The definition of taste on which I am basing this [analysis] is that it is the ability to judge the beautiful. But we have to analyze judgments of taste in order to discover what is required for calling an object beautiful. I have used the logical functions of judging to help me find the moments that judgment takes into consideration when it reflects (since even a judgment of taste still has reference to the understanding). I have examined the moment of quality first, because an aesthetic judgment about the beautiful is concerned with it first.

1They fall under four headings: quantity, quality, relation, modality. See the Critique of Pure Reason, A 70 = B 95.

2Urteilskraft, in this case. Cf. above, Ak. 167 br. n. 4.
§ 1

A Judgment of Taste Is Aesthetic

If we wish to decide whether something is beautiful or not, we do not use understanding to refer the presentation\(^4\) to the object so as to give rise to cognition;\(^5\) rather, we use imagination (perhaps in connection with understanding) to refer the presentation to the subject and his feeling of pleasure or displeasure. Hence a judgment of taste is not a cognitive judgment and so is not a logical judgment but an aesthetic one, by which we mean a judgment whose determining basis cannot be other than subjective. But any reference of presentations, even of sensations, can be objective (in which case it signifies what is real [rather than formal] in an empirical presentation) excepted is a reference to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure—this reference designates nothing whatsoever in the object, but here the subject feels himself, [namely] how he is affected by the presentation.

To apprehend a regular, purposive building with one's cognitive power\(^6\) (whether the presentation is distinct or confused) is very different from being conscious of this presentation with a sensation of liking. Here the presentation is referred only to the subject, namely, to his feeling of life, under the name feeling of pleasure or displeasure, and this forms the basis of a very special power of discriminating and judging.\(^7\) This power does not contribute anything to cognition, but merely compares the given presentation in the subject with the entire presentational power, of which the mind becomes conscious when it feels its own state. The presentations given in a judgment may be empirical (and hence aesthetic\(^8\)), but if we refer them to the object, the judgment we make by means of them is logical. On the other hand, even if the given presentations were rational, they would still be aesthetic if, and to the extent that, the subject referred them, in his judgment, solely to himself (to his feeling).

§ 2

The Liking That Determines a Judgment of Taste Is Devoid of All Interest

Interest is what we call the liking we connect with the presentation of an object's existence. Hence such a liking always refers at once to our power of desire, either as the basis that determines it, or at any rate as necessarily connected with that determining basis. But if the question is whether something is beautiful, what we want to know is not whether we or anyone cares, or so much as might care, in any way, about the thing's existence, but rather how we judge in our mere contemplation of it (intuition or reflection). Suppose someone asks me whether I consider the palace I see before me beautiful. I might reply that I am not fond of things of that sort\(^9\) made merely to be gaped at. Or I might reply like that Iroquois sachem who said that he liked nothing better in Paris than the eating-houses.\(^9\) I might even

\(^4\)[Vorstellung, traditionally rendered as 'representation.' (See above, Ak. 175 br. n. 17.) 'Presentation' is a generic term referring to such objects of our direct awareness as sensations, intuitions, perceptions, concepts, cognitions, ideas, and schemata. Cf. the Critique of Pure Reason, A 320 = B 376-77 and A 140 = B 179.]

\(^5\)[Erkenntnis. Cf. above, Ak. 167 br. n. 2.]

\(^6\)[For my use of 'power,' rather than 'faculty,' see above, Ak. 167 br. n. 3.]

\(^7\)[Beurteilung. On Kant's attempt to make a terminological distinction between 'beurteilen' and 'urteilen,' see above, Ak. 169 br. n. 9.]

\(^8\)[Wilhelm Windelband, editor of the Akademie edition of the Critique of Judgment, notes (Ak. V. 527) that Kant's reference has been traced to (Pierre François Xavier de) Charlebois (1682-1761), French Jesuit traveler and historian, Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle-France (History and General Description of New France [in eastern Canada]) (Paris, 1744). Windelband quotes a passage (from III, 322) in French, which translates: “Some Iroquois went to Paris in 1666 and were shown all the royal mansions and all the beauties of that great city. But they did not admire anything in these, and would have preferred the villages to the capital of the most flourishing kingdom of Europe if they had not seen the rue de la Huchette where they were delighted with the rosticles they always found furnished with meats of all sorts.” (All translations given in footnotes are my own, and this fact is not indicated in each such footnote individually.)]
go on, as *Rousseau* would, to rebuke the vanity of the great who spend the people's sweat on such superfluous things. I might, finally, quite easily convince myself that, if I were on some uninhabited island with no hope of ever again coming among people, and could conjure up such a splendid edifice by a mere wish, I would not even take that much trouble for it if I already had a sufficiently comfortable hut. The questioner may grant all this and approve of it; but it is not to the point. All he wants to know is whether my mere presentation of the object is accompanied by a liking, no matter how indifferent I may be about the existence of the object of this presentation. We can easily see that, in order for me to say that an object is beautiful, and to prove that I have taste, what matters is what I do with this presentation within myself; and not the [respect] in which I depend on the object's existence. Everyone has to admit that if a judgment about beauty is mingled with the least interest then it is very partial and not a pure judgment of taste. In order to play the judge in matters of taste, we must not be in the least biased in favor of the thing's existence but must be wholly indifferent about it.

There is no better way to elucidate this proposition, which is of prime importance, than by contrasting the pure disinterested\(^\text{10}\) liking that occurs in a judgment of taste with a liking connected with interest, especially if we can also be certain that the kinds of interest I am about to mention are the only ones there are.

\(^{10}\) A judgment we make about an object of our liking may be wholly *disinterested* but still *very interesting*, i.e., it is not based on any interest but it gives rise to an interest: all pure moral judgments are of this sort. But judgments of taste, of themselves, do not even give rise to any interest. Only in society does it become *interesting* to have taste; the reason for this will be indicated later.\(^\text{11}\)

\(^{11}\) See esp. Ak. 275-76 and 296-98.

§ 3

**A Liking for the Agreeable Is Connected with Interest**

AGREEABLE is *what the senses like* in sensation. Here the opportunity arises at once to censure and call attention to a quite common confusion of the two meanings that the word sensation can have. All liking (so it is said or thought) is itself sensation (of a pleasure). Hence whatever is liked, precisely inasmuch as it is liked, is agreeable (and, depending on the varying degrees or on the relation to other agreeable sensations, it is *graceful, lovely, delightful, gladdening, etc.*). But if we concede this, then sense impressions that determine inclination, or principles of reason that determine the will, or mere forms of intuition that we reflect on [and] that determine the power of judgment, will all be one and the same insofar as their effect on the feeling of pleasure is concerned, since pleasure would be the agreeableness [found] in the sensation of one's state. And since, after all, everything we do with our powers must in the end aim at the practical and unite in it as its goal, we could not require them to estimate things and their value in any other way than by the gratification they promise; how they provided it would not matter at all in the end. And since all that could make a difference in that promised gratification would be what means we select, people could no longer blame one another for businness and malice, but only for foolishness and ignorance, since all of them, each according to his own way of viewing things, would be pursuing one and the same goal: gratification.

When [something determines the feeling of pleasure or displeasure and this] determination of that feeling is called sensation, this term means something quite different from what it means when I apply it to the presentation of a thing (through the senses, a receptivity that belongs to the cognitive power). For in the second case the presentation is referred to the object, but in the first it is referred solely to the subject and is not used for cognition at all, not even for that by which the subject recognizes himself.

As I have just explicated it [i.e., for the second case], the word sensation means an objective presentation of sense; and, to avoid
constantly running the risk of being misinterpreted, let us call what must always remain merely subjective, and cannot possibly be the presentation of an object, by its other customary name, feeling. The green color of meadows belongs to objective sensation, i.e., to the perception of an object of sense; but the color’s agreeableness belongs to subjective sensation, to feeling, through which no object is presented, but through which the object is regarded as an object of our liking (which is not a cognition of it).

Now, that a judgment by which I declare an object to be agreeable expresses an interest in that object is already obvious from the fact that, by means of sensation, the judgment arouses a desire for objects of that kind, so that the liking presupposes something other than my mere judgment about the object: it presupposes that I have referred the existence of the object to my state insofar as that state is affected by such an object. This is why we say of the agreeable not merely that we like it but that it gratifies us. When I speak of the agreeable, I am not granting mere approval: the agreeable produces an inclination. Indeed, what is agreeable in the liveliest way requires no judgment at all about the character of the object, as we can see in people who aim at nothing but enjoyment (this is the word we use to mark the intensity of the gratification): they like to dispense with all judging.

§ 4

A Liking for the Good Is Connected with Interest

Good is what, by means of reason, we like through its mere concept. We call something (viz., if it is something useful) good for [this or that] if we like it only as a means. But we call something intrinsically good if we like it for its own sake. In both senses of the term, the good always contains the concept of a purpose, consequently a relation of reason to a volition (that is at least possible), and hence a liking for the existence of an object or action. In other words, it always some interest or other.

In order to consider something good, I must always know what sort of thing the object is [meant] to be, i.e., I must have a determinate concept of it. But I do not need this in order to find beauty in something. Flowers, free designs, lines aimlessly intertwined and called foliage: these have no significance, depend on no determinate concept, and yet we like [gefallen] them. A liking [Wohlgelalten\(^\text{14}\)] for the beautiful must depend on the reflection, regarding an object, that leads to some concept or other (but it is indeterminate which concept this is). This dependence on reflection also distinguishes the liking for the beautiful from [that for] the agreeable, which rests entirely on sensation.

It is true that in many cases it seems as if the agreeable and the good are one and the same. Thus people commonly say that all gratification (especially if it lasts) is intrinsically good, which means roughly the same as to be (lasting) agreeable and to be good are one and the same. Yet it is easy to see that in talking this way they are merely substituting one word for another by mistake, since the concepts that belong to these terms are in no way interchangeable. Insofar as we present an object as agreeable, we present it solely in relation to sense; but if we are to call the object good [as well], and hence an object of the will, we must first bring it under principles of reason, using the concept of a purpose. [So] if something that gratifies us is also called good, it has a very different relation to our liking. This is also evident from the fact that in the case of the good there is always the question whether it is good merely indirectly or good directly\(^\text{15}\) (i.e., useful, or intrinsically good), whereas in the case of the agreeable

\(^{14}\) The only noun Kant had for the verb ‘gefalten’ (‘to be liked’) was ‘Wohlgelalten,’ and ‘wohl’ does not add anything. Grammar aside, Kant uses the two interchangeably.

\(^{15}\) ‘Mittelbar,’ ‘unmittelbar.’ The more literal rendering of these as ‘mediately’ and ‘immediately’ has been avoided in this translation because ‘immediately’ has also its temporal sense, which would frequently be misleading.

\(^{13}\) [Cl., in this section, the Critique of Practical Reason, Ak. V, 22-26.]
this question cannot even arise, since this word always signifies something that we like directly. (What we call beautiful is also liked directly.)

Even in our most ordinary speech we distinguish the agreeable from the good. If a dish stimulates [erheben] our tasting by its spices and other condiments, we will not hesitate to call it agreeable while granting at the same time that it is not good; for while the dish is directly appealing to our senses, we dislike it indirectly, i.e., as considered by reason, which looks ahead to the consequences. Even when we judge health, this difference is still noticeable. To anyone who has it, health is directly agreeable (at least negatively, as the absence of all bodily pain). But in order to say that health is good, we must also use reason and direct this health toward purposes: we must say that health is a state that disposes us to [attend to] all our tasks. [Perhaps in the case of happiness, at least, the agreeable and the good are the same?] Surely everyone believes that happiness, the greatest sum (in number as well as duration) of what is agreeable in life, may be called a true good, indeed the highest good? And yet reason balks at this too. Agreeableness is enjoyment. But if our sole aim were enjoyment, it would be foolish to be scrupulous about the means for getting it, [i.e.,] about whether we got it passively, from nature’s bounty, or through our own activity and our own doing. But reason can never be persuaded that there is any intrinsic value in the existence of a human being who lives merely for enjoyment (no matter how industrious he may be in pursuing that aim), even if he served others, all likewise aiming only at enjoyment, as a most efficient means to it because he participated in their gratification by enjoying it through sympathy. Only by what he does without concern for enjoyment, in complete freedom and independently of whatever he could also receive passively from nature, does he give his existence [Dasein] an absolute value, as the existence [Existenz] of a person. Happiness, with all its abundance of agreeableness, is far from being an unconditioned good.17

§5

Comparison of the Three Sorts of Liking, Which Differ in Kind

But despite all this difference between the agreeable and the good, they do agree in this: they are always connected with an interest in their object. This holds not only for the agreeable—see § 3—and for what is good indirectly (useful), which we like as the means to something or other that is agreeable, but also for what is good absolutely and in every respect, i.e., the moral good, which carries with it the highest interest. For the good is the object of the will (a power of desire that is determined by reason). But to will something and to have a liking for its existence, i.e., to take an interest in it, are identical.

16 In the Critique of Judgment Kant uses ‘Dasein’ and ‘Existenz’ synonymously, and they will both be rendered as ‘existence.’ Moreover, rendering ‘Dasein’ as ‘being’ or ‘Being’ leads to serious trouble in the contexts where Kant also refers to the original being (Wesen); see esp. Ak. 475.

17 An obligation to enjoy oneself is a manifest absurdity. So, consequently, must be an alleged obligation to any acts that aim merely at enjoyment, no matter how intellectually subtle (or veiled) that enjoyment may be, indeed, even if it were a mystical, so-called heavenly, enjoyment.

18 Cf. the Metaphysics of Morals, Ak. VI, 212.

19 For comparison: i.e., the feeling, as we shall see shortly (Ak. 222), is a nonconceptual awareness of a harmony (with a certain indeterminate form) between imagination and understanding; in an aesthetic judgment of reflection we hold, for comparison, a given form up to the form of that harmony.]
Hence the agreeable, the beautiful, and the good designate three different relations that presentations have to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, the feeling by reference to which we distinguish between objects or between ways of presenting them. The terms of approbation which are appropriate to each of these three are also different. We call agreeable what gratifies us, beautiful what we just like, good what we esteem, or endorse [billigen]; i.e., that to which we attribute [setzen] an objective value. Agreeableness holds for nonrational animals too; beauty only for human beings, i.e., beings who are animal and yet rational, though it is not enough that they be rational (e.g., spirits) but they must be animal as well; the good, however, holds for every rational being as such, though I cannot fully justify and explain this proposition until later. We may say that, of all these three kinds of liking, only the liking involved in taste for the beautiful is disinterested and free, since we are not compelled to give our approval by any interest, whether of sense or of reason. So we might say that [the term] liking, in the three cases mentioned, refers to inclination, or to favor, or to respect. For favor is the only free liking. Neither an object of inclination, nor one that a law of reason enjoins on us as an object of desire, leaves us the freedom to make an object of pleasure for ourselves out of something or other. All interest either presupposes a need or gives rise to one; and, because interest is the basis that determines approval, it makes the judgment about the object unfree.

