

AESTHETICS

LECTURES ON FINE ART

BY

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Translated by T. M. Knox



VOLUME I

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME ONE

Silenus with the Infant Bacchus

frontispiece

INTRODUCTION

1. Prefatory Remarks	I
2. Limitation and Defence of Aesthetics	1
3. Refutation of Objections	3
4. Scientific Ways of Treating Beauty and Art	14
5. Concept of the Beauty of Art	22
6. Common Ideas of Art	25
(i) The Work of Art as a Product of Human Activity	25
(ii) The Work of Art, as being for Apprehension by Man's Senses, is drawn from the Sensuous Sphere	32
(iii) The Aim of Art	41
7. Historical Deduction of the True Concept of Art	55
(i) The Kantian Philosophy	56
(ii) Schiller, Winckelmann, Schelling	61
(iii) Irony	64
8. Division of the Subject	69
(i) The Idea of the Beauty of Art or the Ideal	73
(ii) Development of the Ideal into the Particular Forms of the Beauty of Art	75
(iii) The System of the Individual Arts	82

PART I. THE IDEA OF ARTISTIC BEAUTY, OR THE IDEAL 91

INTRODUCTION. Position of Art in Relation to the Finite World and to Religion and Philosophy 91

Division of the Subject 105

Chapter I. CONCEPT OF THE BEAUTIFUL AS SUCH 106

1. The Idea	106
2. The Idea in Existence	110
3. The Idea of the Beautiful	111

Chapter II. THE BEAUTY OF NATURE	116
A. NATURAL BEAUTY AS SUCH	116
1. The Idea as Life	116
2. Life in Nature as Beautiful	123
3. Ways of Considering Life in Nature	129
B. THE EXTERNAL BEAUTY OF THE ABSTRACT FORM AND THE ABSTRACT UNITY OF THE SENSUOUS MATERIAL	133
1. Beauty of Abstract Form	134
(a) Regularity and Symmetry	134
(b) Conformity to Law	138
(c) Harmony	140
2. Beauty as Abstract Unity of the Sensuous Material	141
C. DEFICIENCY OF NATURAL BEAUTY	143
1. The Inner in Immediacy as only the Inner	145
2. The Dependence of Immediate Individual Existence	147
3. The Restrictedness of Immediate Individual Existence	150
Chapter III. THE BEAUTY OF ART OR THE IDEAL	153
A. THE IDEAL AS SUCH	153
1. Beautiful Individuality	153
2. The Relation of the Ideal to Nature	160
B. THE DETERMINACY OF THE IDEAL	174
1. Ideal Determinacy as such	175
1. The Divine as Unity and Universality	175
2. The Divine as a Group of Gods	175
3. Repose of the Ideal	176
II. Action	177
1. The General State of the World	179
(a) Individual Independence—Heroic Age	179
(b) Prosaic States of Affairs in the Present	193
(c) The Reconstitution of Individual Independence	195
2. The Situation	196
(a) Absence of Situation	200
(b) The Specific Situation in its Harmlessness	200
(c) Collision	204

CONTENTS

xvii

3. Action	217
(a) The Universal Powers over Action	220
(b) The Individual Agents	225
(c) Character	236
III. The External Determinacy of the Ideal	244
1. Abstract Externality as such	246
2. Correspondence of the Concrete Ideal with its External Reality	252
3. The Externality of the Ideal [Work of Art] in Relation to the Public	263
C. THE ARTIST	280
1. Imagination (<i>Phantasie</i>), Genius, and Inspiration	281
2. Objectivity of the Representation	289
3. Manner, Style, and Originality	291
PART II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEAL INTO THE PARTICULAR FORMS OF ART	299
INTRODUCTION	299
SECTION I. THE SYMBOLIC FORM OF ART	303
INTRODUCTION. The Symbol in general	303
Division of the Subject	314
Chapter I. UNCONSCIOUS SYMBOLISM	323
A. IMMEDIATE UNITY OF MEANING AND SHAPE	323
1. The Religion of Zoroaster	325
2. The Non-symbolic Character of Zoroastrianism	329
3. Non-artistic Interpretation and Presentation of Zoroastrianism	330
B. FANTASTIC SYMBOLISM	332
1. The Indian Conception of Brahma	335
2. Sensuousness, Boundlessness, and the Activity of Personifying	336
3. View of Purification and Penance	346

C. SYMBOLISM PROPER	347
1. Egyptian View and Representation of the Dead: Pyramids	354
2. Animal Worship and Animal Masks	357
3. Complete Symbolism—Memnons, Isis and Osiris, the Sphinx	357
Chapter II. SYMBOLISM OF THE SUBLIME	362
A. THE PANTHEISM OF ART	364
1. Indian Poetry	366
2. Mohammedan Poetry	368
3. Christian Mysticism	371
B. THE ART OF THE SUBLIME	371
1. God as Creator and Lord of the World	373
2. The Finite World Bereft of God	374
3. The Human Individual	375
Chapter III. CONSCIOUS SYMBOLISM OF THE COMPARATIVE ART-FORM	378
A. COMPARISONS ORIGINATING FROM THE EXTERNAL OBJECT	381
1. Fable	383
2. Parable, Proverb, Apologue	390
(a) Parable	390
(b) Proverbs	392
(c) Apologue	392
3. Metamorphoses	393
B. COMPARISONS WHICH START FROM THE MEANING	395
1. Riddle	397
2. Allegory	398
3. Metaphor, Image, Simile	402
(a) Metaphor	403
(b) Image	408
(c) Simile	410
C. DISAPPEARANCE OF THE SYMBOLIC FORM OF ART	421
1. Didactic Poetry	422
2. Descriptive Poetry	424
3. The Ancient Epigram	424

SECTION II. THE CLASSICAL FORM OF ART	427
INTRODUCTION. The Classical Type in General	427
1. Independence of the Classical as Interpenetration of Spirit and its Shape in Nature	431
2. Greek Art as the Actual Existence of the Classical Ideal	436
3. Position of the Productive Artist in Classical Art	438
4. Division of the Subject	441
Chapter I. THE PROCESS OF SHAPING THE CLASSICAL FORM OF ART	443
1. The Degradation of the Animal	445
(a) Animal Sacrifices	445
(b) Hunts	447
(c) Metamorphoses	447
2. The Battle between the Old Gods and the New	453
(a) Oracles	456
(b) The Old Gods in Distinction from the New	458
(c) The Conquest of the Old Gods	465
3. Affirmative Retention of the Negated Features	468
(a) The Mysteries	468
(b) Preservation of the Old Gods in Artistic Representation	469
(c) Natural Basis of the New Gods	471
Chapter II. THE IDEAL OF THE CLASSICAL FORM OF ART	476
1. The Ideal of Classical Art in General	477
(a) The Ideal as Originated by Free Artistic Creation	477
(b) The New Gods of the Classical Ideal	481
(c) The Sort of External Representation	485
2. The Group of Particular Gods	486
(a) Plurality of Individual Gods	487
(b) Lack of a Systematic Arrangement	487
(c) Fundamental Character of the Group of the Gods	488
3. The Individuality of the Gods <i>seriatim</i>	490
(a) Material for Individualization	491
(b) Preservation of the Moral Basis	499
(c) Advance to Grace and Attractiveness	500

Chapter III. THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CLASSICAL FORM OF ART	502
1. Fate	502
2. Dissolution of the Gods through their Anthropomorphism	503
(a) Deficiency in Inner Subjectivity	504
(b) The Transition to Christianity is only a Topic of Modern Art	506
(c) Dissolution of Classical Art in its own Sphere	509
3. Satire	512
(a) Difference between the Dissolution of Classical Art and that of Symbolic Art	512
(b) Satire	512
(c) The Roman World as the Soil where Satire Flourishes	514
 SECTION III. THE ROMANTIC FORM OF ART	 517
INTRODUCTION. Of the Romantic in General	517
1. The Principle of Inner Subjectivity	518
2. The more Detailed Features of the Content and Form of the Romantic	519
3. Relation of the Subject-matter to the Mode of Representation	524
4. Division of the Subject	528
 Chapter I. THE RELIGIOUS DOMAIN OF ROMANTIC ART	 530
1. The Redemptive History of Christ	534
(a) Apparent Superfluity of Art	535
(b) Necessary Emergence of Art	535
(c) The Details of the External Appearance are Accidental	536
2. Religious Love	539
(a) Concept of the Absolute as Love	539
(b) The Heart [or Soul]	540
(c) Love as the Romantic Ideal	540
3. The Spirit of the Community	543
(a) Martyrs	544
(b) Repentance and Conversion	548
(c) Miracles and Legends	550

Chapter II. CHIVALRY	552
1. Honour	557
(a) The Concept of Honour	558
(b) Vulnerability of Honour	560
(c) Reconstitution of Honour	561
2. Love	562
(a) Concept of Love	562
(b) Love's Collisions	565
(c) Love's Contingency	566
3. Fidelity	568
(a) Fidelity in Service	569
(b) Fidelity's Subjective Independence	570
(c) Fidelity's Collisions	570
Chapter III. THE FORMAL INDEPENDENCE OF INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS	573
1. The Independence of the Individual Character	576
(a) Formal Firmness of Character	577
(b) Character as Inner but Undeveloped Totality	580
(c) What the Substantial Interest is in the Presentation of Formal Character	585
2. Adventures	586
(a) The Contingency of Aims and Collisions	586
(b) The Comic Treatment of Contingency	590
(c) Romantic Fiction	592
3. Dissolution of the Romantic Form of Art	593
(a) The Subjective Artistic Imitation of the Existent Present	595
(b) Subjective Humour	600
(c) The End of the Romantic Form of Art	602

CONTENTS OF VOLUME TWO

PART III. THE SYSTEM OF THE INDIVIDUAL ARTS	613
SECTION I. ARCHITECTURE	630
SECTION II. SCULPTURE	701
SECTION III. THE ROMANTIC ARTS	792
INDEX	1239

INTRODUCTION

[1 *Prefatory Remarks*]

THESE lectures are devoted to Aesthetics. Their topic is the spacious *realm of the beautiful*; more precisely, their province is *art*, or, rather, *fine art*.