Consider, first, the interest of inclination, [which occurs] with the agreeable. Here everyone says: Hunger is the best sauce; and to people with a healthy appetite anything is tasty provided it is edible. Hence if people have a liking of this sort, that does not prove that they are selecting [Wahl] by taste. Only when their need has been satisfied can we tell who in a multitude of people has taste and who does not. In the same way, second, one can find manners (conduite) without virtue, politeness without benevolence, propriety without integrity, and so on. For where the moral law speaks we are objectively no longer free to select what we must do; and to show taste in our conduct (or in judging other people's conduct) is very different from expressing our moral way of thinking. For this contains a command and gives rise to a need, whereas moral taste only plays with the objects of liking without committing itself to any of them.

explication of the beautiful inferred from the first moment

Taste is the ability to judge an object, or a way of presenting it, by means of a liking or disliking devoid of all interest. The object of such a liking is called beautiful.

second moment of a judgment of taste, as to its quantity

The Beautiful Is What Is Presented without Concepts as the Object of a Universal Liking

This explication of the beautiful can be inferred from the preceding explication of it as object of a liking devoid of all interest. For if
someone likes something and is conscious that he himself does so without any interest, then he cannot help judging that it must contain a basis for being liked [that holds] for everyone. He must believe that he is justified in requiring a similar liking from everyone because he cannot discover, underlying this liking, any private conditions, on which only he might be dependent, so that he must regard it as based on what he can presuppose in everyone else as well. He cannot discover such private conditions because his liking is not based on any inclination he has (nor on any other considered interest whatever); rather, the judging person feels completely free as regards the liking he accords the object. Hence he will talk about the beautiful as if beauty were a characteristic of the object and the judgment were logical (namely, a cognition of the object through concepts of it), even though in fact the judgment is only aesthetic and refers the object's presentation merely to the subject. He will talk in this way because the judgment does resemble a logical judgment inasmuch as we may presuppose it to be valid for everyone. On the other hand, this universality cannot arise from concepts. For from concepts there is no transition to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure (except in pure practical laws; but these carry an interest with them, while none is connected with pure judgments of taste). It follows that, since a judgment of taste involves the consciousness that all interest is kept out of it, it must also involve a claim to being valid for everyone, but without having a universality based on concepts. In other words, a judgment of taste must involve a claim to subjective universality.

§ 7

Comparison of the Beautiful with the Agreeable and the Good in Terms of the Above Characteristic

As regards the agreeable everyone acknowledges that his judgment, which he bases on a private feeling and by which he says that he likes some object, is by the same token confined to his own person. Hence, if he says that canary wine is agreeable he is quite content if someone else corrects his terms and reminds him to say instead: It is agreeable to me. This holds moreover not only for the taste of the tongue, palate, and throat, but also for what may be agreeable to any one's eyes and ears. To one person the color violet is gentle and lovely, to another lifeless and faded. One person loves the sound of wind instruments, another that of string instruments. It would be foolish if we disputed about such differences with the intention of censuring another's judgment as incorrect if it differs from ours, as if the two were opposed logically. Hence about the agreeable the following principle holds: Everyone has his own taste (of sense).

It is quite different (exactly the other way round) with the beautiful. It would be ridiculous if someone who prided himself on his taste tried to justify [it] by saying: This object (the building we are looking at, the garment that man is wearing, the concert we are listening to, the poem put up to be judged) is beautiful for me. For he must not call it beautiful if [he means] only [that] he likes it. Many things may be charming and agreeable to him; no one cares about that. But if he proclaims something to be beautiful, then he requires the same liking from others; he then judges not just for himself but for everyone.

22[For an elaborate discussion of our different senses, see the Anthropology. § § 15-27, Ak. VII, 153-67.]
23[As distinguished from taste of reflection.]
24[Emphasis added.]
and speaks of beauty as if it were a property of things. That is why he says: *The thing is beautiful,* and does not count on other people to agree with his judgment of liking on the ground that he has repeatedly found them agreeing with him; rather, he *demands* that they agree. He reproaches them if they judge differently, and denies that they have taste, which he nevertheless demands of them, as something they ought to have. In view of this, we cannot say that everyone has his own particular taste. That would amount to saying that there is no such thing as taste at all, no aesthetic judgment that could rightfully lay claim to everyone's assent.

And yet, even about the agreeable we can find people standing in agreement, and because of this we do, after all, deny that some people have taste while granting it to others; in speaking of taste here we do not mean the sense of taste, which involves an organ, but an ability to judge the agreeable in general. Thus we will say that someone has taste if he knows how to entertain his guests at a party with agreeable things (that they can enjoy by all the senses) in such a way that everyone likes the party. But here it is understood that the universality is only comparative, so that the rules are only *general* (as all empirical rules are), not *universal,* as are the rules that a judgment about the beautiful presupposes or lays claim to. Such a judgment of taste about the agreeable refers to sociability as far as that rests on empirical rules. It is true that judgments about the good also rightfully claim to be valid for everyone, but in presenting the good as the object of a universal liking we do so by means of a concept, whereas this is the case neither with the beautiful nor with the agreeable.

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*In a Judgment of Taste the Universality of the Liking Is Presented Only as Subjective*

This special characteristic of an aesthetic judgment [of reflection], the universality to be found in judgments of taste, is a remarkable feature, not indeed for the logician but certainly for the transcendental philosopher. This universality requires a major effort on his part if he is to discover its origin, but it compensates him for this by revealing to him a property of our cognitive power which without this analysis would have remained unknown.

We must begin by fully convincing ourselves that in making a judgment of taste (about the beautiful) we require *ansinnen* everyone to like the object, yet without this liking's being based on a concept (since then it would be the good), and that this claim to universal validity belongs so essentially to a judgment by which we declare something to be *beautiful* that it would not occur to anyone to use this term without thinking of universal validity; instead, everything we like without a concept would then be included with the agreeable. For as to the agreeable we allow everyone to be of a mind of his own, no one requiring *zumuten* others to agree. But in a judgment of taste about beauty we always require others to agree. Insofar as judgments about the agreeable are merely private, whereas judgments about the beautiful are put forward as having general validity (as being public), taste regarding the agreeable can be called taste of sense, and taste regarding the beauti-

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25 The transcendental philosopher tries to discover what enables us to make a priori judgments, especially synthetic ones: judgments in which the predicate is not already contained in the subject, as it is in analytic judgments, but which are nonetheless (wholly or partly) a priori rather than empirical. (See also above, Ak. 181-82, and cf. the *Critique of Pure Reason,* A 298-302 = B 355-59.)

26 *'Ansinnen' and 'zumuten' are used interchangeably by Kant. Both mean 'to expect' as in 'I expect you to do this,' but not in the sense of anticipation. Because of this ambiguity (found also in *erwarten,* 'to expect'), 'require' is to be preferred. (It also has just about the right force.)}
ful can be called taste of reflection, though the judgments of both are aesthetic (rather than practical) judgments about an object, [i.e.,] judgments merely about the relation that the presentation of the object has to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. But surely there is something strange here. In the case of the taste of sense, not only does experience show that its judgment (of a pleasure or displeasure we take in something or other) does not hold universally, but people, of their own accord, are modest enough not even to require others to agree (even though there actually is, at times, very widespread agreement in these judgments too). Now, experience teaches us that the taste of reflection, with its claim that its judgment about the beautiful is universally valid for everyone, is also rejected often enough. What is strange is that the taste of reflection should nonetheless find itself able (as it actually does) to conceive of judgments that can demand such agreement, and that it does in fact require this agreement from everyone for each of its judgments. What the people who make these judgments dispute about is not whether such a claim is possible; they are merely unable to agree, in particular cases, on the correct way to apply this ability.

Here we must note, first of all, that a universality that does not rest on concepts of the object (not even on empirical ones) is not a logical universality at all, but an aesthetic one; i.e., the universal quantity of a judgment is not objective but only subjective. For this quantity I use the expression *general validity*, by which I mean the validity that a presentation's reference to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure [may] have for every subject, rather than the validity of a presentation's reference to the cognitive power. (We may, alternatively, use just one expression, universal validity, for both the aesthetic and the logical quantity of a judgment, provided we add *objective* for the logical universal validity, to distinguish it from the merely subjective one, which is always aesthetic.)

Now a judgment that is *universally valid objectively* is always subjectively so too, i.e., if the judgment is valid for everything contained under a given concept, then it is also valid for everyone who presents an object by means of this concept. But if a judgment has *subjective* — i.e., aesthetic — *universal validity*, which does not rest on a concept, we cannot infer that it also has logical universal validity, because such judgments do not deal with the object [itself] at all. That is precisely why the aesthetic universality we attribute to a judgment must be of a special kind; for although it does not connect the predicate of beauty with the concept of the *object*, considered in its entire logical sphere, yet it extends that predicate over the entire sphere of judging persons.

In their logical quantity all judgments of taste are *singular* judgments. For since I must hold the object directly up to my feeling of pleasure and displeasure, but without using concepts, these judgments cannot have the quantity that judgments with objective general validity have. On the other hand, once we have made a judgment of taste about an object, under the conditions characteristic for such judgments, we may then convert the singular presentation of the object into a concept by comparing it [with other presentations] and so arrive at a logically universal judgment. For example, I may look at a rose and make a judgment of taste declaring it to be beautiful. But if I compare many singular roses and so arrive at the judgment, Roses in general are beautiful, then my judgment is no longer merely aesthetic, but a **logical judgment based on an aesthetic one**. Now the judgment, *The rose agreeable (in its smell), is also aesthetic and singular, but it is a judgment of sense, not of taste. For a judgment of taste carries with it an *aesthetic quantity* of universality, i.e., of validity for everyone, which a judgment about the agreeable does not have. Only judgments about the good, though they too determine our liking for an object, have logical rather than merely aesthetic universality; for they hold for the object, as cognitions of it, and hence for everyone.

If we judge objects merely in terms of concepts, then we lose all presentation of beauty. This is why there can be no rule by which someone could be compelled to acknowledge that something is beautiful. No one can use reasons or principles to talk us into a judgment on whether some garment, house, or flower is beautiful. We want to submit the object to our own eyes, just as if our liking of it depended on that sensation. And yet, if we then call the object beautiful, we believe we have a universal voice, and lay claim to the

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27] In the *Logic*, Kant spells out the (familiar) distinctions between universal, particular, and singular judgments in terms of inclusion and exclusion, total or partial, of the spheres of subject and predicate concepts, and also distinguishes universal from general propositions: Ak. IX, 102-03.

28] See above, Ak. 209 br. n. 19.

29] Kant meant to say 'universal.'
agreement of everyone, whereas any private sensation would decide solely for the observer himself and his liking.

We can see, at this point, that nothing is postulated in a judgment of taste except such a universal voice about a liking unmediated by concepts. Hence all that is postulated is the possibility of a judgment that is aesthetic and yet can be considered valid for everyone. The judgment of taste itself does not postulate everyone's agreement (since only a logically universal judgment can do that, because it can adduce reasons); it merely requires this agreement from everyone, as an instance of the rule, an instance regarding which it expects confirmation not from concepts but from the agreement of others. Hence the universal voice is only an idea. (At this point we are not yet inquiring on what this idea rests.) Whether someone who believes he is making a judgment of taste is in fact judging in conformity with that idea may be uncertain; but by using the term beauty he indicates that he is at least referring his judging to that idea, and hence that he intends it to be a judgment of taste. For himself, however, he can attain certainty on this point, 30 by merely being conscious that he is separating whatever belongs to the agreeable and the good from the liking that remains to him after that. It is only for this that he counts on everyone's assent, and he would under these conditions [always] be justified in this claim, if only he did not on occasion fail to observe these conditions and so make an erroneous judgment of taste.

30 Presumably the point that in a given case "may be uncertain" (at the outset): whether he is in fact judging in conformity with the idea of the universal voice. For the sources of error about to be mentioned (in this sentence), cf. Ak. 290-91 incl., n. 15 at Ak. 290, as well as § 39, Ak. 293, and § 40, Ak. 293-94. See also Ted Cohen, "Why Beauty Is a Symbol of Morality," in Essays in Kant's Aesthetics, eds. Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 221-36.
and understanding insofar as they refer a given presentation to cognition in general.

When this happens, the cognitive powers brought into play by this presentation are in free play, because no determinate concept restricts them to a particular rule of cognition. Hence the mental state in this presentation must be a feeling, accompanying the given presentation of a free play of the presentational powers directed to cognition in general. Now if a presentation by which an object is given, is in general, to become cognition, we need imagination to combine the manifold of intuition, and understanding to provide the unity of the concept uniting the [component] presentations. This state of free play of the cognitive powers, accompanying a presentation by which an object is given, must be universally communicable for cognition, the determination of the object with which given presentations are to harmonize (in any subject whatever) is the only way of presenting that holds for everyone.

But the way of presenting [which occurs] in a judgment of taste is to have subjective universal communicability without presupposing a determinate concept; hence this subjective universal communicability can be nothing but Subjective mental state in which we are when imagination and understanding are in free play (insofar as they harmonize with each other as required for cognition in general). For we are conscious that this subjective relation suitable for cognition in general must hold just as much for everyone, and hence be just as universally communicable, as any determinate cognition, since cognition always rests on that relation as its subjective condition.

Now this merely subjective (aesthetic) judging of the object, or of the presentation by which it is given, precedes the pleasure in the object and is the basis of this pleasure, [a pleasure] in the harmony of the cognitive powers. But the universal subjective validity of this liking, the liking we connect with the presentation of the object we call beautiful, is based solely on the mentioned universality of the subjective conditions for judging objects.

That the ability to communicate one's mental state, even if this is only the state of one's cognitive powers, carries a pleasure with it, could easily be established (empirically and psychologically) from man's natural propensity to sociability. But that would not suffice for our aim here. When we make a judgment of taste, the pleasure we feel is something we require from everyone else as necessary, just as if, when we call something beautiful, we had to regard beauty as a characteristic of the object, determined in it according to concepts, even though in fact, apart from a reference to the subject's feeling, beauty is nothing by itself. We must, however, postpone discussion of this question until we have answered another one, namely, whether and how aesthetic judgments are possible a priori.

At present we still have to deal with a lesser question, namely, how we become conscious, in a judgment of taste, of a reciprocal subjective harmony between the cognitive powers: is it aesthetically, through mere inner sense and sensation? or is it intellectually, through consciousness of the intentional activity by which we bring these powers into play?

If the given presentation that prompts the judgment of taste were a concept which, in our judgment of the object, united understanding and imagination so as to give rise to cognition of the object, then the consciousness of this relation would be intellectual (as it is in the objective schematism of judgment, with which the Critique [of Pure Reason] deals64). But in that case the judgment would not have been made in reference to pleasure and displeasure and hence would not be a judgment of taste. But in fact a judgment of taste determines the object, independently of concepts, with regard to liking and the predicate of beauty. Hence that unity in the relation [between the cognitive powers] in the subject can reveal itself only through sensation. This sensation, whose universal communicability a judgment of taste postulates, is the quickening of the two powers (imagination and understanding) to an activity that is indeterminate but, as a result of the prompting of the given presentation, nonetheless accordant: the activity required for cognition in general. An objective relation can only be thought. Still, insofar as it has subjective conditions, it can nevertheless be sensed in the effect it has on the mind; and if the relation is not based on a concept (e.g., the relation that the presentational powers must have in order to give rise to a power of cognition in general), then the only way we can become conscious of it is through a sensation of this relation's effect: the facilitated play of the two mental powers (imagination and understanding) quickened by their reciprocal harmony. A presentation that, though singular and not compared with others, yet harmonizes with the conditions of the

64[See A 137-47 – B 176-87, and cf. below, Ak. 253 br. n. 17.]}
universality that is the business of the understanding in general, brings the cognitive powers into that proportioned attunement which we require for all cognition and which, therefore, we also consider valid for everyone who is so constituted as to judge by means of understanding and the senses in combination (in other words, for all human beings).

Explication of the Beautiful Inferred from the Second Moment

Beautiful is what, without a concept, is liked universally.

Third Moment of Judgments of Taste, As to the Relation of Purposes That Is Taken into Consideration in Them

§ 10. On Purposiveness in General

What is a purpose? If we try to explicate it in terms of its transcendental attributes (without presupposing anything empirical, such as the feeling of pleasure), then a purpose is the object of a concept insofar as we regard this concept as the object’s cause (the real basis of its possibility); and the causality that a concept has with regard to its object is purposiveness (forma finalis). Hence we think of a purpose if we think not merely, say, of our cognition of the object, but instead of the object itself (its form, or its existence), as an effect that is possible only through a concept of that effect. In that case the presentation of the effect is the basis that determines the effect’s cause and precedes it. Consciousness of a presentation’s causality directed at the subject’s state so as to keep him in that state, may here designate generally what we call pleasure; whereas displeasure is that presentation which determines the basis that determines [the subject to change] the state [consisting] of [certain] presentations into their own opposite (i.e., to keep them away or remove them).

The power of desire, insofar as it can be determined to act only by concepts, i.e., in conformity with the presentation of a purpose, would be the will. On the other hand, we do call objects, states of mind, or acts purposive even if their possibility does not necessarily presuppose the presentation of a purpose; we do this merely because we can explain and grasp them only if we assume that they are based on a causality [that operates] according to purposes, i.e., on a will that would have so arranged them in accordance with the presentation of a certain rule. Hence there can be purposiveness without a purpose, insofar as we do not posit the causes of this form in a will, and yet can grasp the explanation of its possibility only by deriving it from a will. Now what we observe we do not always need to have insight into by reason (as to how it is possible). Hence we can at least observe a purposiveness as to form and take note of it in objects—even if only by reflection—without basing it on a purpose (as the matter of the nexus finalis).
§ 11

A Judgment of Taste
Is Based on Nothing
but the Form of Purposiveness
of an Object
(or of the Way of Presenting It)

Whenever a purpose is regarded as the basis of a liking, it always carries with it an interest, as the basis that determines the judgment about the object of the pleasure. Hence a judgment of taste cannot be based on a subjective purpose. But a judgment of taste also cannot be determined by a presentation of an objective purpose, i.e., a presentation of the object itself as possible according to principles of connection in terms of purposes, and hence it cannot be determined by a concept of the good. For it is an aesthetic and not a cognitive judgment, and hence does not involve a concept of the character and internal or external possibility of the object through this or that cause; rather, it involves merely the relation of the presentational powers to each other, insofar as they are determined by a presentation.

Now this relation, when a judgment determines an object as beautiful, is connected with the feeling of a pleasure, a pleasure that the judgment of taste at the same time declares to be valid for everyone. Hence neither an agreeableness accompanying the presentation, nor a presentation of the object's perfection and the concept of the good, can contain the basis that determines such a judgment. Therefore the liking that, without a concept, we judge to be universally communicable and hence to be the basis that determines a judgment of taste, can be nothing but the subjective purposiveness in the presentation of an object, without any purpose (whether objective or subjective), and hence the mere form of purposiveness, insofar as we are conscious of it, in the presentation by which an object is given us.

§ 12

A Judgment of Taste
Rests on A Priori Bases

We cannot possibly tell a priori that some presentation or other (sensation or concept) is connected, as cause, with the feeling of a pleasure or displeasure, as its effect. For that would be a causal relation, and a causal relation (among objects of experience) can never be cognized otherwise than a posteriori and by means of experience itself. It is true that in the Critique of Practical Reason we did actually derive a priori from universal moral concepts the feeling of respect (a special and peculiar modification of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure which does seem to differ somehow from both the pleasure and the displeasure we get from empirical objects). But there we were also able to go beyond the bounds of experience and appeal to a causality that rests on a supersensible characteristic of the subject, namely, freedom. And yet, even there, what we derived from the idea of the moral, as the cause, was actually not this feeling, but merely the determination of the will, except that the state of mind of a will determined by something or other is itself already a feeling of pleasure and is identical with it. Hence the determination of the will (by the moral law) does not (in turn) come about as an effect from the feeling of pleasure, [with that feeling being produced by the concept of the moral]; this we would have to assume only if the concept of the moral, as a good [and so as giving rise to respect, the pleasure], preceded the will's determination by the law; but in that case the concept of the moral would be a mere cognition, and so it would be futile to [try to] derive from it the pleasure connected with it.

35 [We recognize a priori only that every event must have some cause; what causes produce what effects, we discover by observation.]

36 [For this derivation, and for a comparison with this entire paragraph, see the Critique of Practical Reason, Ak. V, 71-89. Cf. also the Metaphysics of Morals, Ak. VI, 211-13.]

37 [The feeling of pleasure would then mediate this determination.]
PART 1. CRITIQUE OF AESTHETIC JUDGMENT

Now the situation is similar with the pleasure in an aesthetic judgment, except that here the pleasure is merely contemplative, and does not bring about an interest in the object, whereas in a moral judgment it is practical. The very consciousness of a merely formal purposiveness in the play of the subject's cognitive powers, accompanying a presentation by which an object is given, is that pleasure. For this consciousness in an aesthetic judgment contains a basis for determining the subject's activity regarding the quickening of his cognitive powers, and hence an inner causality (which is purposive) concerning cognition in general, which however is not restricted to a determinate cognition. Hence it contains a mere form of the subjective purposiveness of a presentation. This pleasure is also not practical in any way, neither like the one arising from the pathological basis, agreeableness, nor like the one arising from the intellectual basis, the conceived good. Yet it does have a causality in it, namely, to keep us in the state of having the presentation itself, and to keep the cognitive powers engaged in their occupation without any further aim. We linger in our contemplation of the beautiful, because this contemplation reinforces and reproduces itself. This is analogous to (though not the same as) the way in which we linger over something charming that, as we present an object, repeatedly arouses our attention, [though here] the mind is passive.

§ 13
A Pure Judgment of Taste Is Independent of Charm and Emotion

All interest ruins a judgment of taste and deprives it of its impartiality, especially if, instead of making the purposiveness precede the feeling of pleasure as the interest of reason does, that interest bases the purposiveness on the feeling of pleasure; but this is what always happens in an aesthetic judgment that we make about something insofar as it gratifies or pains us. Hence judgments affected in this way can make either no claim at all to a universally valid liking, or a claim that is diminished to the extent that sensations of that kind are included among the bases determining the taste. Any taste remains barbaric if its liking requires that charms and emotions be mingled in, let alone if it makes these the standard of its approval.

And yet, (though beauty should actually concern only form), charms are frequently not only included with beauty, as a contribution toward a universal aesthetic liking, but are even themselves passed off as beauties, so that the matter of the liking is passed off as the form. This is a misunderstanding that, like many others having yet some basis in truth, can be eliminated by carefully defining these concepts.

A pure judgment of taste is one that is not influenced by charm or emotion (though these may be connected with a liking for the beautiful), and whose determining basis is therefore merely the purposiveness of the form.

§ 14
Elucidation by Examples

Aesthetic judgments, just like theoretical (i.e., logical) ones, can be divided into empirical and pure. Aesthetic judgments are empirical if they assert that an object or a way of presenting it is agreeable or disagreeable; they are pure if they assert that it is beautiful. Empirical aesthetic judgments are judgments of sense (material aesthetic judgments); only pure aesthetic judgments (since they are formal) are properly judgments of taste.

Hence a judgment of taste is pure only insofar as no merely empirical liking is mingled in with the basis that determines it. But this is just what happens whenever charm or emotion have a share in a judgment by which something is to be declared beautiful.

Here again some will raise objections, trying to make out, not merely that charm is a necessary ingredient in beauty, but indeed that
it is sufficient all by itself to [deserve] being called beautiful. Most people will declare a mere color, such as the green color of a lawn, or a mere tone (as distinct from sound and noise), as for example that of a violin, to be beautiful in themselves, even though both seem to be based merely on the matter of presentations, i.e., solely on sensation, and hence deserve only to be called agreeable. And yet it will surely be noticed at the same time that sensations of color as well as of tone claim to deserve being considered beautiful only insofar as they are pure. And that is an attribute that already concerns form, and it is moreover all that can be universally communicated with certainty about these presentations; for we cannot assume that in all subjects the sensations themselves agree in quality, let alone that everyone will judge one color more agreeable than another, or judge the tone of one musical instrument more agreeable than that of another.

If, following Euler, we assume that colors are vibrations (pulsus) of the aether in uniform temporal sequence, as, in the case of sound, tones are such vibrations of the air, and if we assume—what is most important (and which, after all, I do not doubt at all)—that the mind perceives not only, by sense, the effect that these vibrations have on the excitement of the organ, but also, by reflection, the

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39[Leonhard Euler (1707-83), Swiss mathematician, physicist, and physiologist. He is the author of many works and became a member of the Academies of Science, respectively, of St. Petersburg, Berlin, and Paris.]

40["Woran ich doch gar nicht zweifle," incorporated into the Akademie text from the third edition. Both the first and the second edition had "woran ich doch gar sehr zweifle," i.e., which, however, I doubt very much. Wilhelm Windelband, in his notes to the Akademie edition of the Critique of Judgment, points out (Ak. V, 527-29) that Kant's treatment of color and sound in this Critique (as allowing reflection on their form) presupposes Euler's view, and that Kant also speaks very favorably of it in these other places: Meditationum quarundam de igne succincta delineatio (Brief Outline of Some Reflections Concerning Fire [1755]), Ak. I, 378, and Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science (1786), Ak. IV, the n. on 519-20. On the other hand, in the Anthropology (Ak. VII, 156) Kant writes: "Sight too is a sense [involving] indirect or mediate: 'mittelbar' sensation by means of [durch] a matter in motion, light, which only a certain organ (the eyes) can sense. Unlike sound, light is not merely a wave-like fluid element, which spreads in all directions in the surrounding space; rather, it is an emanation by which a point in space is determined for the object..."

But the 'not merely' at least can be read in a way that makes this passage compatible with Windelband's evidence and hence with the third edition reading adopted here.

Cl., on this whole issue, Theodore E. Uehling, Jr., The Notion of Form in Kant's Critique of Aesthetic Judgment (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 22-26.]
play of shapes (in space, namely, mimetic art and dance), or mere play of sensations (in time). The charm of colors or of the agreeable tone of an instrument may be added, but it is the design in the first case and the composition in the second that constitute the proper object of a pure judgment of taste: that the purity of the colors and of the tones, or for that matter their variety and contrast, seem to contribute to the beauty, does not mean that, because they themselves are agreeable, they furnish us, as it were, with a supplement to, and one of the same kind as, our liking for the form. For all they do is to make the form intuitable more precisely, determinately, and completely, while they also enliven the presentation by means of their charm, by arousing and sustaining the attention we direct toward the object itself.

Even what we call ornam ents (parerga), i.e., what does not belong to the whole presentation of the object as an intrinsic constituent, but [is] only an extrinsic addition, does indeed increase our taste's liking, and yet it too does so only by its form, as in the case of picture frames, or drapery on statues, or colonnades around magnificent buildings. On the other hand, if the ornament itself does not consist in beautiful form but is merely attached, as a gold frame is to a painting so that its charm may commend the painting for our approval, then it impairs genuine beauty and is called finery.

Emotion, a sensation where agreeableness is brought about only by means of a momentary inhibition of the vital force followed by a stronger outpouring of it, does not belong to beauty at all. But sublimity (with which the feeling of emotion is connected) requires a different standard of judging from the one that taste uses as a basis. Hence a pure judgment of taste has as its determining basis neither charm nor emotion, in other words, no sensation, which is [merely] the matter of an aesthetic judgment.

General Comment on the First Division of the Analytic

If we take stock of the above analyses, we find that everything comes down to the concept of taste, namely, that taste is an ability to judge an object in reference to the free lawfulness of the imagination. Therefore, in a judgment of taste the imagination must be considered in its freedom. This implies, first of all, that this power is here not taken as reproductive, where it is subject to the laws of association, but as productive and spontaneous (as the originator of chosen forms of possible intuitions). Moreover, [second,] although in apprehending a given object of sense the imagination is tied to a determinate form of this object and to that extent does not have free play (as it does [e.g.] in poetry), it is still conceivable that the object may offer it just the sort of form in the combination of its manifold as the imagination, if it were left to itself [and] free, would design in harmony with the understanding's lawfulness in general. And yet, to say that the imagination is free and yet useful of itself, i.e., that it carries autonomy with it, is a contradiction. The understanding alone gives the law. But when the imagination is compelled to proceed according to a determinate law, then its product is determined by concepts (as far as its form is concerned), but in that case the liking, as was shown above, is a liking not for the beautiful but for the good (of perfection, at any rate, formal perfection), and the judgment is not a judgment

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[The first Book, actually.]

[§ § IS and 16, Ak.]