For this topic, it is true, the word Aesthetics, taken literally, is not wholly satisfactory, since 'Aesthetics' means, more precisely, the science of sensation, of feeling. In this sense it had its origin as a new science, or rather as something which for the first time was to become a philosophical discipline,¹ in the school of Wolff at the period in Germany when works of art were treated with regard to the feelings they were supposed to produce, as, for instance, the feeling of pleasure, admiration, fear, pity, and so on. Because of the unsatisfactoriness, or more accurately, the superficiality of this word, attempts were made after all to frame others, e.g. 'Callistics'. But this too appears inadequate because the science which is meant deals not with the beautiful as such but simply with the beauty of art. We will therefore let the word 'Aesthetics' stand; as a mere name it is a matter of indifference to us, and besides it has meanwhile passed over into common speech. As a name then it may be retained, but the proper expression for our science is *Philosophy of Art* and, more definitely, *Philosophy of Fine Art*.

[2 *Limitation and Defence of Aesthetics*]

By adopting this expression we at once exclude the beauty of nature. Such a limitation of our topic may appear to be laid down arbitrarily, on the principle that every science has authority to demarcate its scope at will. But this is not the sense in which we should take the limitation of aesthetics to the beauty of art. In ordinary life we are of course accustomed to speak of a beautiful colour, a beautiful sky, a beautiful river; likewise of beautiful flowers, beautiful animals, and even more of beautiful people. We will not here enter upon the controversy about how far the attribute

¹ In Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, 1750.

of beauty is justifiably ascribed to these and the like, and how far, in general, natural beauty may be put alongside the beauty of art. But we may assert against this view, even at this stage, that the beauty of art is *higher* than nature. The beauty of art is beauty *born of the spirit and born again*,¹ and the higher the spirit and its productions stand above nature and its phenomena, the higher too is the beauty of art above that of nature. Indeed, considered *formally* [i.e. no matter what it says], even a useless notion that enters a man's head is higher than any product of nature, because in such a notion spirituality and freedom are always present. Of course, considered in its *content*, the sun, for example, appears as an absolutely necessary factor [in the universe] while a false notion vanishes as *accidental* and transitory. But, taken by itself, a natural existent like the sun is indifferent, not free and self-conscious in itself; and if we treat it in its necessary connection with other things, then we are not treating it by itself, and therefore not as beautiful.

Now if we said in general that spirit and its artistic beauty stands *higher* than natural beauty, then of course virtually nothing is settled, because 'higher' is a quite vague expression which describes natural and artistic beauty as still standing side by side in the space of imagination and differing only quantitatively and therefore externally. But what is *higher* about the spirit and its artistic beauty is not something merely relative in comparison with nature. On the contrary, spirit is alone the *true*, comprehending everything in itself, so that everything beautiful is truly beautiful only as sharing in this higher sphere and generated by it. In this sense the beauty of nature appears only as a reflection of the beauty that belongs to spirit, as an imperfect incomplete mode [of beauty], a mode which in its *substance* is contained in the spirit itself.— Besides we shall find that a limitation to fine art arises very naturally, since, however much is said about the beauties of nature (less by the ancients than by us), it has not yet entered anyone's head to concentrate on the *beauty* of natural objects and make a science, a systematic exposition, of these beauties. A treatment from the point of view of *utility* has indeed been made and, for example,

¹ This is obscure. Bosanquet, in his translation of Hegel's Introduction (London, 1905) p. 39, suggests an allusion to 'born of water and the spirit', but this must be wrong. Hegel means that we have beauty originated by man's mind and also what is reproduced by his mind in his natural world. See below p. 29, and Part I, ch. III, c *ad init.*, and Part II, ch. III *ad init.*

a scientific account of natural objects useful against diseases has been composed, a *materia medica*, a description of the minerals, chemical products, plants, or animals, which are useful for cures. But the realms of nature have not been classified and examined from the point of view of beauty. In [discussing] natural beauty we feel ourselves too much in a vague sphere, without a *criterion*, and therefore such a classification would provide too little interest for us to undertake it.

These preliminary remarks on beauty in nature and art, on the relation of the two, and the exclusion of the former from the scope of our proper subject, should dispose of the idea that the limitation is due merely to caprice and arbitrariness. The proof of this relation should not come here yet, since its consideration falls within our science itself and is therefore not to be further explained and proved until later [see Part I, ch. II].

But if we now limit ourselves provisionally to the beauty of art, this first step brings us at once up against new difficulties.

[3 *Refutation of Objections*]

The *first* that we may encounter is the doubt whether fine art shows itself *deserving* of a scientific treatment. Beauty and art does indeed [pervade all the business of life like a friendly genius] and brightly adorns all our surroundings whether inner or outer, mitigating the seriousness of our circumstances and the complexities of the actual world, extinguishing idleness in an entertaining way, and, where there is nothing good to be done, filling the place of evil always better than evil itself. Yet even though art intersperses with its pleasing forms everything from the war-paint of the savages to the splendour of temples with all their riches of adornment, these forms themselves nevertheless seem to fall outside the true ends and aims of life. Even if artistic creations are not detrimental to these serious purposes, if indeed they sometimes even seem to further them, at least by keeping evil away, still, art belongs rather to the indulgence and relaxation of the spirit, whereas substantial interests require its exertion. Thus it may look as if it would be inappropriate and pedantic to propose to treat with scientific seriousness what is not itself of a serious nature. In any case, on this view, art appears as a superfluity, even if the softening of the heart which preoccupation with beauty can produce does

not altogether become exactly deleterious as downright effeminacy. From this point of view, granted that the fine arts are a luxury, it has frequently been necessary to defend them in their relation to practical necessities in general, and in particular to morality and piety, and, since it is impossible to prove their harmlessness, at least to give grounds for believing that this luxury of the spirit may afford a greater sum of advantages than disadvantages. With this in view, serious aims have been ascribed to art itself, and it has frequently been recommended as a mediator between reason and sense, between [inclination and duty, as a reconciler of these colliding elements in their grim strife and opposition.] But it may be maintained that in the case of these aims of art, admittedly more serious, nothing is gained for reason and duty by this attempt at mediation, because by their very nature reason and duty permit of no mixture with anything else; they could not enter into such a transaction, and they demand the same purity which they have in themselves. Besides, it may be argued, art is not by this means made any worthier of scientific discussion, since it always remains a servant on both sides [between which it is supposed to mediate], and along with higher aims it all the same also promotes idleness and frivolity. Indeed, to put it simply, in this service, instead of being an end in itself, it can appear only as a means.—If, finally, art is regarded as a means, then there always remains in the form of the means a disadvantageous aspect, namely that even if art subordinates itself to more serious aims in fact, and produces more serious effects, the means that it uses for this purpose is *deception*. The beautiful [*Schöne*] has its being in pure appearance [*Schein*].¹ But an inherently true end and aim, as is easily recognized, must not be achieved by deception, and even if here and there it may

¹ *Schein* is frequently used in what follows. Hegel is following Kant (*Critique of Judgment*, part i) who held that the beautiful was the pleasing, without our having before us any concept or interest, e.g. in the purpose or utility of the object portrayed, so that what counted was the pure appearance of the object. To put the point in modern terms, if we look at a photograph of a shop, what strikes us is the utility of the shop, or the interest the picture may have for us if we are contemplating a purchase. But a work of art is different from a photograph. Even if it portrays a shop, it is the appearance (*Schein*) which pleases us and is the essential thing, without our having any interest in the shop or what it sells. Consequently, with this Kantian doctrine in mind, I translate *Schein* as a rule by 'pure appearance'. 'Semblance', which other translators use, gives a false impression. Hegel has in mind not only Kant but also Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters* which had a considerable influence on the development of his view of art. See below in [7].

be furthered by this means, this should be only in a limited way; and even in that case deception will be unable to count as the right means. For the means should correspond to the dignity of the end, and not pure appearance and deception but only the truth can create the truth, just as science too has to treat the true interests of the spirit in accordance with the true mode of actuality and the true mode of envisaging it.

In these respects it may look as if fine art is unworthy of scientific treatment because [it is alleged] it remains only a pleasing play, and, even if it pursues more serious ends, it still contradicts their nature; but [the allegation proceeds] in general it is only a servant both of that play and of these ends, and alike for the element of its being and the means of its effectiveness it can avail itself of nothing but deception and pure appearance.

But, *secondly*, it is still more likely to seem that even if fine art in general is a proper object of philosophical reflection, it is yet no appropriate topic for *strictly* scientific treatment. For the beauty of art presents itself to *sense*, feeling, intuition, imagination; it has a different sphere from thought, and the apprehension of its activity and its products demands an organ other than scientific thinking. Further, it is precisely the *freedom* of production and configurations that we enjoy in the beauty of art. In the production as well as in the perception of works of art, it seems as if we escape from every fetter of rule and regularity. In place of the strictness of conformity to law,¹ and the dark inwardness of thought, we seek peace and enlivenment in the forms of art; we exchange the shadow realm of the Idea for bright and vigorous reality. Finally, the source of works of art is the free activity of fancy which in its imaginations is itself more free than nature is. Art has at its command not only the whole wealth of natural formations in their manifold and variegated appearance; but in addition the creative imagination has power to launch out beyond them *inexhaustibly* in productions of its own. In face of this immeasurable fullness of fancy and its free products, it looks as if thought must lose courage to bring them *completely* before itself, to criticize them, and arrange them under its universal formulae.²

¹ On Hegel's distinction between regularity (*Regelmässigkeit*) and conformity to law (*Gesetzmässigkeit*), see Part I, ch. II, B.

² In this paragraph we have the first occurrence of *Phantasie* and *Einbildungskraft*, translated here, and sometimes later, as 'fancy' and 'imagination', and we may be inclined at first to recall Coleridge's distinction between these two

Science on the contrary, the objectors admit, has, in its form, to do with the thinking which abstracts from a mass of details. The result is that, on the one hand, imagination with its whim and caprice, the organ, i.e., of artistic activity and enjoyment, remains excluded from science. On the other hand, they say that while art does brighten and vivify the unilluminated and withered dryness of the Concept, does reconcile its abstractions and its conflict with reality, does enrich the Concept with reality, a *purely* intellectual treatment [of art] removes this means of enrichment, destroys it, and carries the Concept back to its simplicity without reality and to its shadowy abstractness. Further, in its content, science is occupied with what is inherently *necessary*. If aesthetics leaves natural beauty aside, we have in this respect apparently not only not gained anything, but rather have removed ourselves still further from the necessary. For the very word 'nature' already gives us the idea of necessity and conformity to law, and so of a state of affairs which, it can be hoped, is nearer to scientific treatment and susceptible of it. But in the sphere of the spirit in general, especially in the imagination, what seems, in comparison with nature, to be peculiarly at home is caprice and the absence of law, and this is automatically incapable of any scientific explanation.