[See exp. §§ 15 and 16, Ak. 226-31.]
made by taste. It seems, therefore, that only a lawfulness without a law, and a subjective harmony of the imagination with the understanding without an objective harmony—where the presentation is referred to a determinate concept of an object—is compatible with the free lawfulness of the understanding (which has also been called purposiveness without a purpose[69]) and with the peculiarity of a judgment of taste.

It is true that critics of taste commonly adduce geometrically regular figures, such as a circle, square, or cube, etc., as the simplest and most indubitable examples of beauty. And yet these are called regular precisely because the only way we can present them is by regarding them as mere exhibitions of a determinate concept that prescribes the rule for that figure (the rule under which alone the figure is possible). Hence one of these two must be erroneous: either that judgment by the critics which attributes beauty to such figures, or our judgment that beauty requires a purposiveness without a concept.

 Probably no one would hold that a man of taste is required in order to like a circular figure better than a scrawled outline, an equilateral and equiangular quadrangle better than one that is scalene and lopsided, as it were, misshapen; for no taste at all is required for this, but only common understanding. When we pursue an aim, such as to judge the size of an area or, in a division, to enable ourselves to grasp the relation of the parts to one another and to the whole, we require regular figures, and those of the simplest kind; and here our liking does not rest directly on how the figure looks, but rests on its usefulness for all sorts of possible aims. A room whose walls form oblique angles, a garden plot of that kind, even any violation of symmetry in the figure of animals (such as being one-eyed) or of buildings or flower beds: all of these we dislike because they are contrapurpose[70]—not only practically with regard to some definite use of them, but contrapurpose also for our [very] judging of them with all sorts of possible aims [in mind]. This is not the case in a judgment of taste; when such a judgment is purely, it connects liking or disliking directly with the mere contemplation of the object[70], irrespective of its use or any purpose.

It is true that the regularity leading to the concept of an object is

[69]See Ak. 226 and 236.[70]Cf. Ak. 209 and 222.]
Sumatra, comments that the free beauties of nature there surround the beholder everywhere, so that there is little left in them to attract him; whereas, when in the midst of a forest he came upon a pepper garden, with the stakes that supported the climbing plants forming paths between them along parallel lines, it charmed him greatly. He concludes from this that we like wild and apparently ruleless beauty only as a change, when we have been satiated with the sight of regular beauty. And yet he need only have made the experiment of spending one day with his pepper garden to realize that, once regularity has prompted the understanding to put itself into attunement with order which it requires everywhere, the object ceases to entertain him and instead inflicts on his imagination an irksome constraint; whereas nature in those regions, extravagant in all its diversity to the point of opulence, subject to no constraint from artificial rules, can nourish his taste permanently. Even bird song, which we cannot bring under any rule of music, seems to contain more freedom and hence to offer more to taste than human song, even when this human song is performed according to all the rules of the art of music, because we tire much sooner of a human song if it is repeated often and for long periods. And yet in this case we probably confuse our participation in the cheerfulness of a favorite little animal with the beauty of its song, for when bird song is imitated very precisely by a human being (as is sometimes done with the nightingale’s warble) it strikes our ear as quite tasteless.

Again, we must distinguish beautiful objects from beautiful views of objects (where their distance prevents us from recognizing them distinctly). In beautiful views of objects, taste seems to fasten not so much on what the imagination apprehends in that area, as on the occasion they provide for it to engage in fiction [dichten], i.e., on the actual fantasies with which the mind entertains itself as it is continually being aroused by the diversity that strikes the eye.  

Cf. the Anthropology, Ak. VII, 167-68: “The imagination, insofar as it produces imaginings involuntarily as well, is called fantasy. . . . [So] (in other words) the imagination either engages in fiction (i.e., it is productive), or in recall (i.e., it is reproductive). But this does not mean that the productive imagination is creative, i.e., capable of producing a presentation of sense that was never before given to our power of sense; rather, we can always show [from where the imagination took] its material.” Cf. also, in the same work, §§ 31–33, Ak. VII, 174–82.
§ 23

Transition from the Power of Judging the Beautiful to That of Judging the Sublime

The beautiful and the sublime are similar in some respects. We like both for their own sake, and both presuppose that we make a judgment of reflection rather than either a judgment of sense or a logically determinative one. Hence in neither of them does our liking depend on a sensation, such as that of the agreeable, nor on a determinate concept, as does our liking for the good; yet we do refer the liking to concepts, though it is indeterminate which concepts these are. Hence the liking is connected with the mere exhibition or power of exhibition, i.e., the imagination, with the result that we regard this power, when an intuition is given us, as harmonizing with the power of concepts, i.e., the understanding or reason, this harmony furthering [the aims of] these. That is also why both kinds of judgment are singular ones that nonetheless proclaim themselves universally valid for all subjects, though what they lay claim to

1[For my use of ‘power,’ rather than ‘faculty,’ see above, Ak. 167 br. n. 3.]
2[Cf. the Anthropology. § § 67-68, Ak. VII, 239-43.]
is merely the feeling of pleasure, and not any cognition of the object.

But some significant differences between the beautiful and the sublime are also readily apparent. The beautiful in nature concerns the form of the object, which consists in [the object’s] being bounded. But the sublime can also be found in a formless object, insofar as we present unboundedness, either [as] in the object or because the object prompts us to present it, while yet we add to this unboundedness the thought of its totality. So it seems that we regard the beautiful as the exhibition of an indeferminate concept of the understanding, and the sublime as the exhibition of an indeferminate concept of reason. Hence in the case of the beautiful our liking is connected with the presentation of quality, but in the case of the sublime with the presentation of quantity. The two likings are also very different in kind. For the one liking ([that for] the beautiful) carries with it directly a feeling of life’s being furthered, and hence is compatible with charms and with an imagination at play. But the other liking (the feeling of the sublime) is a pleasure that arises only indirectly: it is produced by the feeling of a momentary inhibition of the vital forces, followed immediately by an outpouring of them that is all the stronger. Hence it is an emotion, and so it seems to be seriousness, rather than play, in the imagination’s activity. Hence, too, this liking is incompatible with charms, and, since the mind is not just attracted by the object but is alternately always repelled as well, the liking for the sublime contains not so much a positive pleasure as rather admiration and respect, and so should be called a negative pleasure. ③

But the intrinsic and most important distinction between the sublime and the beautiful is presumably the following. If, as is permissible, we start here by considering only the sublime in natural objects (since the sublime in art is always confined to the conditions that [art] must meet to be in harmony with nature), then the distinction in question comes to this: (Independent) natural beauty reveals to us a technique of nature that allows us to present nature as a system in terms of laws whose principle we do not find anywhere in our understanding: the principle of a purposiveness directed to our use of judgment as regards appearances. Under this principle, appearances must be judged as belonging not merely to nature as governed by its purposeless mechanism, but also to [nature considered by] analogy with art. Hence even though this beauty does not actually expand our cognition of natural objects, it does expand our concept of nature, namely, from nature as mere mechanism to the concept of that same nature as art, and that invites us to profound investigations about [how] such a form is possible. However, in what we usually call sublime in nature there is such an utter lack of anything leading to particular objective principles and to forms of nature conforming to them, that it is rather in its chaos that nature most arouses our ideas of the sublime, or in its

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③ Cf. Ak. 226.]

④ Cf. the Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime (1764), Ak. II. 209: “The sublime MOVES us, the beautiful CHARMS us.”

⑤ On admiration, respect, and positive and negative pleasure, cf. the Critique of Practical Reason, Ak. V, 71-89.

⑥ [See Ak. 193 br. n. 35.]
wildest and most ruleless disarray and devastation, provided it displays magnitude and might. This shows that the concept of the sublime in nature is not nearly as important and rich in implications as that of the beautiful in nature, and that this concept indicates nothing purposive whatever in nature itself but only in what use we can make of our intuitions of nature so that we can feel a purposiveness within ourselves entirely independent of nature. For the beautiful in nature we must seek a basis outside ourselves, but for the sublime a basis merely within ourselves and in the way of thinking that introduces sublimity into our presentation of nature. This is a crucial preliminary remark, which separates our ideas of the sublime completely from the idea of a purposiveness of nature, and turns the theory of the sublime into a mere appendix to our aesthetic judging of the purposiveness of nature. For through these ideas we do not present a particular form in nature, but only develop [the] purposive use that the imagination makes of the presentation of nature.

§ 24

On Dividing an Investigation of the Feeling of the Sublime

In dividing the moments that are involved when we judge objects aesthetically in relation to the feeling of the sublime, the analytic can go on under the same principle that it followed in analyzing judgments of taste. For, since judgments about the sublime are made by the aesthetic reflective power of judgment, [the analytic] must allow us to present the liking for the sublime, just as that for the beautiful, as follows: in terms of quantity, as universally valid; in terms of quality, as devoid of interest; in terms of relation, [as a] subjective purposiveness; and in terms of modality, as a necessary subjective purposiveness. So our method here will not deviate from the one used in the preceding [book], except for a [detail that is] of no account: since aesthetic judgments about the beautiful concerned the form of the object, we there started by investigating their quality, whereas here, since what we call sublime may be formless, we shall begin with the quantity as the first moment of an aesthetic judgment about the sublime. The reason for this is evident from the preceding section.

But we do have to make one division in analyzing the sublime that the analysis of the beautiful did not require: we must divide the sublime into the mathematically and the dynamically sublime.

For while taste for the beautiful presupposes and sustains the mind in restful contemplation, the feeling of the sublime carries with it, as its character, a mental agitation connected with our judging of the object. But (since we like the sublime) this agitation is to be judged subjectively purposive, and so the imagination will refer this agitation either to the cognitive power or to the power of desire, but in both cases the purposiveness of the given presentation will be judged only with regard to these powers (without any purpose or interest). The first kind of agitation is a mathematical, the second a dynamical, attunement of the mind. And so we attribute both these kinds of agitation to the object, and hence present the object as sublime in these two ways.
ON THE
MATHEMATICALLY
SUBLIME

§ 25
Explication of
the Term Sublime

We call sublime what is absolutely [schlechthin] large. To be large [groß] and to be a magnitude [Größe] are quite different concepts (magnitudo and quantitas). Also, saying simply [schlechtweg] (simpliciter) that something is large is quite different from saying that it is absolutely large (absolute, non comparative magnum?). The latter is what is large beyond all comparison. But what does it mean to say that something is large, or small, or medium-sized? Such a term does not stand for a pure concept of the understanding, let alone an intuition of sense. Nor does it stand for a rational concept, for it involves no cognitive principle whatsoever. Hence it must stand for a concept that belongs to the power of judgment or is derived from such a concept, and it must presuppose a subjective purposiveness of the presentation in relation to the power of judgment. That something is a magnitude (quantum) can be cognized from the thing itself without any comparison of it with others, namely, if a multiplicity of the homogeneous together constitutes a unity. On the other hand, [to

7] Large absolutely rather than by comparison.
judge] *how large* something is we always need something else, which is also a magnitude, as its measure. But since what matters in judging magnitude is not just multiplicity (number) but also the magnitude of the *Einheit*8 [used as the unit] (the measure), and since [to judge] the magnitude of this unity we always need something else in turn as a measure with which we can compare it, it is plain that no determination of the magnitude of appearances can possibly yield an absolute concept of a magnitude, but at most can yield only a comparative one.

Now if I say simply that something is large, it seems that I have no comparison in mind at all, at least no comparison with an objective measure, because in saying this I do not determine at all how large [groß] the object is. But though my standard of comparison is merely subjective, my judgment still lays claim to universal assent. Such judgments as, This man is beautiful, and, He is large, do not confine themselves to the judging subject, but demand everyone's assent, just as theoretical judgments do.

But in a judgment by which we describe something as absolutely large, we do not just mean that the object has some magnitude, but we also imply that this magnitude is superior to that of many other objects of the same kind, yet without indicating this superiority determinately. Hence we do base our judgment on a standard, which we assume we can presuppose to be the same for everyone; but it is a standard that will serve not for a logical (mathematically determinate) judging of magnitude, but only for an aesthetic one, because it is only a subjective standard underlying our reflective judgment about magnitude [Größe]. Furthermore, the standard may be either empirical or one that is given a priori. An empirical one might be the average size [Größe] of the people we know, of animals of a certain kind, of trees, houses, mountains, and so on. One that is given a priori would be confined, because of the deficiencies of the judging subject, to subjective conditions of an exhibition in concreto: an example from the practical sphere is the magnitude [or degree] of a certain virtue, or of the civil liberty and justice in a country; from the theoretical sphere, the magnitude [or degree] of the correctness or incorrectness of some observation or measurement that has been made, and so on.

It is noteworthy here that even if we have no interest whatsoever in the object, e.g., we are indifferent to its existence, still its mere magnitude, even if the object is regarded as formless, can yet carry with it a liking that is universally communicable and hence involves consciousness of a subjective purposiveness in the use of our cognitive powers. But—and in this it differs from [the liking for] the beautiful, where reflective judgment finds itself purposively attuned in relation to cognition in general—this liking is by no means a liking for the object (since that may be formless), but rather a liking for the expansion of the imagination itself.

If (under the above restriction9) we say simply of an object that it is large, then our judgment is not mathematically determinative; it is a mere judgment of reflection about our presentation of the object, a presentation that is subjectively purposive for a certain use we can make of our cognitive powers in estimating magnitude; and we then always connect with the presentation a kind of respect, as we connect a [kind of] contempt with what we simply-call small. Furthermore, our judging of things as large or small [groß oder klein] applies to anything, even to any characteristics of things. That is why we call even beauty great or little [groß oder klein], because no matter what we exhibit in intuition (and hence present aesthetically) in accordance with the precept of judgment, it is always appearance, and hence also a quantum.10

But suppose we call something not only large, but large absolutely [schlechthin, absolut], in every respect (beyond all comparison), i.e., sublime. Clearly, in that case, we do not permit a standard adequate to it to be sought outside it, but only within it. It is a magnitude that is equal only to itself. It follows that the sublime must not be sought in things of nature, but must be sought solely in our ideas; but in which of these it resides [is a question that] must wait for the deduction.11

The above explication can also be put as follows: *That is sublime in comparison with which everything else is small.* We can easily see

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8"*Einheit*" can mean 'unity' or 'unit.' Here it means both, but the concern is with the imagination's effort to perform its usual function of providing an intuition (including that of a unit, even a basic unit) with *unity* by comprehending it in accordance with a concept. See § 26 (Ak. 251-57) as well as Ak. 259. Cf. also the *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 98-100.

9[On the kind of standard we are presupposing.]

10[See below, § 30, Ak. 279-80.]

11[See below, § 30, Ak. 279-80.]
here that nothing in nature can be given, however large we may judge it, that could not, when considered in a different relation, be degraded all the way to the infinitely small, nor conversely anything so small that it could not, when compared with still smaller standards, be expanded for our imagination all the way to the magnitude of a world; telescopes have provided us with a wealth of material in support of the first point,\footnote{Cf. the \textit{Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens} (1755), Ak. I, 215-368.} microscopes in support of the second. Hence, considered on this basis, \textit{nothing that can be an object of the senses is to be called sublime.} What happens is that our imagination strives to progress toward infinity, while our reason demands absolute totality as a real idea, and so [the imagination,] our power of estimating the magnitude of things in the world of sense, is inadequate to that idea. Yet this inadequacy itself is the arousal in us of the feeling that we have within us a supersensible power; and what is absolutely large is not an object of sense, but is the use that judgment makes naturally of certain objects so as to \textit{arouse} this (feeling), and in contrast with that use any other use is small. Hence what is to be called sublime is not the object, but the attunement that the intellect \textit{gets} through a certain presentation that occupies reflective judgment.

Hence we may supplement the formulas already given to explicate the sublime by another one: \textit{Sublime is what even to be able to think proves that the mind has a power surpassing any standard of sense.}

\section*{§ 26}

On Estimating the Magnitude of Natural Things, as We Must for the Idea of the Sublime

Estimation of magnitude by means of numerical concepts (or their signs in algebra) is mathematical; estimation of magnitudes in mere intuition (by the eye) is aesthetic. It is true that to get determinate concepts of \textit{how large} something is we must use numbers (or, at any rate, approximations \textit{expressed} by numerical series progressing to infinity), whose unity is \textit{the unit we use} as\footnote{Cf. Ak. 248 incl. br. n. 8.} the measure; and to that extent all logical estimation of magnitude is mathematical. Yet the magnitude of the measure must be assumed to be known. Therefore, if we had to estimate this magnitude also mathematically, i.e., only by numbers, whose unity would have to be a different measure, then we could never have a first or basic measure, and hence also could have no determinate concept of a given magnitude. Hence our estimation of the magnitude of the basic measure must consist merely in our being able to take it in \textit{(fassen)} directly in one intuition and to use it, by means of the imagination, for exhibiting numerical concepts. In other words, all estimation of the magnitude of objects of nature is ultimately aesthetic (i.e., determined subjectively rather than objectively).

Now even though there is no maximum \textit{(Größtes)} for the mathematical estimation of magnitude (inasmuch as the power of numbers progresses to infinity), yet for the aesthetic estimation of magnitude there is indeed a maximum. And regarding this latter maximum I say that when it is judged as \textit{the} absolute measure beyond which no larger is subjectively possible (i.e., possible for the judging subject), then it carries with it the idea of the sublime and gives rise to that emotion which no mathematical estimation of magnitude by means of numbers can produce (except to the extent that the basic aesthetic
measure is at the same time kept alive in the imagination). For a mathematical estimation of magnitude never exhibits more than relative magnitude, by a comparison with others of the same kind, whereas an aesthetic one exhibits absolute magnitude to the extent that the mind can take it in in one intuition.

In order for the imagination to take in a quantum intuitively, so that we can then use it as a measure or unity in estimating magnitude by numbers, the imagination must perform two acts: apprehension (apprehensio), and comprehension (comprehensio). Apprehension involves no problem, for it may progress to infinity. But comprehension becomes more and more difficult the farther apprehension progresses, and it soon reaches its maximum, namely, the aesthetically largest basic measure for an estimation of magnitude. For when apprehension has reached the point where the partial presentations of sensible intuition that were first apprehended are already beginning to be extinguished in the imagination, as it proceeds to apprehend further ones, the imagination then loses as much on the one side as it gains on the other; and so there is a maximum in comprehension that it cannot exceed.

This serves to explain a comment made by Savary in his report on Egypt: that in order to get the full emotional effect from the magnitude of the pyramids one must neither get too close to them nor stay too far away. For if one stays too far away, then the apprehended parts (the stones on top of one another) are presented only obscurely, and hence their presentation has no effect on the subject's aesthetic judgment; and if one gets too close, then the eye needs some time to complete the apprehension from the base to the peak, but during that time some of the earlier parts are invariably extinguished in the imagination before it has apprehended the later ones, and hence the comprehension is never complete. Perhaps the same observation can explain the bewilderment or kind of perplexity that is said to seize the spectator who for the first time enters St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

14 Zu sammenfassung. 'Comprehension' and 'comprehend' are used in this translation only in this sense of 'collecting together and holding together' (cf. 'comprehensive'), never in the sense of 'understanding.'

15 Lettres sur l'Egypte (Letters on Egypt), 1787, by Anne Jean Marie René Savary, Duke of Rovigo, (1774-1833), French general, diplomat, and later minister of police (notorious for his severity) under Napoleon Bonaparte, but active even after the latter's banishment to St. Helena in 1815. Savary took part in Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt.

For he has the feeling that his imagination is inadequate for exhibiting the idea of a whole, [a feeling] in which imagination reaches its maximum, and as it strives to expand that maximum, it sinks back into itself, but consequently comes to feel a liking [that amounts to an] emotion (fühlendes Wohlgefallen).

I shall say nothing for now regarding the basis of this liking, a liking connected with a presentation from which one would least expect it, namely, a presentation that makes us aware of its own inadequacy and hence also of its subjective unpurposiveness for the power of judgment in its estimation of magnitude. Here I shall only point out that if the aesthetic judgment in question is to be pure (unmixed with any teleological and hence rational judgment), and if we are to give an example of it that is fully appropriate for the critique of aesthetic judgment, then we must point to the sublime not in products of art (e.g., buildings, columns, etc.), where both the form and the magnitude are determined by a human purpose, nor in natural things whose very concept carries with it a determinate purpose (e.g., animals with a known determination in nature), but rather in crude nature (and even in it only insofar as it carries with it no charm, nor any emotion aroused by actual danger), that is, merely insofar as crude nature contains magnitude. For in such a presentation nature contains nothing monstrous (nor anything magnificent or horrid); it does not matter how far the apprehended magnitude has increased, just as long as our imagination can comprehend it within one whole. An object is monstrous if by its magnitude it nullifies the purpose that constitutes its concept. And colossal is what we call the mere exhibition of a concept if that concept is almost too large for any exhibition (i.e., if it borders on the relatively monstrous); for the purpose of exhibiting a concept is hampered if the intuition of the object is almost too large for our power of apprehension. A pure judgment about the sublime, on the other hand, must have no purpose whatsoever of the object as the basis determining it, if it is to be aesthetic and not mingled with some judgment of understanding or of reason.

Since the presentation of anything that our merely reflective power of judgment is to like without an interest must carry with it a
purposiveness that is subjective and yet universally valid, but since
in the sublime (unlike the beautiful) our judging is not based on
a purposiveness of the form of the object, the following ques-
tions arise: What is this subjective purposiveness, and how does
it come to be prescribed as a standard, thereby providing a basis
for a universally valid liking accompanying the mere estimation of
magnitude—an estimation that has been pushed to the point where
the ability of our imagination is inadequate to exhibit the concept of
magnitude?

When the imagination performs the combination [Zusammen-
setzung] that is required to present a magnitude, it encounters no
obstacles and on its own progresses to infinity, while the understand-
ing guides it by means of numerical concepts, for which the imagina-
tion must provide the schema; and in this procedure, which is
involved in the logical estimation of magnitude, there is indeed
something objectively purposive under the concept of a purpose
(since any measuring is a purpose). And yet there is nothing in it that
is purposive for, and liked by, the aesthetic power of judgment. Nor is
there anything in this intentional purposiveness that necessitates
our pushing the magnitude of the measure, and hence of the compre-
ッション of the many elements in one intuition, to the limit of the
imagination’s ability, and as far as it may extend in exhibiting. For in
estimating magnitudes by the understanding (arithmetic) we get equally
far whether we pursue the comprehension of the unities to the num-
ber 10 (as in the decimal system) or only to 4 (as in the tetradic
system): the further generation of magnitudes—in the [process of]
combination or, if the quantum is given in intuition, in apprehension—is
done merely progressively (rather than comprehensively), under an
assumed principle of progression. This mathematical estimation of
magnitude serves and satisfies the understanding equally well, whether
the imagination selects as the unity a magnitude that we can take in as
one glance, such as a foot or a rod, or whether it selects a German
mile, or even an earth diameter, which the imagination can appre-
hend but cannot comprehend in one intuition (by a comprehensio
aesthetica, though it can comprehend it in a numerical concept by a
comprehensio logica). In either case the logical estimation of magni-
tude progresses without hindrance to infinity.

But the mind listens to the voice of reason within itself, which
demands totality for all given magnitudes, even for those that we can
never apprehend in their entirety but do (in presentation of sense)
judge as given in their entirety. Hence reason demands comprehen-
sion in one intuition, and exhibition of all the members of a pro-
gressively increasing numerical series, and it exempts from this demand
not even the infinite (space and past time). Rather, reason makes us
unavoidably think of the infinite (in common reason’s judgment) as
given in its entirety (in its totality).

The infinite, however, is absolutely large (not merely large by
comparison). Compared with it everything else (of the same kind of
magnitudes) is small. But—and this is most important—to be able
even to think the infinite as a whole indicates a mental power that
surpasses any standard of sense. For [thinking the infinite as a whole
while using a standard of sense] would require a comprehension
yielding as a unity a standard that would have a determinate relation
to the infinite, one that could be stated in numbers; and this is
impossible. If the human mind is nonetheless to be able even to think
the given infinite without contradiction, it must have within itself a
power that is supersensible, whose idea of a noumenon cannot be
intuited but can yet be regarded as the substrate underlying what is
mere appearance, namely, our intuition of the world. For only by
means of this power and its idea do we, in a pure intellectual estima-

17A schema is what mediates, and so makes possible, the subsumption of intuitions
under concepts of the understanding (and so the application of these concepts to
intuitions). It does so by sharing features of both a concept and an intuition. See the
Critique of Pure Reason, A 137-47 = B 176-87, and cf. Ak. 351-52 and the Translator’s
Introduction, xxxvi.

18[The Prussian rod equaled 3.7662 m (meters), the Saxon 4.2951 m, whereas the
English rod equals 5.5 yds. or 5.029 m. The German mile was quite long: 7500 m; the
English statute mile equals only 1609.35 m. There was also a “geographic” or “Bavarian”
as well as a “Bavarian” mile.]

19[Das Unendliche.] What this expression says literally is ‘the infinite.’ Yet here (and
similarly in mathematics, where the same expression is used), the expression does not
mean something infinite (to which the estimation of magnitude progresses), even
though it does mean this in other contexts (e.g., in the next paragraph): ‘Unendlichkeit,’
on the other hand, usually means ‘infinity’ only in the most abstract sense: ‘infiniteness,’
‘being infinite.’]

20[In this case, magnitudes that are given (in intuition).]
tion of magnitude, comprehend the infinite in the world of sense entirely under a concept, even though in a mathematical estimation of magnitude by means of numerical concepts we can never think it in its entirety. Even a power that enables us to think the infinite of supersensible intuition as given (in our intelligible substrate) surpasses any standard of sensibility. It is large beyond any comparison even with the power of mathematical estimation—not, it is true, for [the pursuit of] a theoretical aim on behalf of our cognitive power, but still as an expansion of the mind that feels able to cross the barriers of sensibility with a different (a practical) aim.

Hence nature is sublime in those of its appearances whose intuition carries with it the idea of their infinity. But the only way for this to occur is through the inadequacy of even the greatest effort of our imagination to estimate an object's magnitude. In the mathematical estimation of magnitude, however, the imagination is equal to the task of providing, for any object, a measure that will suffice for this estimation, because the understanding's numerical concepts can be used in a progression and so can make any measure adequate to any given magnitude. Hence it must be the aesthetic estimation of magnitude where we feel that effort, our imagination's effort to perform a comprehension that surpasses its ability to encompass [begreifen] the progressive apprehension in a whole of intuition, and where at the same time we perceive the inadequacy of the imagination—unbounded though it is as far as progressing is concerned—for taking in and using, for the estimation of magnitude, a basic measure that is suitable for this with minimal expenditure on the part of the understanding. Now the proper unchangeable basic measure of nature is the absolute whole of nature, which, in the case of nature as appearance, is infinity comprehended. This basic measure, however, is a self-contradictory concept (because an absolute totality of an endless progression is impossible). Hence that magnitude of a natural object to which the imagination fruitlessly applies its entire ability to comprehend must lead the concept of nature to a supersensible substrate (which underlies both nature and our ability to think), a substrate that is large beyond any standard of sense and hence makes us judge as sublime not so much the object as the mental attunement in which we find ourselves when we estimate the object.

Therefore, just as the aesthetic power of judgment in judging the beautiful refers the imagination in its free play to the understanding so that it will harmonize with the understanding's concepts in general (which concepts they are is left indeterminate), so in judging a thing sublime it refers the imagination to reason so that it will harmonize subjectively with reason's ideas (which ideas they are is indeterminate), i.e., so that it will produce a mental attunement that conforms to and is compatible with the one that an influence by determinate (practical) ideas would produce on feeling.

This also shows that true sublimity must be sought only in the mind of the judging person, not in the natural object the judging of which prompts this mental attunement. Indeed, who would want to call sublime such things as shapeless mountain masses piled on one another in wild disarray, with their pyramids of ice, or the gloomy raging sea? But the mind feels elevated in its own judgment of itself when it contemplates these without concern for their form and abandons itself to the imagination and to a reason that has come to be connected with it—though quite without a determinate purpose, and merely expanding it—and finds all the might of the imagination still inadequate to reason's ideas.

Nature offers examples of the mathematically sublime, in mere intuition, whenever our imagination is given, not so much a larger numerical concept, as a large unity for a measure (to shorten the numerical series). A tree that we estimate by a man's height will do as a standard for [estimating the height of] a mountain. If the mountain were to be about a mile high, it can serve as the unity for the number that expresses the earth's diameter, and so make that diameter intuitable. The earth's diameter can serve similarly for estimating the planetary system familiar to us, and that [in turn] for estimating the Milky Way system. And the immense multitude of such Milky Way systems, called nebulous stars, which presumably form another such system among themselves, do not lead us to expect any boundaries here.\textsuperscript{21} Now when we judge such an immense whole aesthetically, the sublime lies not so much in the magnitude of the number as in the fact that, the farther we progress, the larger are the unities we reach. This is partly due to the systematic division in the structure of the world edifice; for this division always presents to us whatever is large in nature as being small in turn, though what it actually presents to us is

\textsuperscript{21}[Cf. the Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens (1755), Ak. I, 247-58, but esp. Ak. I, 306-22.]
our imagination, in all its boundlessness, and along with its nature, as vanishingly small in contrast to the ideas of reason, if the imagination is to provide an exhibition adequate to them.