In all these respects, therefore [the argument runs], fine art, alike in its origin, its effect, and its scope, instead of showing itself fitted for scientific endeavour, seems rather in its own right to resist thought's regulating activity and *not* to be suitable for scientific discussion.

These scruples, and others like them, against a truly scientific preoccupation with fine art are derived from common ideas, points of view, and considerations; their more prolix elaboration you can

English words. Although Hegel does distinguish between the two German words when he writes about The Artist in Part I, ch. III, c, he usually treats them as synonyms, and I have generally translated both words by 'imagination'. It is a trick of Hegel's style not to repeat the same word in the same sentence, or, often, in a succeeding one, and in order to avoid repetition, he uses two different words as synonyms, even if they are not exactly synonymous. Until this is realized, a translator may perplex himself unnecessarily to find two different English words, in fact synonymous, to render the two different words used by Hegel synonymously. Frequent examples of this Hegelianism occur in his use of *Inhalt* and *Gehalt*; and the use of 'Poseidon' in one sentence and 'Neptune' in the next is perhaps the *reductio ad absurdum* of this stylistic purism. 'Athene', 'Pallas', and 'Minerva' within two or three lines all mean the same goddess.

read *ad nauseam* in older books, especially French ones,¹ about beauty and the fine arts. And in part they contain facts that are right enough, and, in part too, argumentation is derived from them which at first sight seems plausible as well. Thus, for example, it is a fact that the shapes that beauty takes on are as multifarious as its occurrence is universal. If you like, you can infer from this a universal bent in human nature for the beautiful, and then go on to the further inference that because the ideas of the beautiful are so infinitely various, and, therefore, at first sight, something *particular*, there cannot be any *universal* laws of beauty and taste.

Now before we can turn away from such considerations to our proper subject, our next task must consist in a short introductory discussion of the scruples and doubts that have been raised.

[i] As regards the *worthiness* of art to be treated scientifically, it is of course the case that art can be used as a fleeting play, affording recreation and entertainment, decorating our surroundings, giving pleasantness to the externals of our life, and making other objects stand out by artistic adornment. Thus regarded, art is indeed not independent, not free, but ancillary. But what *we* want to consider is art which is *free* alike in its end and its means. The fact that art in general can serve other ends and be in that case a mere passing amusement is something which it shares equally with thought. For, on the one hand, science may indeed be used as an intellectual servant for finite ends and accidental means, and it then acquires its character not from itself but from other objects and circumstances. Yet, on the other hand, it also cuts itself free from this servitude in order to raise itself, in free independence, to the truth in which it fulfils itself independently and conformably with its own ends alone.

Now, in this its freedom alone is fine art truly art, and it only fulfils its supreme task when it has placed itself in the same sphere as religion and philosophy, and when it is simply one way of bringing to our minds and expressing the *Divine*, the deepest interests of mankind, and the most comprehensive truths of the spirit. In works of art the nations have deposited their richest inner intuitions and ideas, and art is often the key, and in many nations the sole key, to understanding their philosophy and religion. Art shares this vocation with religion and philosophy, but in a special way, namely by displaying even the highest [reality] sensuously,

¹ e.g. the works of Batteux, see below, p. 16, note 2.

bringing it thereby nearer to the senses, to feeling, and to nature's mode of appearance. What is thus displayed is the depth of a supra-sensuous world which thought pierces and sets up at first as a *beyond* in contrast with immediate consciousness and present feeling; it is the freedom of intellectual reflection which rescues itself from the *here* and now, called sensuous reality and finitude. But this breach, to which the spirit proceeds, it is also able to heal. It generates out of itself works of fine art as the first reconciling middle term between pure thought and what is merely external, sensuous, and transient, between nature and finite reality and the infinite freedom of conceptual thinking.

[ii] So far as concerns the unworthiness of the *element* of art in general, namely its pure appearance and *deceptions*, this objection would of course have its justification if pure appearance could be claimed as something wrong. But appearance itself is essential to essence. Truth would not be truth if it did not show itself and appear, if it were not truth *for* someone and *for* itself, as well as for the spirit in general too. Consequently, not pure appearance in general, but only the special kind of appearance in which art gives reality to what is inherently true can be the subject of reproof. If in this connection the pure appearance in which art brings its conceptions into existence is to be described as 'deception', this reproof first acquires its meaning in comparison with the phenomena of the *external world* and its immediate materiality, as well as in relation to our own world of feeling, i.e. the *inner world of sense*. To both these worlds, in our life of experience, our own phenomenal life, we are accustomed to ascribe the value and name of actuality, reality, and truth, in contrast to art which lacks such reality and truth. But it is precisely this whole sphere of the empirical inner and outer world which is not the world of genuine actuality; on the contrary, we must call it, in a stricter sense than we call art, a pure appearance and a harsher deception. Only beyond the immediacy of feeling and external objects is genuine actuality to be found. For the truly actual is only that which has being in and for itself, the substance of nature and spirit, which indeed gives itself presence and existence, but in this existence remains in and for itself and only so is truly actual. It is precisely the dominion of these universal powers¹ which art emphasizes and reveals. In the ordinary external and internal world essentiality

¹ See below, Part I, ch. III, B, II 3(a).

does indeed appear too, but in the form of a chaos of accidents, afflicted by the immediacy of the sensuous and by the capriciousness of situations, events, characters, etc. Art liberates the true content of phenomena from the pure appearance and deception of this bad, transitory world, and gives them a higher actuality, born of the spirit. Thus, far from being mere pure appearance, a higher reality and truer existence is to be ascribed to the phenomena of art in comparison with [those of] ordinary reality.

Neither can the representations of art be called a deceptive appearance in comparison with the truer representations of historiography. For the latter has not even immediate existence but only the spiritual pure appearance thereof as the element of its portrayals, and its content remains burdened with the entire contingency of ordinary life and its events, complications, and individualities, whereas the work of art brings before us the eternal powers that govern history without this appendage of the immediate sensuous present and its unstable appearance.

But if the mode in which artistic forms appear is called a deception in comparison with philosophical thinking and with religious and moral principles, of course the form of appearance acquired by a topic in the sphere of *thinking* is the truest reality; but in comparison with the appearance of immediate existence and of historiography, the pure appearance of art has the advantage that it points through and beyond itself, and itself hints at something spiritual of which it is to give us an idea, whereas immediate appearance does not present itself as deceptive but rather as the real and the true, although the truth is in fact contaminated and concealed by the immediacy of sense. The hard shell of nature and the ordinary world make it more difficult for the spirit to penetrate through them to the Idea than works of art do.

But while on the one hand we give this high position to art, it is on the other hand just as necessary to remember that neither in content nor in form is art the highest and absolute mode of bringing to our minds the true interests of the spirit. For precisely on account of its form, art is limited to a specific content. Only one sphere and stage of truth is capable of being represented in the element of art. In order to be a genuine content for art, such truth must in virtue of its own specific character be able to go forth into [the sphere of] sense and remain adequate to itself there. This is the case, for example, with the gods of Greece. On the other hand,

there is a deeper comprehension of truth which is no longer so akin and friendly to sense as to be capable of appropriate adoption and expression in this medium. The Christian view of truth is of this kind, and, above all, the spirit of our world today, or, more particularly, of our religion and the development of our reason, appears as beyond the stage at which art is the supreme mode of our knowledge of the Absolute. The peculiar nature of artistic production and of works of art no longer fills our highest need. We have got beyond venerating works of art as divine and worshipping them. The impression they make is of a more reflective kind, and what they arouse in us needs a higher touchstone and a different test. Thought and reflection have spread their wings above fine art. Those who delight in lamenting and blaming may regard this phenomenon as a corruption and ascribe it to the predominance of passions and selfish interests which scare away the seriousness of art as well as its cheerfulness; or they may accuse the distress of the present time, the complicated state of civil and political life which does not permit a heart entangled in petty interests to free itself to the higher ends of art. This is because intelligence itself subserves this distress, and its interests, in sciences which are useful for such ends alone, and it allows itself to be seduced into confining itself to this desert.

However all this may be, it is certainly the case that art no longer affords that satisfaction of spiritual needs which earlier ages and nations sought in it, and found in it alone, a satisfaction that, at least on the part of religion, was most intimately linked with art. The beautiful days of Greek art, like the golden age of the later Middle Ages, are gone. The development of reflection in our life today has made it a need of ours, in relation both to our will and judgement, to cling to general considerations and to regulate the particular by them, with the result that universal forms, laws, duties, rights, maxims, prevail as determining reasons and are the chief regulator. But for artistic interest and production we demand in general rather a quality of life in which the universal is not present in the form of law and maxim, but which gives the impression of being one with the senses and the feelings, just as the universal and the rational is contained in the imagination by being brought into unity with a concrete sensuous appearance. Consequently the conditions of our present time are not favourable to art. It is not, as might be supposed, merely that the practising

artist himself is infected by the loud voice of reflection all around him and by the opinions and judgements on art that have become customary everywhere, so that he is misled into introducing more thoughts into his work; the point is that our whole spiritual culture is of such a kind that he himself stands within the world of reflection and its relations, and could not by any act of will and decision abstract himself from it; nor could he by special education or removal from the relations of life contrive and organize a special solitude to replace what he has lost.

In all these respects art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past. Thereby it has lost for us genuine truth and life, and has rather been transferred into our *ideas* instead of maintaining its earlier necessity in reality and occupying its higher place. What is now aroused in us by works of art is not just immediate enjoyment but our judgement also, since we subject to our intellectual consideration (i) the content of art, and (ii) the work of art's means of presentation, and the appropriateness or inappropriateness of both to one another. The *philosophy* of art is therefore a greater need in our day than it was in days when art by itself as art yielded full satisfaction. Art invites us to intellectual consideration, and that not for the purpose of creating art again, but for knowing philosophically what art is.

But as soon as we propose to accept this invitation, we are met by the suspicion, already touched upon [pp. 3-5], that while art may well be a suitable subject for philosophical reflection in a general way, it may not be suitable for strictly systematic and scientific treatment. But this implies at once the false idea that a philosophical discussion can also be unscientific. On this point I can only say in brief that, whatever ideas others may have about philosophy and philosophizing, my view is that philosophizing is throughout inseparable from scientific procedure. Philosophy has to consider an object in its necessity, not merely according to subjective necessity or external ordering, classification, etc.; it has to unfold and prove the object, according to the necessity of its own inner nature. It is only this unfolding which constitutes the scientific element in the treatment of a subject. But in so far as the objective necessity of an object lies essentially in its logical and metaphysical nature, the treatment of art in isolation may, and indeed must, be exempt from absolute scientific rigour; art has so many preconditions both in respect of its content and in

respect of its material and its medium,¹ whereby it always simultaneously touches on the accidental; and so it is only in relation to the essential inner progress of its content and means of expression that we may refer to its *necessary* formation.

[iii] But what of the objection that works of fine art are not susceptible of a scientific and intellectual treatment because they have their origin in the heart and unregulated imagination, and, incalculable in number and variety, exercise their effect only on feeling and imagination? This is a perplexity which even now still seems to carry some weight. For the beauty of art does in fact appear in a form which is expressly opposed to thought and which thought is compelled to destroy in order to pursue its own characteristic activity. This idea hangs together with the view that the real in general, the life of nature and spirit, is marred and killed by comprehension; that instead of being brought nearer to us by conceptual thinking, it is all the more removed from us, with the result that, by using thinking as a means of grasping what the live phenomenon is, man defeats his own purpose. At this point we cannot deal with this matter exhaustively; we can only indicate the point of view from which this difficulty or impossibility or unadaptability can be removed.

This much at least will be granted at once, that the spirit is capable of considering itself, and of possessing a consciousness, a *thinking* consciousness, of itself and of everything originating in itself. Thinking is precisely what constitutes the inmost essential nature of spirit. In this thinking consciousness of itself and its products, however much freedom and caprice these may always have, the spirit is acting in accordance with its essential nature, provided that it be genuinely in them. Now art and works of art, by springing from and being created by the spirit, are themselves of a spiritual kind, even if their presentation assumes an appearance of sensuousness and pervades the sensuous with the spirit. In this respect art already lies nearer to the spirit and its thinking than purely external spiritless nature does. In the products of art, the spirit has to do solely with its own. And even if works of art are not thought or the Concept, but a development of the Concept out of itself, a shift of the Concept from its own ground to that of sense, still the power of the thinking spirit lies in being able not only to grasp itself in its proper form as thinking, but to know itself

¹ Colours, sounds, etc., are the element in which art is at home, or its medium.

again just as much when it has surrendered its proper form to feeling and sense, to comprehend itself in its opposite, because it changes into thoughts what has been estranged and so reverts to itself. And in this preoccupation with its opposite the thinking spirit is not false to itself at all as if it were forgetting and abandoning itself thereby, nor is it so powerless as to be unable to grasp what is different from itself; on the contrary, it comprehends both itself and its opposite. For the Concept is the universal which maintains itself in its particularizations, overreaches itself and its opposite, and so it is also the power and activity of cancelling again the estrangement in which it gets involved. Thus the work of art too, in which thought expresses itself, belongs to the sphere of conceptual thinking, and the spirit, by subjecting it to philosophic treatment, is thereby merely satisfying the need of the spirit's inmost nature. For since thinking is the essence and Concept of spirit, the spirit in the last resort is only satisfied when it has permeated all products of its activity with thought too and so only then has made them genuinely its own. But art, far removed, as we shall see more definitely later,¹ from being the highest form of spirit, acquires its real ratification only in philosophy.

Nor does art elude philosophical treatment by lawless caprice, since, as has been already hinted [p. 9 above], its true task is to bring the highest interests of spirit to our minds. From this it follows at once that, so far as *content* is concerned, fine art cannot range in wild unfettered fancy,² since these spiritual interests set firm stopping-places to it for its content, no matter how multifarious and inexhaustible its forms and configurations. The same holds good for the forms themselves. They too are not left to pure chance. Not every artistic configuration is capable of expressing and displaying those interests, of absorbing and reproducing them; on the contrary, by a definite content the form appropriate to it is also made definite.

And so, after all, seen from this angle, we are able to orientate ourselves by process of thought in what seemed the impossibly vast mass of works and forms of art. Thus we have now stated, in relation to our science, the content to which we propose to restrict ourselves and we have seen that neither is fine art unworthy of

¹ See p. 71 below, and also p. 9 above.

² Cf. Kant: *Prolegomena*, § 35: 'The Understanding is our only support in setting bounds to the fantasies of the imagination.'

philosophical treatment, nor is philosophical treatment incapable of desecrating the essence of fine art.

[4] *Scientific Ways of Treating Beauty and Art*

If we now ask about the *kind* of scientific treatment [of art] we meet here again two opposed ways of treating the subject; each appears to exclude the other and not to let us reach any true result.

On the one hand we see the science of art only busying itself with actual works of art from the outside, arranging them into a history of art, setting up discussions about existing works or outlining theories which are to yield general considerations for both criticizing and producing works of art.

On the other hand, we see science abandoning itself on its own account to reflections on the beautiful and producing only something universal, irrelevant to the work of art in its peculiarity, in short, an abstract philosophy of the beautiful.

(1) As for the first mode of treatment, which has the *empirical* for its starting-point, it is the indispensable route for anyone who thinks of becoming a *scholar* in the field of art. And just as, at the present day, everyone, even if not a devotee of physics, still likes to be equipped with the most essential physical facts, so it has been more or less necessary for a cultured man to have some acquaintance with art, and the pretension of proving oneself a dilettante and a connoisseur of art is almost universal.

(a) But if acquaintance of this sort with art is to be recognized as real scholarship, it must be of many kinds and of wide range. For the first requirement is a precise acquaintance with the immeasurable realm of individual works of art, ancient and modern, some of which (α) have already perished in reality, or (β) belong to distant lands or continents and which the unkindness of fate has withdrawn from our own inspection. Further, every work of art belongs to its own time, its own people, its own environment, and depends on particular historical and other ideas and purposes; consequently, scholarship in the field of art demands a vast wealth of historical, and indeed very detailed, facts, since the individual nature of the work of art is related to something individual and necessarily requires detailed knowledge for its understanding and explanation. Finally, scholarship demands here not only, as in other fields, a memory of the facts, but also a keen imagination to

retain pictures of artistic forms in all their varied details, and especially to have them present to the mind for comparison with other works of art.

(b) Within this primarily historical treatment there arise at once different considerations which must not be lost sight of if we are to derive judgements from them. Now these considerations, as in other sciences which have an empirical basis, form, when extracted and assembled, general criteria and propositions, and, by still further generalization, *theories* of the arts. This is not the place to go through the literature of this kind, and it must therefore be enough to cite just a few works in the most general way. Thus, for example (α) Aristotle's *Poetics*—its theory of tragedy is even now of interest, and (β) more particularly, Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Longinus *On the Sublime* provide, among the classics, a general idea of the manner in which this theorizing has been handled. The general characteristics abstracted by these authors were supposed to count in particular as prescriptions and rules in accordance with which works of art had to be produced, especially in times when poetry and art had deteriorated. Yet the prescriptions which these art-doctors wrote to cure art were even less reliable than those of ordinary doctors for restoring human health.

On these theories of art I will only mention that, although in *single* instances they contain much that is instructive, still their remarks were drawn from a very restricted range of works of art which happened to be accounted genuinely beautiful [at the time] yet which always constituted only a small extent of the sphere of art. On the other hand, such characteristics are in part very trivial reflections which in their *universality* make no advance towards establishing the *particular*, which is principally what is at issue; for example, the Horatian *Epistle* that I have mentioned is full of such reflections and therefore is a book for everybody, but for that reason contains much that is vapid: *omne tulit punctum*, etc.¹ This is just like so many proverbial instructions: 'Dwell in the land and thou shalt be fed',² which are right enough thus generally expressed, but which lack the concrete specifications necessary for action.

Another kind of interest consisted not in the express aim of producing genuine works of art directly but in the intention of

¹ *Ars Poetica*, 343: 'He gets all applause who has mingled the useful with the pleasant' etc.

² Ps. 37: 3.

developing through such theories a judgement on works of art, in short, of developing *taste*. As examples, Home's *Elements of Criticism*,¹ the works of Batteux, and Ramler's *Einleitung in die schönen Wissenschaften*² were books much read in their day. Taste in this sense concerns the arrangement and treatment, the aptness and perfection of what belongs to the external appearance of a work of art. Moreover they drew into the principles of taste views which were taken from the old psychology and had been derived from empirical observations of mental capacities and activities, passions and their probable intensification, sequence, etc. But it remains ever the case that every man apprehends works of art or characters, actions, and events according to the measure of his insight and his feelings; and since the development of taste only touched on what was external and meagre, and besides took its prescriptions likewise from only a narrow range of works of art and a limited training of the intellect and the feelings, its scope was unsatisfactory and incapable of grasping the inner [meaning] and truth [of art] and sharpening the eye for detecting these things.

In general, such theories proceed in the same kind of way as the other non-philosophical sciences. What they take as their subject matter is derived from our perception as something really *there*; [but] now a further question arises about the character of this perception, since we need closer specifications which are likewise found in our perception and, drawn thence, are settled in definitions. But thus we find ourselves at once on uncertain and disputed ground. For at first it might seem that the beautiful was a quite simple idea. But it is soon obvious that several sides may be found in it, and so one author emphasizes one and another author another, or, if the same considerations are kept in view, a dispute arises about the question which side is now to be treated as the essential one.

In this regard it is a part of scientific completeness to cite and criticize the different definitions of the beautiful. We will not do this either in historical completeness in order to get to know all the various subtleties of definition, or for the sake of *historical* interest; we will only pick out as an example some of the more recent and

¹ 1762. By Henry Home, Lord Kames, 1698-1782.