§ 27

On the Quality of the Liking in Our Judging of the Sublime

The feeling that it is beyond our ability to attain to an idea that is a law for us is respect. Now the idea of comprehending every appearance that may be given us in the intuition of a whole is an idea enjoined on us by a law of reason, which knows no other determinate measure that is valid for everyone and unchanging than the absolute whole. But our imagination, even in its greatest effort to do what is demanded of it and comprehend a given object in a whole of intuition (and hence to exhibit the idea of reason), proves its own limits and inadequacy, and yet at the same time proves its vocation to obey a law, namely, to make itself adequate to that idea. Hence the feeling of the sublime in nature is respect for our own vocation. But by a certain subreption, in which respect for the object is substituted for respect for the idea of humanity within ourselves, as subject(s) this respect is accorded an object of nature that, as it were, makes intuitive for us the superiority of the rational vocation of our cognitive powers over the greatest power of sensibility.

Hence the feeling of the sublime is a feeling of displeasure that arises from the imagination's inadequacy, and in an aesthetic estimation of magnitude, for an estimation by reason, but is at the same time also a pleasure, aroused by the fact that this very judgment, namely, that even the greatest power of sensibility is inadequate, is itself in harmony with rational ideas, insofar as striving toward them is still a law for us. For it is a law (of reason) for us, and part of our vocation, to estimate any sense object in nature that is large for us as being small when compared with ideas of reason; and whatever arouses us the feeling of this supersensible vocation is in harmony with that law. Now the greatest effort of the imagination in exhibiting the unity [it needs] to estimate magnitude is itself a reference to something large absolutely, and hence also a reference to reason's law to adopt only this something as the supreme measure of magnitude. Hence our inner perception that every standard of sensibility is inadequate for an estimation of magnitude by reason is itself a reference to laws of reason, as well as a displeasure that arouses in us the feeling of our supersensible vocation, according to which finding that every standard of sensibility is inadequate to the ideas of reason is purposeful and hence pleasurable.

In presenting the sublime in nature the mind feels agitated, while in an aesthetic judgment about the beautiful in nature it is in restful contemplation. This agitation (above all at its inception) can be compared with a vibration, i.e., with a rapid alternation of repulsion from, and attraction to, one and the same object. If a thing is excessive for the imagination (and the imagination is driven to such excess) as it apprehends the thing in intuition, then the thing is, as it were, an abyss in which the imagination is afraid to lose itself. Yet, at the same time, for reason's idea of the supersensible [this same thing] is not excessive but conforms to reason's law to give rise to such striving by the imagination. Hence the thing is now attractive to the same degree to which [formerly] it was repulsive to mere sensibility. The judgment itself, however, always remains only aesthetic here. For it is not based on a determinate concept of the object, and presents merely the subjective play of the mental powers themselves (imagination and reason) as harmonious by virtue of their contrast. For just as, when we judge the beautiful, imagination and understanding give rise to a subjective purposiveness of the mental powers by their accordance, so do imagination and reason here give rise to such a purposiveness
by their conflict, namely, to a feeling that we have a pure and independent reason, or a power for estimating magnitude, whose superiority cannot be made intuitive by anything other than the inadequacy of that power which in exhibiting magnitudes (of sensible objects) is itself unbounded.

Measuring (as a way of apprehending) a space is at the same time describing it, and hence it is an objective movement in the imagination and a progression. On the other hand, comprehending a multiplicity in a unity (of intuition rather than of thought), and hence comprehending in one instant what is apprehended successively, is a regression that in turn cancels the condition of time in the imagination's progression and makes simultaneity intuitable. Hence, (since temporal succession is a condition of the inner sense and of an intuition) it is a subjective movement of the imagination by which it does violence to the inner sense, and this violence must be the more significant the larger the quantum is that the imagination comprehends in one intuition. Hence the effort to take up into a single intuition a measure for magnitude requiring a significant time for apprehension is a way of presenting which subjectively considered is contrapurposive, but which objectively is needed to estimate magnitude and hence is purposive. And yet this same violence that the imagination inflicts on the subject is still judged purposive for the whole vocation of the mind.

The quality of the feeling of the sublime consists in its being a feeling, accompanying an object, of displeasure about our aesthetic power of judging, yet of a displeasure that we present at the same time as purposive. What makes this possible is that the subject's own inability uncovers in him the consciousness of an unlimited ability which is also his, and that the mind can judge this ability aesthetically only by that inability.

In the logical estimation of magnitude, the impossibility of ever arriving at absolute totality by measuring the things in the world of sense progressively, in time and space, was cognized as objective, as an impossibility of thinking the infinite as given, and not as merely subjective, as an inability to take it in. For there we are not at all concerned with the degree of the comprehension in one intuition, [to be used] as a measure, but everything hinges on a numerical concept. In an aesthetic estimation of magnitude, on the other hand, the numerical concept must drop out or be changed, and nothing is purposive for this estimation except the imagination's comprehension to [form] a unity [to be used as] a measure (so that the concepts of a law of the successive generation of concepts of magnitude are avoided). Now if a magnitude almost reaches the limit of our ability to comprehend [it] in one intuition, but the imagination is still called upon to perform, by means of numerical magnitudes (regarding which we are conscious of having an unbounded ability), an aesthetic comprehension in a larger unity; then we feel in our mind that we are aesthetically confined within bounds. Yet, in view of the necessary expansion of the imagination toward adequacy regarding what is unbounded in our power of reason, namely, the idea of the absolute whole, the displeasure is still presented as purposive for the rational ideas and their arousal, and hence so is the un purposiveness of our imagination's ability. This is precisely what makes the aesthetic judgment itself subjectively purposive for reason, as the source of ideas, i.e., as the source of an intellectual comprehension [compared] to which all aesthetic comprehension is small, and the object is apprehended as sublime with a pleasure that is possible only by means of a displeasure.

§ 27. ON THE QUALITY OF THE LIKING...
B

ON THE DYNAMICALLY SUBLIME IN NATURE

§ 28

On Nature as a Might

Might is an ability that is superior to great obstacles. It is called "dominance [Gewalt]" if it is superior even to the resistance of something that itself possesses might. When in an aesthetic judgment we consider nature as a might that has no dominance over us, then it is dynamically sublime.

If we are to judge nature as sublime dynamically, we must present it as arousing fear. (But the reverse does not hold: not every object that arouses fear is found sublime when we judge it aesthetically.) For when we judge [something] aesthetically (without a concept), the only way we can judge a superiority over obstacles is by the magnitude of the resistance. But whatever we strive to resist is an evil, and it is an object of fear if we find that our ability [to resist it] is no match for it. Hence nature can count as a might, and so as dynamically sublime, for aesthetic judgment only insofar as we consider it as an object of fear.

We can, however, consider an object fearful without being afraid of it, namely, if we judge it in such a way that we merely think of the

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27 From Greek δύναμις (dynamis), i.e. 'might,' 'power,' etc.

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case where we might possibly want to put up resistance against it, and that any resistance would in that case be utterly futile. Thus a virtuous person fears God without being afraid of him. For he does not think of wanting to resist God and his commandments as a possibility that should worry him. But for every such case, which he thinks of as not impossible intrinsically, he recognizes God as fearful.

Just as we cannot pass judgment on the beautiful if we are seized by inclination and appetite, so we cannot pass judgment at all on the sublime in nature if we are afraid. For we flee from the sight of an object that scares us, and it is impossible to like terror that we take seriously. That is why the agreeableness that arises from the cessation of a hardship is gladness. But since this gladness involves our liberation from a danger, it is accompanied by terror, and thus by inclination never to expose ourselves to that danger again. Indeed, we do not even like to think back on that sensation, let alone actively seek out an opportunity for it.

On the other hand, consider bold, overhanging and, as it were, threatening rocks, thunderclouds piling up in the sky and moving about accompanied by lightning and thunderclaps, volcanoes with all their destructive power, hurricanes with all the devastation they leave behind, the boundless ocean heaved up, the high waterfall of a mighty river, and so on. Compared to the might of any of these, our ability to resist becomes an insignificant trifle. Yet the sight of them becomes all the more attractive the more fearful it is, provided we are in a safe place. And we like to call these objects sublime because they raise the soul’s fortitude above its usual middle range and allow us to discover in ourselves an ability to resist which is of a quite different kind, and which gives us the courage to believe that we could be a match for nature’s seeming omnipotence.

For although we found our own limitation when we considered the immensity of nature and the inadequacy of our ability to adopt a standard proportionate to estimating aesthetically the magnitude of nature’s domain, yet we also found, in our power of reason, a different and nonsensible standard that has this infinity itself under it as a unit; and since in contrast to this standard everything in nature is small; we found in our mind a superiority over nature itself in its immensity. In the same way, though the irresistibility of nature’s might makes us, considered as natural beings, recognize our physical impotence, it reveals in us at the same time an ability to judge ourselves independent of nature, and reveals in us a superiority over nature that is the basis of a self-preservation quite different in kind from the one that can be assailed and endangered by nature outside us. This keeps the humanity in our person from being degraded, even though a human being would have to succumb to that dominance [of nature]. Hence if in judging nature aesthetically we call it sublime, we do so not because nature arouses fear, but because it calls forth our strength (which does not belong to nature) to regard as small the objects of our [natural] concerns: property, health, and life, and because of this we regard nature’s might (to which we are indeed subjected in these [natural] concerns) as yet not having such a dominance over us, as persons, that we should have to bow to it if our highest principles were at stake and we had to choose between upholding or abandoning them. Hence nature is here called sublime [erhaben] merely because it elevates [erhebt] our imagination, [making] it exhibit those cases where the mind can come to feel its own sublimity, which lies in its vocation and elevates it even above nature.

This self-estimation loses nothing from the fact that we must find ourselves safe in order to feel this exciting liking, so that (as it might seem), since the danger is not genuine, the sublimity of our intellectual ability might also not be genuine. For here the liking concerns only our ability’s vocation, revealed in such cases, insofar as the predisposition to this ability is part of our nature, whereas it remains up to us, as our obligation, to develop and exercise this ability. And there is truth in this, no matter how conscious of his actual present impotence man may be when he extends his reflection thus far.

I admit that this principle seems farfetched and the result of some subtle reasoning, and hence high-flown [überwieglich] for an aesthetic judgment. And yet our observation of man proves the opposite, and proves that even the commonest judging can be based on this principle, even though we are not always conscious of it. For what is it that is an object of the highest admiration even to the savage? It is a person who is not terrified, not afraid, and hence does not yield to danger but promptly sets to work with vigor and full deliberation. Even in a fully civilized society there remains this superior esteem for the warrior, except that we demand more of him: that he also demonstrate all the virtues of peace—gentleness, sympathy, and even appropriate care for his own person—precisely because they reveal to us that his mind cannot be subdued by danger. Hence,
no matter how much people may dispute, when they compare the statesman with the general, as to which one deserves the superior respect, an aesthetic judgment decides in favor of the general. Even war has something sublime about it if it is carried on in an orderly way and with respect for the sanctity of the citizens’ rights. At the same time it makes the way of thinking of a people that carries it on in this way all the more sublime in proportion to the number of dangers in the face of which it courageously stood its ground. A prolonged peace, on the other hand, tends to make prevalent a mere [ly] commercial spirit, and along with it base selfishness, cowardice, and softness, and to debase the way of thinking of that people. This analysis of the concept of the sublime, insofar as [sublimity is] attributed to might, may seem to conflict with the fact that in certain situations—in tempests, storms, earthquakes, and so on—we usually present God as showing himself in his wrath but also in his sublimity, while yet it would be both foolish and sacrilegious to imagine that our mind is superior to the effects produced by such a might, and is superior apparently even to its intentions. It seems that here the mental attunement that befits the manifestation of such an object is not a feeling of the sublimity of our own nature, but rather submission, prostration, and a feeling of our utter impotence; and this mental attunement is in fact usually connected with the idea of this object when natural events of this sort occur. It seems that in religion in general the only fitting behavior in the presence of the deity is prostration, worship with bowed head and accompanied by contrite and timorous gestures and voice; and that is why most peoples have in fact adopted this behavior and still engage in it. But, by the same token, this mental attunement is far from being intrinsically and necessarily connected with the idea of the sublimity of a religion and its object. A person who is actually afraid and finds cause for this in himself because he is conscious that with his reprehensible attitude he offends against a might whose will is at once irresistible and just is not at all in the frame of mind [needed] to admire divine greatness, which requires that we be attuned to quiet contemplation and that our judgment be completely free. Only if he is conscious that his attitude is sincere and pleasing to God, will these effects of might serve to arouse in him the idea of God’s sublimity, insofar as he recognizes in his own attitude a sublimity that conforms to God’s will, and is thereby elevated above any fear of such natural effects, which he does not regard as outbursts of God’s wrath. Even humility, as a strict judging of our own defects which, when we are conscious that our own attitudes are good, could otherwise easily be cloaked with the frailty of human nature [as an excuse], is a sublime mental attunement, namely, voluntary subjection of ourselves to the pain of self-reprimand so as gradually to eradicate the cause of these defects. This alone is what intrinsically distinguishes religion from superstition. The latter establishes in the mind not a reverence for the sublime, but fear and dread of that being of superior might to whose will the terrified person finds himself subjected but without holding him in esteem; and this can obviously give rise to nothing but ingratiation and fawning, never to a religion based on good conduct.

Hence sublimity is contained not in any thing of nature, but only in our mind, insofar as we can become conscious of our superiority to nature within us, and thereby also to nature outside us (as far as it influences us). Whatever arouses this feeling in us, and this includes the might of nature that challenges our forces, is then (although improperly) called sublime. And it is only by presupposing this idea within us, and by referring to it, that we can arrive at the idea of the sublimity of that being who arouses deep respect in us, not just by his might as demonstrated in nature, but even more by the ability, with which we have been endowed, to judge nature without fear and to think of our vocation as being sublimely above nature.

28[Cf. Perpetual Peace, Ak. VIII, 368.]
29[Cf. § 83, Ak. 429–34.]
30[Cf. Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone, Ak. VI, 51: "...All religions can be divided into two kinds: religion of ingratiation (mere worship), and moral religion, i.e., religion based on good conduct."]
§ 29

On the Modality of a Judgment about the Sublime in Nature

Beautiful nature contains innumerable things about which we do not hesitate to require everyone's judgment to agree with our own, and can in fact expect such agreement without being wrong very often. But we cannot with the same readiness count on others to accept our judgment about the sublime in nature. For it seems that, if we are to pass judgment on that superiority of [such] natural objects, not only must our aesthetic power of judgment be far more cultivated, but also so must the cognitive powers on which it is based.