² Charles Batteux (1713-80) was a prolific writer, mostly about classical authors. But Hegel is doubtless referring to *Les Beaux Arts réduits à un même principe* (1746). See also K. W. Ramler, 1725-98. His *Introduction to the Beaux Arts* is his translation of part of Batteux's *Cours de belles-lettres*, amplified and annotated by himself (1762).

more interesting ways of looking at beauty which are aimed more precisely at what is in fact implied in the Idea of the beautiful. To this end we must give pride of place to Goethe's¹ account of the beautiful which [J. H.] Meyer [1760-1832] has embodied in his *Geschichte der bildenden Künste in Griechenland*² where without naming Hirt he quotes his view too.

[A. L.] Hirt, one of the greatest genuine connoisseurs in our time, wrote an essay on the beauty of art in *Die Horen*,³ 1797, pt. 7, in which, after writing about the beautiful in the different arts, he sums up in conclusion that the basis for a just criticism of beauty in art and for the formation of taste is the concept of the *characteristic*; i.e. he lays it down that the beautiful is 'the perfect which is or can be an object of eye, ear, or imagination'. He then further defines the perfect as 'what corresponds with its aim, what nature or art intended to produce in the formation of the object within its genus and species'. It follows then that, in order to form our judgement of beauty, we must direct our observation so far as possible to the individual marks which constitute the essence of a thing [*ein Wesen*], since it is just these marks which constitute its characteristic. By 'character' as a law of art Hirt understands 'that specific individuality whereby forms, movement and gesture, mien and expression, local colour, light and shade, *chiaroscuro*, and bearing are distinguished, and indeed, as the previously envisaged object demands'. This formulation is already more significant than other definitions, for if we go on to ask what 'the characteristic' is, we see at once that it involves (i) a content, as, for example, a specific feeling, situation, occurrence, action, individual, and

¹ Since this is the first of Hegel's many mentions of Goethe in these lectures, it may be as well to recall that Goethe (1749-1832) was Hegel's senior by eleven years and outlived him by a year. Hegel knew him well and often visited him in Weimar. Goethe thought highly of Hegel but wished that he could express himself more clearly. Others have had a similar wish.

² 1824-36—History of the *bildenden* arts in Greece. Bosanquet, op. cit., p. 67, tentatively suggests 'formative' as a translation of *bildenden*. But all the arts are 'formative' in one way or another. Hegel refers often to the *bildenden* arts, and he means by them architecture, sculpture, and painting, as distinct from music and poetry. These three arts are collectively referred to in English as the 'visual' arts, and I have therefore used this word to render *bildenden*. E. Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Peregrine Books, 1970), does not mention Hegel, but the book contains a good deal of material which illuminates Hegel's discussion of these arts.

³ A periodical conducted by Schiller, 1795-8. Hirt, (1759-1839), who is often mentioned below in Part II, was a professor of archaeology in Berlin, and Hegel was friendly with him.

(ii) the mode and manner in which this content is presented. It is on this manner of presentation that the artistic law of 'the characteristic' depends, since it demands that everything particular in the mode of expression shall serve towards the specific designation of its content and be a link in the expression of that content. The abstract category of 'the characteristic' thus refers to the degree of appropriateness with which the particular detail of the artistic form sets in relief the content it is meant to present. If we wish to explain this conception in a quite popular way, the following is the limitation which it involves. In a dramatic work, for example, an action constitutes the content; the drama is to display how this action happens. Now people do all sorts of things; they join in talk, eat occasionally, sleep, put on their clothes, say this and that, and so on. But whatever of all this does not stand immediately in relation to that specific action (which is the content proper) should be excluded, so that, in that content, nothing remains without significance. In the same way, in a picture, which seizes on only one phase of that action, there could be included—such are the wide ramifications of the external world—a mass of circumstances, persons, situations, and other incidents which have no relation to the specific action in that phase and contribute nothing to its distinctive character. But according to the principle of 'the characteristic', nothing is to enter the work of art except what belongs to the appearance and essentially to the expression of this content alone; nothing is to be otiose or superfluous.

This is a very important principle which may be justified in certain respects. Yet Meyer in the book mentioned above thinks that this view has been superseded without trace and, as he maintains, to the benefit of art, on the ground that this idea would probably have led to something like caricature. This judgement immediately implies the perversity of supposing that such a definition of the beautiful would have to do with *leading* to something. The philosophy of art has no concern with prescriptions for artists; on the contrary, it has to determine what the beautiful is as such, and how it has displayed itself in reality, in works of art, without wishing to provide rules for their production. Now, apart from this, in respect to this criticism, it is of course true that Hirt's definition does cover caricature and the like too, for after all what is caricatured may be a characteristic; only one must say at once on the other side that in caricature the specific character is exaggerated

and is, as it were, a superfluity of the characteristic. But the superfluity is no longer what is strictly required for the characteristic, but a troublesome repetition whereby the 'characteristic' itself may be made unnatural. Moreover, caricature and the like may also be the characterizing of the ugly, which is certainly a distortion. Ugliness for its part is closely related to the subject-matter, so that it may be said that the principle of the characteristic involves as a fundamental feature an acceptance of the ugly and its presentation. On what is to be 'characterized' in the beauty of art, and what is not, on the content of the beautiful, Hirt's definition of course gives us no more precise information. In this respect he provides only a purely formal prescription which yet contains something true, even if in an abstract way.

But now the further question arises of what Meyer opposes to Hirt's artistic principle. What does he prefer? In the first place he deals only with the principle in the works of art of antiquity, which must however contain the definition of the beautiful as such. In this connection he comes to speak of Mengs' and Winckelmann's' definition of [beauty as] the ideal and says that he neither rejects this law of beauty nor wholly accepts it; on the other hand he has no hesitation in agreeing with the opinion of an enlightened judge of art (Goethe) since it is definitive and seems to be nearer solving the riddle. Goethe says: 'The supreme principle of antiquity was the *significant*, but the supreme result of a successful *treatment* was the *beautiful*.'² If we look more closely at what this expression implies, we again find in it two things: (i) the content, the thing, and (ii) the manner and mode of presentation. In a work of art we begin with what is immediately presented to us and only then ask what its meaning or content is. The former, the external appearance, has no immediate value for us; we assume behind it something inward, a meaning whereby the external appearance is endowed with the spirit. It is to this, its soul, that the external points. For an appearance that means something does not present *itself* to our minds, or what it is *as* external, but something else. Consider, for example, a symbol, and, still more obviously, a fable the meaning of which is constituted by its moral and message.

¹ A. R. Mengs, 1728-79. J. J. Winckelmann, 1717-68, frequently mentioned below.

² The usual works of reference give no clue to the source of this quotation. Probably it comes from Meyer's book (see p. 17 above).

Indeed any word hints at a meaning and counts for nothing in itself. Similarly the spirit and the soul shine through the human eye, through a man's face, flesh, skin, through his whole figure, and here the meaning is always something wider than what shows itself in the immediate appearance. It is in this way that the work of art is to be significant and not appear exhausted by these lines, curves, surfaces, carvings, hollowings in the stone, these colours, notes, word-sounds, or whatever other material is used; on the contrary, it should disclose an inner life, feeling, soul, a content and spirit, which is just what we call the significance of a work of art.

With this demand for meaningfulness in a work of art, therefore, little is said that goes beyond or is different from Hirt's principle of the 'characteristic'.

According to this view, to sum up, we have characterized as the elements of the beautiful something inward, a content, and something outward which signifies that content; the inner shines in the outer and makes itself known through the outer, since the outer points away from itself to the inner. But we cannot go further into detail.

(c) This earlier manner of theorizing has after all been already violently cast aside in Germany, along with those practical rules, principally owing to the appearance of genuinely living poetry. The right of genius, its works and their effects, have been made to prevail against the presumptions of those legalisms and the watery wastes of theories. From this foundation of a genuine spiritual art, and the sympathy it has received and its widespread influence, there has sprung a receptivity for and freedom to enjoy and recognize great works of art which have long been available, whether those of the modern world or the Middle Ages, or even of wholly foreign peoples in the past, e.g. the Indian. These works, because of their age or foreign nationality, have of course something strange about them for us, but they have a content which outsoars their foreignness and is common to all mankind, and only by the prejudice of theory could they be stamped as products of a barbarous bad taste. This general recognition of works of art which lie outside the circle and forms which were the principal basis for the abstractions of theory has in the first place led to the recognition of a special kind of art—Romantic Art, and it has become necessary to grasp the Concept and nature of the beautiful

in a deeper way than was possible for those theories. Bound up with this at the same time is the fact that the Concept, aware of itself as the thinking spirit, has now recognized itself on its side, more deeply, in philosophy, and this has thereby immediately provided an inducement for taking up the essence of art too in a profounder way.

Thus then, simply following the phases of this more general development, the mode of reflecting on art, the theorizing we have been considering, has become out of date, alike in its principles and its achievements. Only the *scholarship* of the history of art has retained its abiding value, and must do so all the more, the more the growth of spiritual receptivity, which I mentioned, has extended people's intellectual horizons in every direction. Its task and vocation consists in the aesthetic appreciation of individual works of art and in a knowledge of the historical circumstances which condition the work of art externally; it is only an appreciation, made with sense and spirit, and supported by the historical facts, which can penetrate into the entire individuality of a work of art. Goethe, for example, has written a great deal in this way about art and works of art. This mode of treating the subject does not aim at theorizing in the strict sense, although it may indeed often concern itself with abstract principles and categories, and may fall into them unintentionally, but if anyone does not let this hinder him but keeps before his eyes only those concrete presentations, it does provide a philosophy of art with tangible examples and authentications, into the historical particular details of which philosophy cannot enter.

This is then the first mode of treating art, the one that starts from particular and existent [works].

(2) From this it is essential to distinguish the opposite side, namely the purely theoretical reflection which labours at understanding the beautiful as such out of itself and fathoming its *Idea*.

We all know that Plato, in a deeper way, began to demand of philosophical inquiry that its objects should be understood not in their particularity, but in their universality, in their genus, in their essential reality, because he maintained that it was not single good actions, true opinions, beautiful human beings or works of art, that were the truth, but goodness, beauty, and truth themselves. Now if in fact the beautiful is to be understood in its essence and its Concept, this is possible only through the conceptual thinking

whereby the logico-metaphysical nature of the *Idea in general*, as well as of the particular *Idea of the beautiful*, enters conscious reflection. But this treatment of the beautiful by itself in its *Idea* may itself turn again into an abstract metaphysics. Even if Plato in this connection be taken as foundation and guide, still the Platonic abstraction, even for the logical *Idea* of the beautiful, can satisfy us no longer. We must grasp this *Idea* more concretely, more profoundly, since the emptiness, which clings to the Platonic *Idea*, no longer satisfies the richer philosophical needs of our spirit today. It is indeed the case that we too must begin, in the philosophy of art, with the *Idea* of the beautiful, but we ought not to be in the position of clinging simply to Platonic *Ideas*, to that abstract mode with which philosophizing about art first began.

(3) The philosophical Concept of the beautiful, to indicate its true nature at least in a preliminary way, must contain, reconciled within itself, both the extremes which have been mentioned, because it unites metaphysical universality with the precision of real particularity. Only so is it grasped absolutely in its truth: for, on the one hand, over against the sterility of one-sided reflection, it is in that case fertile, since, in accordance with its own Concept, it has to develop into a totality of specifications, and it itself, like its exposition, contains the necessity of its particularizations and of their progress and transition one into another; on the other hand, the particularizations, to which a transition has been made, carry in themselves the universality and essentiality of the Concept, as the proper particularizations whereof they appear. The previously mentioned modes of treating the subject lack both these characteristics,¹ and for this reason it is only this full Concept which leads to substantial, necessary, and complete principles.

[5] *Concept of the Beauty of Art*

After these preliminary remarks, we now come closer to our proper subject, the philosophy of the beauty of art, and, since we are undertaking to treat it scientifically, we have to make a beginning with its Concept. Only when we have established this Concept can we lay down the division, and therefore the plan, of the whole of this science. For a division, if not undertaken in a purely external

¹ i.e. finding particulars in the universal, and the universal diversified in the particulars.

manner, as it is in a non-philosophical inquiry, must find its principle in the Concept of the subject-matter itself.

Confronted with such a requirement, we are at once met with the question 'whence do we derive this Concept?' If we start with the Concept itself of the beauty of art, it at once becomes a *presupposition* and a mere assumption; mere assumptions, however, philosophical method does not allow; on the contrary, what is to pass muster has to have its truth proved, i.e. has to be shown to be necessary.

About this difficulty, which affects the introduction to every philosophical discipline considered independently and by itself, we will come to an understanding in a short space.

In the case of the object of every science, two things come at once into consideration: (i) that there *is* such an object, and (ii) *what* it is.

On the first point little difficulty usually arises in the ordinary [i.e. physical] sciences. Why, it would at once be ridiculous to require astronomy and physics to prove that there are a sun, stars, magnetic phenomena, etc.! In these sciences which have to do with what is present to sensation, the objects are taken from experience of the external world, and instead of *proving* them, it is thought sufficient to *point* to them. Yet even within the non-philosophical disciplines, doubts may arise about the existence of their objects, as, for example, in psychology, the science of mind, there may be a doubt whether there *is* a soul, a spirit, i.e. an explicitly independent subjective entity distinct from what is material; or in theology, a doubt whether there is a God. If, moreover, the objects are of a subjective sort, i.e. present only in the mind and not as things externally perceptible, we know that in mind there is only what its own activity has produced. Hence there arises at once the chance that men may or may not have produced this inner idea or intuition in themselves, and, even if the former is really the case, that they have not made such an idea vanish again, or at least degraded it to a purely subjective idea whose content has no independent reality of its own. Thus, for example, the beautiful has often been regarded as not being absolutely necessary in our ideas but as a purely subjective pleasure, or a merely accidental sense. Our intuitions, observations, and perceptions of the external world are often deceptive and erroneous, but this is even more true of our inner ideas, even if

they have in themselves the greatest vividness and could carry us away into passion irresistibly.

Now the doubt whether an object of our inner ideas and general outlook *is* or is *not*, like the question whether subjective consciousness has generated it in itself and whether the manner and mode in which it has brought it before itself was also in correspondence with the object in its essential nature, is precisely what arouses in men the higher scientific need which demands that, even if we have a notion that an object *is* or that there is such an object, nevertheless the object must be exhibited or proved in accordance with its *necessity*.

With this proof, provided it be developed really scientifically, the other question of *what* an object is, is sufficiently answered at the same time. However, to expound this fully would take us too far afield at this point, and only the following indications can be given.

If the necessity of our subject, the beauty of art, is to be exhibited, we would have to prove that art or the beautiful was a result of an antecedent which, considered according to its true Concept, was such as to lead on with scientific necessity to the Concept of fine art. But since we begin with art and wish to treat of *its* Concept and the realization thereof, not of its antecedent in its essential character (the antecedent pursuant to its own Concept), art has for us, as a particular scientific subject-matter, a presupposition which lies outside our consideration and, handled scientifically as a different subject-matter, belongs to a different philosophical discipline. Thus the only course left to us is to take up the Concept of art *lemmatically*,¹ so to say, and this is the case with all particular philosophical sciences if they are to be treated *seriatim*. For it is only the *whole* of philosophy which is knowledge of the universe as in itself that *one* organic totality which develops itself out of its own Concept and which, in its self-relating necessity, withdrawing into itself to form a whole, closes with itself to form *one* world of truth. In the circlet of this scientific necessity each single part is on the one hand a circle returning into itself, while on the other hand it has at the same time a necessary connection with other parts. It has a backward whence it is itself derived, and a forward to which it ever presses itself on, in so far as it is fertile, engendering an 'other' out of itself once more, and issuing

¹ i.e. assume that it has been demonstrated.

it for scientific knowledge. Thus it is not our present aim, but the task of an encyclopedic development of the whole of philosophy and its particular disciplines, to prove the Idea of the beautiful with which we began, i.e. to derive it necessarily from the presuppositions which antecede it in philosophy and out of the womb of which it is born. For us the Concept of the beautiful and art is a presupposition given by the system of philosophy. But since we cannot here expound this system and the connection of art with it, we have not yet got the Concept of the beautiful before us scientifically. What *is* before us is only elements and aspects of it as they occur already in the different ideas of the beautiful and art held by ordinary people, or have formerly been accepted by them. From this point we intend to pass on to a deeper consideration of these views in order to gain the advantage, in the first place, of acquiring a general idea of our subject, as well as, by a brief critique, a preliminary acquaintance with the higher determinations with which we will have to do in the sequel. In this way our final introductory treatment of the subject will present, as it were, an overture to the lectures on the matter at issue and will tend [to provide] a general collection and direction [of our thoughts] to our proper subject.

[6] *Common Ideas of Art*

What we are acquainted with at the start, as a familiar idea of the work of art, falls under the three following heads:

(i) The work of art is no natural product; it is brought about by human activity;

(ii) it is essentially made for man's apprehension, and in particular is drawn more or less from the sensuous field for apprehension by the senses;

(iii) it has an end and aim in itself.

(i) *The Work of Art as a Product of Human Activity*

(a) As for the first point, that a work of art is a product of human activity, this view has given rise to the thought that this activity, being the *conscious* production of an external object, can also be *known* and expounded, and learnt and pursued by others. For what one man makes, another, it may seem, could make or imitate too, if only he were first acquainted with the manner of proceeding;

so that, granted universal acquaintance with the rules of artistic production, it would only be a matter of everyone's pleasure to carry out the procedure in the same manner and produce works of art. It is in this way that the rule-providing theories, mentioned above [p. 15], with their prescriptions calculated for practical application, have arisen. But what can be carried out on such directions can only be something formally regular and mechanical. For the mechanical alone is of so external a kind that only a purely empty exercise of will and dexterity is required for receiving it into our ideas and activating it; this exercise does not require to be supplemented by anything concrete, or by anything not prescribed in universal rules. This comes out most vividly when such prescriptions do not limit themselves to the purely external and mechanical, but extend to the significant and spiritual activity of the artist. In this sphere the rules contain only vague generalities, for example that 'the theme should be interesting, every character should speak according to his standing, age, sex, and situation'. But if rules are to satisfy here, then their prescriptions should have been drawn up at the same time with such precision that they could be observed just as they are expressed, without any further spiritual activity of the artist's. Being abstract in content, however, such rules reveal themselves, in their pretence of adequacy to fill the consciousness of the artist, as wholly inadequate, since artistic production is not a formal activity in accordance with given specifications. On the contrary, as spiritual activity it is bound to work from its own resources and bring before the mind's eye a quite other and richer content and more comprehensive individual creations [than formulae can provide]. Therefore, in so far as such rules do actually contain something specific and therefore of practical utility, they may apply in case of need, but still can afford no more than specifications for purely external circumstances.

(b) Thus, as it turns out, the tendency just indicated has been altogether abandoned, and instead of it the opposite one has been adopted to the same extent. For the work of art was no longer regarded as a product of *general* human activity, but as a work of an entirely *specially gifted* spirit which now, however, is supposed to give free play simply and *only* to its own particular gift, as if to a specific natural force; it is to cut itself altogether loose from attention to universally valid laws and from a conscious reflection interfering with its own instinctive-like productive activity. Indeed

it is supposed to be protected from such reflection, since its productions could only be contaminated and spoiled by such awareness. From this point of view the work of art has been claimed as a product of *talent* and *genius*, and the natural element in talent and genius has been especially emphasized. In a way, rightly, since talent is specific and genius universal capability, which man has not the power to give to himself purely and simply through his own self-conscious activity. On this topic we shall speak at greater length later [in Part I, ch. III, c].

Here we have only to mention the false aspect of this view, namely that in artistic production all consciousness of the artist's own activity is regarded as not merely superfluous but even deleterious. In that case production by talent and genius appears as only a *state* and, in particular, a state of *inspiration*. To such a state, it is said, genius is excited in part by an object, and in part can transpose itself into it by its own caprice, a process in which, after all, the good services of the champagne bottle are not forgotten. In Germany this notion became prominent at the time of the so-called *Period of Genius* which was introduced by Goethe's first poetical productions and then sustained by Schiller's. In their earliest works¹ these poets began afresh, setting aside all the rules then fabricated; they worked deliberately against these rules and thereby surpassed all other writers. However, I will not go further into the confusions which have been prevalent about the concept of inspiration and genius, and which prevail even today about the omnicompetence of inspiration as such. All that is essential is to state the view that, even if the talent and genius of the artist has in it a natural element, yet this element essentially requires development by thought, reflection on the mode of its productivity, and practice and skill in producing. For, apart from anything else, a main feature of artistic production is external workmanship, since the work of art has a purely technical side which extends into handicraft, especially in architecture and sculpture, less so in painting and music, least of all in poetry. Skill in technique is not helped by any inspiration, but only by reflection, industry, and practice. But such skill the artist is compelled to have in order to master his external material and not be thwarted by its intractability.