In order for the mind to be attuned to the feeling of the sublime, it must be receptive to ideas. For it is precisely nature's inadequacy to the ideas—and this presupposes both that the mind is receptive to ideas and that the imagination strains to treat nature as a schema for them—that constitutes what both repels our sensibility and yet attracts us at the same time, because it is a dominance [Gewalt] that reason exerts over sensibility only for the sake of expanding it commensurately with reason's own domain (the practical one) and letting it look outward toward the infinite, which for sensibility is an abyss. It is a fact that what is called sublime by us, having been prepared through culture, comes across as merely repellent to a person who is uncultured and lacking in the development of moral ideas. In all the evidence of nature's destructive force [Gewalt], and in the large scale of its might, in contrast to which his own is nonexistent, he will see only the hardship, danger, and misery that would confront anyone forced to live in such a place. Thus (as Mr. de Saussure relates32) the good and otherwise sensible Savoyard peasant did not hesitate to call anyone a fool who fancies glaciered mountains. He might even have had a point, if Saussure had acted merely from fancy, as most travelers tend to, in exposing himself to the dangers involved in his observations, or in order that he might some day be able to describe them with pathos. In fact, however, his intention was to instruct mankind, and that excellent man got, in addition, the soul-stirring sensation and gave it into the bargain to the readers of his travels.

But the fact that a judgment about the sublime in nature requires culture (more so than a judgment about the beautiful) still in no way implies that it was initially produced by culture and then introduced to society by way of (say) mere convention. Rather, it has its foundation in human nature: in something that, along with common sense, we may require and demand of everyone, namely, the predisposition to the feeling for (practical ideas, i.e., to moral feeling.

This is what underlies the necessity—which we include in our judgment about the sublime—of the assent of other people's judgment to our own. For just as we charge someone with a lack of taste if he is indifferent when he judges an object of nature that we find beautiful, so we say that someone has no feeling if he remains unmoved in the presence of something we judge sublime. But we demand both taste and feeling of every person, and, if he has any culture at all, we presuppose that he has them. But we do so with this difference: taste we demand unhesitatingly from everyone, because here judgment refers the imagination merely to the understanding, our power of concepts; in the case of feeling, on the other hand, judgment refers the imagination to reason, our power of ideas, and so we demand feeling only under a subjective presupposition (though we believe we are justified and permitted to require fulfillment of this presupposition in everyone): we presuppose moral feeling in man. And so we attribute necessity to this [kind of] aesthetic judgment as well.

In this modality of aesthetic judgments—their presumed necessity—lies one principal moment for a critique of judgment. For it is this necessity that reveals an a priori principle in them and lifts them out of [the reach of] empirical psychology, in which they would otherwise remain buried among the feelings of gratification and pain (accompanied only by the empty epithet of being a more refined feeling). Instead this necessity places them, and by means of them our power of judgment, into the class of those judgments that have a priori

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32[See Ak. 253 br. n. 17.]
32[Horace Bénédict de Saussure (1740-99), Swiss geologist, geographer, and botanist. He traveled extensively in the Alps (he was only the third to climb Mont Blanc, in 1787), and recorded his observations in his Voyages dans les Alpes (1779, 1786).]
principles at their basis, and hence brings them into transcendental philosophy.

General Comment on the Exposition of Aesthetic Reflective Judgments

In relation to the feeling of pleasure an object must be classed with either the agreeable, or the beautiful, or the sublime, or the (absolutely) good (iucundum, pulchrum, sublime, honestum).

The agreeable, as an incentive for desires, is always of the same kind, wherever it may come from and however different in kind may be the presentation (of sense, and of sensation regarded objectively)\(^3\). That is why what matters in judging its influence on the mind is only the number of stimuli (simultaneous and successive), and, as it were, only the mass of the agreeable sensation, so that this sensation can be made intelligible only through its quantity. Nor does the agreeable contribute to culture, but it belongs to mere enjoyment. The beautiful, on the other hand, requires that we present a certain quality of the object, and a quality that can be made intelligible and brought to concepts (even though in an aesthetic judgment the beautiful is not brought to concepts). It also contributes to culture, for it teaches us at the same time to be mindful of purposiveness in the feeling of pleasure. The sublime consists merely in a relation, for here we judge the sensible [element] in the presentation of nature to be suitable for a possible supersensible use. The absolutely good (the object of moral feeling), as judged subjectively by the feeling it inspires, is the ability of the subject's powers to be determined by the conception of a law that obligates absolutely. It is distinguished above all by its modality:

\(^3\) [i.e., in the meaning of the term 'sensation' where the sensation refers to an object, rather than being a feeling and so referring only to the subject, like the agreeable sensation about to be mentioned. Cf. § 3, Ak. 205–06. Cf. also Ak. 207 br. n. 12; Kant continues to use 'sensation' to mean 'feeling' as well.]
be exhibited. But when in intuiting nature we expand our empirical
power of presentation (mathematically or dynamically), then reason,
the ability to [think] an independent and absolute totality, never fails
to step in and arouse the mind to an effort, although a futile one, to
make the presentation of the senses adequate to this [idea of] totality.
This effort, as well as the feeling that the imagination [as it synthe-
sizes empirical nature] is unable to attain to that idea, is itself an
exhibition of the subjective purposiveness of our mind, in the use of
our imagination, for the mind's supersensible vocation. And we are
compelled to subjectively think nature itself in its totality as the
exhibition of something supersensible, without our being able to
bring this exhibition about objectively.

For we soon come to realize that nature in space and time [i.e.,
phenomenal nature] entirely lacks the unconditioned, and hence
lacks also that absolute magnitude [i.e., totality] which, after all, even
the commonest reason demands. And this is precisely what reminds
us that we are dealing only with nature as appearance, which must yet be
considered in turn the mere exhibition of nature in itself (of which reason has the idea). We cannot determine this idea of the super-
sensible any further, and hence we cannot cognize but can only think
nature as an exhibition of it. But it is this idea that is aroused in us
when, as we judge an object aesthetically, this judging strains the
imagination to its limit, whether of expansion (mathematically) or of
its might over the mind (dynamically). The judging strains the imagination because it is based on a feeling that the mind has a vocation
that wholly transcends the domain of nature (namely, moral feeling),
and it is with regard to this feeling that we judge the presentation of
the object subjectively purposive.

It is in fact difficult to think of a feeling for the sublime in nature
without connecting with it a mental attunement similar to that for
moral feeling. It is true that the pleasure we take directly in the
beautiful in nature also presupposes, as well as cultivates, a certain
liberality in our way of thinking; i.e., an independence of the liking
from mere enjoyment of sense; but here the freedom is still presented
more as in play than as subject to a law-governed task. But the latter
is what genuinely characterizes man's morality, where reason must
exert its dominance over sensibility, except that in an aesthetic judg-
ment about the sublime we present this dominance as being exerted
by the imagination itself, as an instrument of reason.

By the same token, a liking for the sublime in nature is only
negative (whereas a liking for the beautiful is positive): 34 it is a
feeling that the imagination by its own action is depriving itself of its
freedom, in being determined purposively according to a law differ-
ent from that of its empirical use. The imagination thereby acquires
an expansion and a might that surpasses the one it sacrifices; but the
basis of this might is concealed from it; instead the imagination feels
the sacrifice or deprivation and at the same time the cause to which it
is being subjugated. Thus any spectator who beholds massive moun-
tains climbing skyward, deep gorges with raging streams in them,
wastelands lying in deep shadow and inviting melancholy meditation,
and so on is indeed seized by amazement bordering on terror, by
horror and a sacred thrill; but, since he knows he is safe, this is not
actual fear: it is merely our attempt to incite it with our imagination,
in order that we may feel that very power's might and connect the
mental agitation this arouses with the mind's state of rest. In this way
we [feel] our superiority to nature within ourselves, and hence also to
nature outside us insofar as it can influence our feeling of well-being.
For the imagination, acting in accordance with the law of association,
makes our state of contentment dependent on [something] physical;
but the same power, acting in accordance with principles of the
schematism of judgment (and hence, to that extent, in subordination
to freedom), as an instrument of reason and its ideas. As such, however,
it is a might [that allows us] to assert our independence of natural
influences, to degrade as small what is large according to the imagina-
tion in its first [role], and so to posit the absolutely large [or great]
only in his (the subject's) own vocation. In this reflection of the
aesthetic power of judgment, by which it seeks to elevate itself to the
point of being adequate to reason (though without having a determi-
nate concept from reason), we present the object itself as subjectively

34 Cf. Edmund Burke (to whom Kant responds at Ak. 277-78), Philosophical Enquiry
Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757): "[Sublimity and
beauty] are indeed ideas of a very different nature, one being founded on pain, the
other on pleasure . . . " (Pt. III, Sect. xxvii). The pleasure on which beauty is founded is
"actual" pleasure (Pt. IV, Sect. v), because it is positive pleasure (Pt. I, Sect. iv); the
sublime gives rise only to "delight," which is not a positive pleasure but merely a
"relative" pleasure (Pt. I, Sect. iv) because it "turns on pain" (Pt. I, Sect. xviii), in the
sense that it is merely the cessation or diminution of pain (Pt. I, Sect. iv). There are
many more parallels between Kant's and Burke's accounts of beauty and (especially)
sublimity.]
purposive, precisely because objectively the imagination, [even] in its greatest expansion, is inadequate to reason (the power of ideas).

We must in all of this be mindful of the injunction given above, namely, that the transcendental aesthetic of judgment must be concerned solely with pure aesthetic judgments. Hence we must not take for our examples such beautiful or sublime objects of nature as presuppose the concept of a purpose. For then the purposiveness would be either teleological, and hence not aesthetic, or else be based on mere sensations of an object (gratification or pain) and hence not merely formal. Therefore, when we call the sight of the starry sky *sublime*, we must not base our judgment upon any concepts of worlds that are inhabited by rational beings, and then conceive of the bright dots that we see occupying the space above us as being these worlds' suns, moved in orbits prescribed for them with great purposiveness; but we must base our judgment regarding it merely on how we see it, as a vast vault encompassing everything, and merely under this presentation may we posit the sublimity that a pure aesthetic judgment attributes to this object. In the same way, when we judge the sight of the ocean we must not do so on the basis of how we think it, enriched with all sorts of knowledge which we possess (but which is not contained in the direct intuition), e.g., as a vast realm of aquatic creatures, or as the great reservoir supplying the water for the vapors that impregnate the air with clouds for the benefit of the land, or again as an element that, while separating continents from one another, yet makes possible the greatest expansion, is inadequate to reason (the power of ideas).

Aesthetic purposiveness is the lawfulness of the power of judgment in its freedom. [Whether we then] like the object depends on [how] we suppose [setzen wollen] the imagination to relate [to it]; but [for this liking to occur] the imagination must on its own sustain the mind in a free activity. If, on the other hand, the judgment is determined by anything else, whether a sensation proper [*Sinnesempfindung*] or a concept of the understanding, then the judgment is indeed lawful, but it is not one made by a free power of judgment.

Sometimes we speak of intellectual beauty or sublimity. But, *first*, these expressions are not quite correct. For beauty and sublimity are aesthetic ways of presenting [things], and if we were nothing but pure intelligences (or, for that matter, if in thought we put ourselves in the place of such [beings]), we would not present [things] in this way at all. *Second*, even though these two [intellectual beauty and sublimity], as objects of an intellectual (moral) liking, are indeed compatible with an aesthetic liking inasmuch as they do not *rest* on any interest, it still remains difficult to make them compatible with it: for they are to produce an interest, and yet, on the assumption that the exhibition is to harmonize with the [kind of] liking involved in an aesthetic judgment, this interest would have to be an interest of sense connected with the exhibition; but that would impair the intellectual purposiveness and make it impure.

The object of a pure and unconditioned intellectual liking is the moral law in its might, the might that it exerts in us over any and all of those incentives of the mind that precede it. This might actually reveals itself aesthetically only through sacrifice (which is a deprivation—though one that serves our inner freedom—in return for which it reveals in us an unfathomable depth of this supersensible power, whose consequences extend beyond what we can foresee). Hence, considered from the aesthetic side (i.e., in reference to sensibility), the liking is negative, i.e., opposed to this interest, but considered from the intellectual side it is positive and connected with an interest.

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35] Kant discusses the possibility of extraterrestrial life elaborately (and movingly) in his *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* (1755), Ak. I, 349-68.

36] As distinguished from 'sensation' as meaning feeling. Cf. Ak. 291 incl. br. n. 19. (If the aesthetic judgment of liking, which is a feeling, were determined by sensation proper, it would be a judgment about the agreeable, and "lawful" only empirically. Cf. Ak. 205-06.)

It follows from this that if we judge aesthetically the good that is intellectual and intrinsically purposive (the moral good), we must present it not so much as beautiful but rather as sublime, so that it will arouse more a feeling of respect (which disdains charm) than one of love and familiar affection. For human nature does not of itself harmonize with that good; it [can be made to harmonize with it] only through the dominance that reason exerts over sensibility. Conversely, too, what we call sublime in nature outside us, or for that matter in nature within us (e.g., certain affects), becomes interesting only because we present it as a might of the mind to rise above certain obstacles of sensibility by means of moral principles.

Let me dwell a little on that last point. If the idea of the good is accompanied by affect [as its effect], this [affect] is called enthusiasm. This mental state seems to be sublime, so much so that it is commonly alleged that nothing great can be accomplished without it. But in fact any affect is blind, either in the selection of its purpose, or, if that were to have been given by reason, in the manner of achieving it. For an affect is an agitation of the mind that makes it unable to engage in free deliberation about principles with the aim of determining itself according to them. Hence there is no way it can deserve to be liked by reason. Yet enthusiasm is sublime aesthetically, because it is a straining of our forces by ideas that impart to the mind a momentum whose effects are mightier and more permanent than are those of an impulse produced by presentations of sense. But (strange though it seems) even the state of being without affects (apatheia, phlegma in significatu bono) in a mind that vigorously pursues its immutable principles is sublime, and sublime in a far superior way, because it also has pure reason's liking on its side. Only a cast of mind of that sort is called noble—[though] the term has since come to be applied to things as well, such as a building, a garment, a literary style, a person's bearing, and so on—namely, if it arouses not so much amazement [Verwunderung] (an affect that occurs when we present novelty that exceeds our expectation) as admiration [Bewunderung] (an amazement that does not cease once the novelty is gone), which happens when ideas in their exhibition harmonize, unintentionally and without art, without our aesthetic liking.