¹ For further discussion of these see Part I, ch. III, § 11 1(c), as well as sections on Mohammedan Poetry and the end of the Romantic Form of Art.

Now further, the higher the standing of the artist, the more profoundly should he display the depths of the heart and the spirit; these are not known directly but are to be fathomed only by the direction of the artist's own spirit on the inner and outer world. So, once again, it is study whereby the artist brings this content into his consciousness and wins the stuff and content of his conceptions.

Of course, in this respect, one art needs more than another the consciousness and knowledge of such content. Music, for example, which is concerned only with the completely indeterminate movement of the inner spirit and with sounds as if they were feeling without thought, needs to have little or no spiritual material present in consciousness. Therefore musical talent announces itself in most cases very early in youth,¹ when the head is empty and the heart little moved, and it may sometimes attain a very considerable height before spirit and life have experience of themselves. Often enough, after all, we have seen very great virtuosity in musical composition and performance accompanied by remarkable barrenness of spirit and character.

In poetry, on the other hand, it is quite different. In it all depends on the presentation, full of content and thought, of man, of his deeper interests, and of the powers that move him; and therefore the spirit and heart must be richly and deeply educated by life, experience, and reflection before genius can bring into being anything mature, of sterling worth, and complete in itself. The first productions of Goethe and Schiller are of an immaturity, yes even of a crudity and barbarity, that can be terrifying. It is this phenomenon, that in most of these attempts there is an overwhelming mass of elements through and through prosaic, partly cold and flat, which principally tells against the common opinion that inspiration is bound up with the fire and time of youth. It was only in their manhood that these two geniuses, our national poets, the first, we may say, to give poetical works to our country, endowed us with works deep, substantial, the product of true inspiration, and no less perfectly finished in form; just as it was only in old age that Homer was inspired and produced his ever undying songs.

¹ Hegel may be thinking of Mozart. But see below, p. 41. He could have mentioned Mendelssohn but he was blind to contemporary composers as others have been and perhaps are.

(c) A third view concerning the idea of the work of art as a product of human activity refers to the placing of the work of art in relation to the external phenomena of nature. Here the ordinary way of looking at things took easily to the notion that the human art-product ranked below the product of nature; for the work of art has no feeling in itself and is not through and through enlivened, but, regarded as an external object, is dead; but we are accustomed to value the living higher than the dead. That the work of art has no life and movement in itself is readily granted. What is alive in nature is, within and without, an organism purposefully elaborated into all its tiniest parts, while the work of art attains the appearance of life only on its surface; inside it is ordinary stone, or wood and canvas, or, as in poetry, an idea expressed in speech and letters. But this aspect—external existence—is not what makes a work into a product of fine art; a work of art is such only because, originating from the spirit, it now belongs to the territory of the spirit; it has received the baptism of the spiritual and sets forth only what has been formed in harmony with the spirit. Human interest, the spiritual value possessed by an event, an individual character, an action in its complexity and outcome, is grasped in the work of art and blazoned more purely and more transparently than is possible on the ground of other non-artistic things. Therefore the work of art stands higher than any natural product which has not made this journey through the spirit. For example, owing to the feeling and insight whereby a landscape has been represented in a painting, this work of the spirit acquires a higher rank than the mere natural landscape. For everything spiritual is better than any product of nature. Besides, no natural being is able, as art is, to present the divine Ideal.

Now on what the spirit draws from its own inner resources in works of art it confers permanence in their external existence too; on the other hand, the individual living thing in nature is transient, vanishing, changeable in outward appearance, while the work of art persists, even if it is not mere permanence which constitutes its genuine pre-eminence over natural reality, but its having made spiritual inspiration conspicuous.

But nevertheless this higher standing of the work of art is questioned by another idea commonly entertained. For nature and its products, it is said, are a work of God, created by his goodness and wisdom, whereas the art-product is a purely human

work, made by human hands according to human insight. In this contrast between natural production as a divine creation and human activity as something merely finite there lies directly the misunderstanding that God does not work in and through men at all, but restricts the sphere of his activity to nature alone. This false opinion must be completely rejected if we are to penetrate to the true nature of art. Indeed, over against this view we must cling to the opposite one, namely that God is more honoured by what the spirit makes than by the productions and formations of nature. For not only is there something divine in man, but it is active in him in a form appropriate to the being of God in a totally different and higher manner than it is in nature. God is spirit, and in man alone does the medium, through which the Divine passes, have the form of conscious and actively self-productive spirit; but in nature this medium is the unconscious, the sensuous, and the external, which stands far below consciousness in worth. Now in art-production God is just as operative as he is in the phenomena of nature; but the Divine, as it discloses itself in the work of art, has been generated out of the spirit, and thus has won a suitable thoroughfare for its existence, whereas just being *there* in the unconscious sensuousness of nature is not a mode of appearance appropriate to the Divine.

(d) Now granted that the work of art is made by man as the creation of his spirit, a final question arises, in order to derive a deeper result from the foregoing [discussion], namely, what is man's *need* to produce works of art? On the one hand, this production may be regarded as a mere play of chance and fancies which might just as well be left alone as pursued; for it might be held that there are other and even better means of achieving what art aims at and that man has still higher and more important interests than art has the ability to satisfy. On the other hand, however, art seems to proceed from a higher impulse and to satisfy higher needs, —at times the highest and absolute needs since it is bound up with the most universal views of life and the religious interests of whole epochs and peoples.—This question about the non-contingent but absolute need for art, we cannot yet answer completely, because it is more concrete than an answer could turn out to be at this stage. Therefore we must content ourselves in the meantime with making only the following points.

The universal and absolute need from which art (on its formal

side) springs has its origin in the fact that man is a *thinking* consciousness, i.e. that man draws out of himself and puts *before himself* what he is and whatever else is. Things in nature are only *immediate* and *single*, while man as spirit *duplicates* himself, in that (i) he *is* as things in nature are, but (ii) he is just as much *for* himself; he sees himself, represents himself to himself, thinks, and only on the strength of this active placing himself before himself is he spirit. This consciousness of himself man acquires in a two-fold way: *first, theoretically*, in so far as inwardly he must bring himself into his own consciousness, along with whatever moves, stirs, and presses in the human breast; and in general he must see himself, represent himself to himself, fix before himself what thinking finds as his essence, and recognize himself alone alike in what is summoned out of himself and in what is accepted from without. *Secondly*, man brings himself before himself by *practical* activity, since he has the impulse, in whatever is directly given to him, in what is present to him externally, to produce himself and therein equally to recognize himself. This aim he achieves by altering external things whereon he impresses the seal of his inner being and in which he now finds again his own characteristics. Man does this in order, as a free subject, to strip the external world of its inflexible foreignness and to enjoy in the shape of things only an external realization of himself. Even a child's first impulse involves this practical alteration of external things; a boy throws stones into the river and now marvels at the circles drawn in the water as an effect in which he gains an intuition of something that is his own doing. This need runs through the most diversiform phenomena up to that mode of self-production in external things which is present in the work of art. And it is not only with external things that man proceeds in this way, but no less with himself, with his own natural figure which he does not leave as he finds it but deliberately alters. This is the cause of all dressing up and adornment, even if it be barbaric, tasteless, completely disfiguring, or even pernicious like crushing the feet of Chinese ladies, or slitting the ears and lips. For it is only among civilized people that alteration of figure, behaviour, and every sort and mode of external expression proceeds from spiritual development.

The universal need for art, that is to say, is man's rational need to lift the inner and outer world into his spiritual consciousness as an object in which he recognizes again his own self. The need for

this spiritual freedom he satisfies, on the one hand, within by making what is within him explicit to himself, but correspondingly by giving outward reality to this his explicit self, and thus in this duplication of himself by bringing what is in him into sight and knowledge for himself and others. This is the free rationality of man in which all acting and knowing, as well as art too, have their basis and necessary origin. The specific need of art, however, in distinction from other action, political and moral, from religious portrayal and scientific knowledge, we shall see later [in the Introduction to Part I].

(ii) *The Work of Art, as being for Apprehension by Man's Senses, is drawn from the Sensuous Sphere*

So far we have considered in the work of art the aspect in which it is made by man. We have now to pass on to its second characteristic, namely that it is produced for apprehension by man's *senses* and therefore is more or less derived from the sensuous sphere.

(a) This reflection has given rise to the consideration that fine art is meant to arouse feeling, in particular the feeling that suits us, pleasant feeling. In this regard, the investigation of fine art has been made into an investigation of the feelings, and the question has been raised, 'what feelings should be aroused by art, fear, for example, and pity? But how can these be agreeable, how can the treatment of misfortune afford satisfaction?' Reflection on these lines dates especially from Moses Mendelssohn's times¹ and many such discussions can be found in his writings. Yet such investigation did not get far, because feeling is the indefinite dull region of the spirit; what is felt remains enveloped in the form of the most abstract individual subjectivity, and therefore differences between feelings are also completely abstract, not differences in the thing itself. For example, fear, anxiety, alarm, terror are of course further modifications of one and the same sort of feeling, but in part they are only quantitative intensifications, in part just forms not affecting their content, but indifferent to it. In the case of fear, for example, something is present in which the subject has an interest, but at the same time he sees the approach of the negative which threatens to destroy what he is interested in, and now

¹ 1729-86. *Über die Empfindungen* (1755) or *Betrachtungen über das Erhabene u.s.w.* (1757).

he finds directly in himself the interest and the negative, both as contradictory affections of his subjectivity. But such fear cannot by itself condition any content; on the contrary, it is capable of receiving into itself the most varied and opposite contents.¹ Feeling as such is an entirely empty form of subjective affection. Of course this form may be manifold in itself, as hope, grief, joy, pleasure; and, again, in this variety it may encompass different contents, as there is a feeling for justice, moral feeling, sublime religious feeling, and so on. But the fact that such content [e.g. justice] is present in different forms of feeling [e.g. hope or grief] is not enough to bring to light its essential and specific nature. Feeling remains a purely subjective emotional state of mind in which the concrete thing vanishes, contracted into a circle of the greatest abstraction.² Consequently the investigation of the feelings which art evokes, or is supposed to evoke, does not get beyond vagueness; it is a study which precisely abstracts from the content proper and its concrete essence and concept. For reflection on *feeling* is satisfied with observing subjective emotional reaction in its particular character, instead of immersing itself in the thing at issue i.e. in the work of art, plumbing its depths, and in addition relinquishing mere subjectivity and its states. But in the case of feeling it is precisely this empty subjectivity which is not only retained but is the chief thing, and this is why men are so fond of having feelings. But this too is why a study of this kind becomes wearisome on account of its indefiniteness and emptiness, and disagreeable by its concentration on tiny subjective peculiarities.