Every affect of the VIGOROUS KIND (i.e., which makes us conscious that we have forces to overcome any resistance, i.e., makes us conscious of our animus strenuus) is aesthetically sublime, e.g., anger, even desperation (provided it is indignant rather than despondent desperation). But an affect of the LANGUID kind (which turns the very effort to resist into an object of displeasure, an animus languidus), has nothing noble about it, though it may be classed with the beautiful of the sensible kind. Hence emotions that can reach the strength of an affect are very diverse as well. We have spirited [mutig] emotions, and we have tender ones. When the latter increase to the level [i.e., strength] of an affect, they are utterly useless; and a propensity toward them is called sentimentality. A sympathetic grief that refuses to be consoled or that, if it concerns fictitious evils, is courted deliberately even to the point where fancy deceives us into regarding the evils as actual proves and creates a soul that is gentle but also weak and that shows a beautiful side; we can call such a soul fanciful, but not even so much as enthusiastic. None of the following are compatible with anything that could be classed with beauty, let alone sublimity, in a cast of mind: romances and maudlin plays; insipid moral precepts that daily with (falsely) so-called noble attitudes but that in fact make the heart languid and insensitive to the stern precept of duty, and that hence make the heart incapable of any respect for the dignity of the humanity in our own person and for human rights.

38 [On enthusiasm as an affect, cf. (and contrast) the Anthropology, §75, Ak. VII, 253-54; cf. also the Metaphysics of Morals, Ak. VI, 408-09.]

39 [Affects differ in kind from passions. Passions relate merely to feeling, whereas passions belong to our power of desire and are inclinations that make it difficult or impossible for us to determine our power of choice through principles. Affects are impetuous and unpremeditated, passions persistent and deliberate. Thus resentment in the form of anger is an affect, in the form of hatred (vindictiveness) it is a passion. Passion can never be called sublime, no matter what the circumstances; for while in an affect the mind's freedom is impeded, in passion it is abolished.]

40 [On amazement and admiration, cf. below, Ak. 365. See also the Anthropology, Ak. VII, 243 and 255. In one place (ibid., Ak. VII, 261), Kant gives the Latin 'admirari' for 'bewundern' rather than 'bewundern,' but while the Latin term can in fact stand for either of these terms, the English 'to admire' means only 'bewundern.']

41 [In their favorable (namely, moral) senses. Cf. the Anthropology, Ak. VII, 252-54, and the Metaphysics of Morals, Ak. VI, 408.]
(which are something quite different from human happiness) and thus make it incapable of any firm principles in general; even a religious discourse that recommends fawning and groveling and base ingratitude and the abandonment of all reliance on our own ability to resist the evil within us, instead of recommending a vigorous resolve for testing what forces are left us despite all our frailty and for trying to overcome our inclinations; the false humility that posits self-contempt, whining hypocritical repentance, and a merely passive frame of mind as the only way we can please the supreme being. 43

But even impetuous agitations of the mind—whether they are connected with religious ideas and are called edification, or with ideas involving a social interest and pertain merely to culture—can by no means claim the distinction of being a sublime exhibition [of ideas], no matter how much they may strain the imagination, unless they leave us with a mental attunement that influences, at least indirectly, our consciousness of our fortitude and resolution concerning what carries with it pure intellectual purposiveness (namely, the supersensible). For otherwise all these emotions belong only to [inner] motion, which we welcome for the sake of our health. The agreeable lassitude we feel after being stirred up by the play of affects is our enjoyment of the well-being that results from the establishment of the equilibrium of our various vital forces. This enjoyment comes to no more in the end than what Oriental voluptuaries find so appealing when they have their bodies thoroughly kneaded, as it were, and have all their muscles and joints gently squeezed and bent—except that in the first case the moving principle is for the most part within us, whereas in the second it is wholly outside us. Thus many people believe they are edified by a sermon that in fact builds no edifice (no system of good maxims), or are improved by the performance of a tragedy when in fact they are merely glad at having succeeded in routing boredom. Hence the sublime must always have reference to our way of thinking, i.e., to maxims directed to providing the intellectual [side in us] and our rational ideas with supremacy over sensibility.

We need not worry that the feeling of the sublime will lose [something] if it is exhibited in such an abstract way as this, which is wholly negative as regards the sensible. For though the imagination finds nothing beyond the sensible that could support it, this very removal of its barriers also makes it feel unbounded, so that its separation [from the sensible] is an exhibition of the infinite; and though an exhibition of the infinite can as such never be more than merely negative, it still expands the soul. Perhaps the most sublime passage in the Jewish Law is the commandment: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven or on earth, or under the earth; etc. This commandment alone can explain the enthusiasm that the Jewish people in its civilized era felt for its religion when it compared itself with other peoples, or can explain the pride that Islam inspires. The same holds also for our presentation of the moral law, and for the predisposition within us for morality. It is indeed a mistake to worry that depriving this presentation of whatever could commend it to the senses will result in its carrying with it no more than a cold and lifeless approval without any moving force or emotion. It is exactly the other way round. For once the senses no longer see anything before them, their unmistakable and indelible idea of morality remains, one would sooner need to temper the momentum of an unbounded imagination so as to keep it from rising to the level of enthusiasm, than to seek to support these ideas with images and childish devices for fear that they would otherwise be powerless. That is also why governments have gladly permitted religion to be amply furnished with such accessories: they were trying to relieve every subject of the trouble, yet also of the ability, to expand his soul's forces beyond the barriers that one can choose to set for him so as to reduce him to mere passivity and so make him more pliable.

On the other hand, this pure, elevating, and merely negative exhibition of morality involves no danger of fanaticism, which is the delusion [Wahn] of wanting to see something beyond all bounds of sensibility, i.e., of dreaming according to principles (raving with reason). The exhibition avoids fanaticism precisely because it is merely negative, for the idea of freedom is inscrutable and thereby precludes all positive exhibition whatever; but the moral law in itself can sufficiently
and originally determine us, so that it does not even permit us to cast about for some additional determining basis. If enthusiasm is comparable to madness [Wahnsinn], fanaticism is comparable to mania [Wahnwitz]. Of these the latter is least of all compatible with the sublime, because it is ridiculous in a somber [grüblicher] way; for enthusiasm, an affect, the imagination is unbridled, but in fanaticism, a deep-seated and brooding passion, it is ruleless. Madness is a passing accident that presumably strikes even the soundest understanding on occasion; mania is a disease that deranges it.

Simplicity (artless purposiveness) is, as it were, nature's style in the sublime. Hence it is also the style of morality, which is a second (namely, a supersensible) nature, of which we know only the laws, without being able to reach, by means of intuition, the supersensible ability within ourselves that contains the basis of this legislation.

A further comment is needed. It is true that our liking both for the beautiful and for the sublime not only differs recognizably from other aesthetic judgments by being universally communicable, but by having this property it also acquires an interest in relation to society (where such communication may take place). Yet we also regard isolation from all society as something sublime, if it rests on ideas that look beyond all sensible interest. To be sufficient to oneself and hence have no need of society, yet without being unsociable, i.e., without shunning society, is something approaching the sublime, as is any case of setting aside our needs. On the other hand, to shun people either from misanthropy because we are hostile toward them or from anthropophobia (fear of people) because we are afraid they might be our enemies is partly odious and partly contemptible. There is, however, a different (very improperly so-called) misanthropy, the predisposition to which tends to appear in the minds of many well-meaning people as they grow older. This latter misanthropy is philanthropic enough as regards benevolence [Wohlwollen], but as the result of a long and sad experience it has veered far away from a liking [Wohlgefunden] for people. We find evidence of this in a person's propensity toward reclusiveness, in his fanciful wish that he could spend the rest of his life on a remote country estate, or for that matter (in the case of young people) in their dream of happily spending their lives with a small family, on some island unknown to the rest of the world—all of which novelists and writers of Robinsonades use so cleverly. Falseness, ingratitude, injustice, whatever is childish in the purposes that we ourselves consider important and great and in the pursuit of which people inflict all conceivable evils on one another, these so contradict the idea of what people could be if they wanted to, and so conflict with our fervent wish to see them improved, that, given that we cannot love them, it seems but a slight sacrifice to forgo all social joys so as to avoid hating them. This sadness, which does not concern the evils that fate imposes on other people (in which case it would be caused by sympathy), but those that they inflict on themselves (a sadness that rests on an antipathy involving principles), is sublime, because it rests on ideas, whereas the sadness caused by sympathy can at most count as beautiful. Saussure, as intelligent as he was thorough, in describing his Alpine travels says of Bonhomme, one of the Savoy mountains, "A certain insipid sadness reigns there." Thus clearly he also knew an interesting sadness, such as is inspired by a wasteland to which people would gladly transfer themselves so as to hear or find out no more about the world, which shows that such wastelands cannot, after all, be quite so inhospitable as to offer no more to human beings than a most troublesome abode. This comment is intended only as a reminder that even grief (but not a dejected kind of sadness) may be included among the vigorous affects, if it has its basis in moral ideas. If, on the other hand, it is based on sympathy, then it may indeed be lovable, but belongs merely to the languid affects. My point is to draw attention to the fact that only in the first case is the mental attunement sublime.

44 Cf. (and contrast) the Anthropology. Ak. VII, 215 (also 202].

45 The insertion replaces a mere period, and its point is to bring out the continuity between the preceding sentence that brings in madness and mania, and the following one, where the demonstrative adjectives in the original text can refer only to madness and mania again, not to enthusiasm and fanaticism.

46 [See Ak. 265.]
one, regarding which work has been done by someone like Burke and many acute men among us, so that we may see where a merely empirical exposition of the sublime and of the beautiful may lead. Burke, who deserves to be mentioned as the foremost author in this way of treating the subject, discovers along this route (p. 223 of [the German translation of] his work) "that the feeling of the sublime is based on the impulse toward self-preservation and on fear, i.e., on a pain, a pain that, since it does not go so far as actually to disarrange the parts of the body, gives rise to agitations. And since these agitations clear the vessels, small or large, of dangerous and troublesome obstructions, they are able to arouse agreeable sensations. These do not indeed amount to a pleasure, but they still amount to a kind of pleasant thrill, a certain tranquility mingled with terror." He attributes the beautiful, which he bases on love (while insisting that desire be kept apart from this love) "to the relaxing, slackening, and enervating of the body's fibres, and hence to a softening, dissolution, exhaustion, a fainting, a dying and melting away with delight" (pp. 251-52 [of the translation]). To confirm this kind of explanation he points not only to those cases where the feeling of the beautiful and of the sublime may be aroused in us by the imagination in connection with the understanding, but even to those where it is aroused by the imagination in connection with sensation. As psychological observations these analyses of the phenomena involved in our mind are exceedingly fine and provide rich material for the favorite investigations of empirical anthropology. Nor can it be denied that all presentations in us, no matter whether their object is merely sensible or instead wholly intellectual, can in the subject still be connected with gratification or pain, however unnoticeable these may be (because all of them affect the feeling of life, and none of them can be indifferent insofar as it is a modification of the subject). It cannot even be denied that, as Epicurus maintained, gratification and pain are ultimately always of the body, whether they come from imagination or even from presentations of the understanding. He maintained this on the ground that, in the absence of [some] feeling of the bodily organ, life is merely consciousness of our existence, and not a feeling of being well or unwell, i.e., of the furtherance or inhibition of the vital forces; for the mind taken by itself is wholly life (the very principle of life), whereas any obstacles or furtherance must be sought outside it and yet still within man himself, and hence in the [mind's] connection with his body.

But if we suppose that our liking for the object consists entirely in the object's gratifying us through charm or emotion, then we also must not require anyone else to assent to an aesthetic judgment that we make; for about that sort of liking each person rightly consults only his private sense. But, if that is so, then all censure of taste will

47Edmund Burke (1729-97), British statesman and political thinker. His Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757) gained him a reputation in Britain. Abroad it was read with interest not only by Kant but, among others, by Lessing, Mendelssohn, Schiller, and Diderot.

48According to the German translation [by Christian Garve (1742-98), German moralist] of his work entitled A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful ([the translation:] Riga: Hartknoch, 1773).

49[Kant's own Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime (1764) (Ak. II, 205-56) had been mainly empirical. Cf. Donald W. Crawford, Kant's Aesthetic Theory (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), pp. 8-11, 60. The same applies of course to Kant's own Remarks on the Observations: Ak. XX, 1-192.]

50[Burke, Enquiry, Pt. IV, Sect. vii: "...[I]f the pain and terror are so modified as not to be actually noxious; if the pain is not carried to violence, and the terror is not conversant about the present destruction of the person, as these emotions clear the parts, whether fine or gross, of a dangerous and troublesome encumbrance, they are capable of producing delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror, a sort of tranquility tinged with terror; which, as it belongs to self-preservation, is one of the strongest of all the passions. Its object is the sublime." Cf. also above, Ak. 269 br. n. 34.]

51[Ibid., Pt. IV, Sect. xiii: "...[A] beautiful object presented to the sense, by causing a relaxation of the body, produces the passion of love in the mind...." And a little earlier: "...[B]eauty acts by relaxing the solids of the whole system. There are all the appearances of such a relaxation: and a relaxation somewhat below the natural tone seems to me to be the cause of all positive pleasure. Who is a stranger to that manner of expression so common in all times and in all countries, of being softened, relaxed, enervated, dissolved, melted away by pleasure?"

52[See the Letter to Herodotus, V, "The Soul."]
also cease, unless the example that other people give through the contingent harmony among their judgments were turned into a command that we [too] approve. At such a principle, however, we would presumably balk, appealing to our natural right to subject to our own sense, not to that of others, any judgment that rests on the direct feeling of our own well-being.

It seems, then, that we must not regard a judgment of taste as egoistic; rather, we must regard it necessarily as pluralistic by its inner nature, i.e., on account of itself rather than the examples that others give of their taste; we must acknowledge it to be a judgment that is entitled to claim that everyone else ought also to agree with it. But if that is so, then it must be based on some a priori principle (whether objective or subjective), and we can never arrive at such a principle by scouting about for empirical laws about mental changes. For these reveal only how we do judge; they do not give us a command as to how we ought to judge, let alone an unconditioned one. And yet judgments of taste presuppose such a command, because they insist that our liking be connected directly with a presentation. Hence, though we may certainly begin with an empirical exposition of aesthetic judgments, so as to provide the material for a higher investigation, still a transcendental discussion of taste is possible, and belongs essentially to a critique of this ability. For if taste did not have a priori principles, it could not possibly pronounce on the judgments of others and pass verdicts approving or repudiating them with even the slightest semblance of having the right to do so.

The remainder of the analytic of aesthetic judgment contains first of all the deduction of pure aesthetic judgments, to which we now turn.