(b) But since the work of art is not, as may be supposed, meant merely in general to arouse feelings (for in that case it would have this aim in common, without any specific difference, with oratory, historical writing, religious edification, etc.), but to do so only in so far as it is beautiful, reflection on the beautiful hit upon the idea of looking for a peculiar *feeling* of the beautiful, and finding a specific *sense* of beauty. In this quest it soon appeared that such a sense is no blind instinct, made firmly definite by nature, capable from the start in and by itself of distinguishing beauty. Hence education was demanded for this sense, and the educated sense of

¹ 'You can be afraid of all sorts of things, but being afraid does not determine what you are afraid of' (Bosanquet's note, op. cit., p. 98).

² This is obscure, but the meaning would seem to be that morality, justice, etc., vanish when contracted into the circle of my private feeling which is abstract or ill defined in comparison with their concreteness.

beauty was called *taste* which, although an educated appreciation and discovery of beauty, was supposed to remain still in the guise of immediate feeling. We have already [p. 16] touched on how abstract theories undertook to educate such a sense of taste and how it itself remained external and one-sided. Criticism at the time of these views was on the one hand deficient in universal principles; on the other hand, as the particular criticism of individual works of art, it aimed less at grounding a more definite judgement—the implements for making one being not yet available—than at advancing rather the education of taste in general. Thus this education likewise got no further than what was rather vague, and it laboured only, by reflection, so to equip feeling, as a sense of beauty, that now it could find beauty wherever and however it existed. Yet the depths of the thing remained a sealed book to taste, since these depths require not only sensing and abstract reflections, but the entirety of reason and the solidity of the spirit, while taste was directed only to the external surface on which feelings play and where one-sided principles may pass as valid. Consequently, however, so-called ‘good taste’ takes fright at all the deeper effects [of art] and is silent when the thing at issue comes in question and externalities and incidentals vanish. For when great passions and the movements of a profound soul are revealed, there is no longer any question of the finer distinctions of taste and its pedantic preoccupation with individual details. It feels genius striding over such ground, and, retreating before its power, finds the place too hot for itself and knows not what to do with itself.

(c) For this reason the study of works of art has given up keeping in view merely the education of taste and proposing only to exhibit taste. The *connoisseur* has taken the place of the man of taste or the judge of artistic taste. The positive side of connoisseurship, in so far as it concerns a thorough acquaintance with the whole sweep of the individual character of a work of art, we have already [pp. 14 ff.] described as necessary for the study of art. For, on account of its nature, at once material and individual, the work of art issues essentially from particular conditions of the most varied sort, amongst them especially the time and place of its origin, then the specific individuality of the artist, and above all the technical development of his art. Attention to all these aspects is indispensable for a distinct and thorough insight into, and

acquaintance with, a work of art, and indeed for the enjoyment of it; with them connoisseurship is principally preoccupied, and what it achieves in its way is to be accepted with gratitude. Now while such scholarship is justly counted as something essential, it still may not be taken as the single and supreme element in the relation which the spirit adopts to a work of art and to art in general. For connoisseurship, and this is its defective side, may stick at acquaintance with purely external aspects, the technical, historical, etc., and perhaps have little notion of the true nature of the work of art, or even know nothing of it at all; indeed it can even disesteem the value of deeper studies in comparison with purely positive, technical, and historical information. Yet connoisseurship, if it be of a genuine kind, does itself strive at least for specific grounds and information, and for an intelligent judgement with which after all is bound up a more precise discrimination of the different, even if partly external, aspects of a work of art and the evaluation of these.

(d) After these remarks on the modes of study occasioned by that aspect of the work of art which, as itself a sensuous object, gave it an essential relation to men as sensuous beings, we propose now to treat this aspect in its more essential bearing on art itself, namely (α) in regard to the work of art as an object, and (β) in regard to the subjectivity of the artist, his genius, talent, etc., yet without our entering upon what in this connection can proceed only from the knowledge of art in its universal essence. For here we are not yet really on scientific ground and territory; we are still only in the province of external reflections.

(α) Of course the work of art presents itself to sensuous apprehension. It is there for sensuous feeling, external or internal, for sensuous intuition and ideas, just as nature is, whether the external nature that surrounds us, or our own sensitive nature within. After all, a speech, for example, may be addressed to sensuous ideas and feelings. But nevertheless the work of art, as a sensuous object, is not merely for *sensuous* apprehension; its standing is of such a kind that, though sensuous, it is essentially at the same time for *spiritual* apprehension; the spirit is meant to be affected by it and to find some satisfaction in it.

Now the fact that this is what the work of art is meant to be explains at once how it can in no way be a natural product or have in its natural aspect a natural vitality, whether a natural product is

supposed to have a higher or a lower value than a *mere* work of art, as a work of art is often called in a depreciatory sense.

For the sensuous element in a work of art should be there only in so far as it exists for the human spirit, regardless of its existing independently as a sensuous object.

If we examine more closely in what way the sensuous is *there* for man, we find that what is sensuous can be related in various ways to the spirit.

(αα) The poorest mode of apprehension, the least adequate to spirit, is purely sensuous apprehension. It consists, in the first place, of merely looking on, hearing, feeling, etc., just as in hours of spiritual fatigue (indeed for many people at any time) it may be an amusement to wander about without thinking, just to listen here and look round there, and so on. Spirit does not stop at the mere apprehension of the external world by sight and hearing; it makes it into an object for its inner being which then is itself driven, once again in the form of sensuousness, to realize itself in things, and relates itself to them as *desire*. In this appetitive relation to the external world, man, as a sensuous individual, confronts things as being individuals; likewise he does not turn his mind to them as a thinker with universal categories; instead, in accord with individual impulses and interests, he relates himself to the objects, individuals themselves, and maintains himself in them by using and consuming them, and by sacrificing them works his own self-satisfaction. In this negative relation, desire requires for itself not merely the superficial appearance of external things, but the things themselves in their concrete physical existence. With mere pictures of the wood that it might use, or of the animals it might want to eat, desire is not served. Neither can desire let the object persist in its freedom, for its impulse drives it just to cancel this independence and freedom of external things, and to show that they are only there to be destroyed and consumed. But at the same time the person too, caught up in the individual, restricted, and nugatory interests of his desire, is neither free in himself, since he is not determined by the essential universality and rationality of his will, nor free in respect of the external world, for desire remains essentially determined by external things and related to them.

Now this relation of desire is not the one in which man stands to the work of art. He leaves it free as an object to exist on its own account; he relates himself to it without desire, as to an object

which is for the contemplative side of spirit alone. Consequently the work of art, though it has sensuous existence, does not require in this respect a sensuously concrete being and a natural life; indeed it ought not to remain on this level, seeing that it is meant to satisfy purely spiritual interests and exclude all desire from itself. Hence it is true that practical desire rates organic and inorganic individual things in nature, which can serve its purpose, higher than works of art which show themselves useless to serve it and are enjoyable only by other forms of the spirit.

($\beta\beta$) A second way in which what is externally present can be for the spirit is, in contrast to individual sense-perception and practical desire, the purely theoretical relation to *intelligence*. The theoretical study of things is not interested in *consuming* them in their individuality and satisfying itself and maintaining itself sensuously by means of them, but in coming to know them in their *universality*, finding their inner essence and law, and conceiving them in accordance with their Concept. Therefore theoretical interest lets individual things alone and retreats from them as sensuous individualities, since this sensuous individualism is not what intelligence tries to study. For the rational intelligence does not belong to the individual person as such in the way that desires do, but to him as at the same time inherently universal. Inasmuch as man relates himself to things in accordance with his universality, it is his universal reason which strives to find itself in nature and thereby to re-establish that inner essence of things which sensuous existence, though that essence is its basis, cannot immediately display. This theoretical interest, the satisfaction of which is the work of science, art does not share, however, in this scientific form, nor does it make common cause with the impulses of purely practical desires. Of course science can start from the sensuous in its individuality and possess an idea of how this individual thing comes to be there in its individual colour, shape, size, etc. Yet in that case this isolated sensuous thing has as such no further bearing on the spirit, inasmuch as intelligence goes straight for the universal, the law, the thought and concept of the object; on this account not only does it turn its back on the object in its immediate individuality, but transforms it within; out of something sensuously concrete it makes an abstraction, something thought, and so something essentially other than what that same object was in its sensuous appearance. This the artistic interest, in distinction from

science, does not do. Just as the work of art proclaims itself *qua* external object in its sensuous individuality and immediate determinateness in respect of colour, shape, sound, or *qua* a single insight, etc., so the consideration of art accepts it like this too, without going so far beyond the immediate object confronting it as to endeavour to grasp, as science does, the concept of this object as a universal concept.

From the practical interest of desire, the interest of art is distinguished by the fact that it lets its object persist freely and on its own account, while desire converts it to its own use by destroying it. On the other hand, the consideration of art differs in an opposite way from theoretical consideration by scientific intelligence, since it cherishes an interest in the object in its individual existence and does not struggle to change it into its universal thought and concept.

(γγ) Now it follows from this that the sensuous must indeed be present in the work of art, but should appear only as the surface and as a pure appearance of the sensuous. For in the sensuous aspect of a work of art the spirit seeks neither the concrete material stuff, the empirical inner completeness and development of the organism which desire demands, nor the universal and purely ideal thought. What it wants is sensuous presence which indeed should remain sensuous, but liberated from the scaffolding of its purely material nature. Thereby the sensuous aspect of a work of art, in comparison with the immediate existence of things in nature, is elevated to a pure appearance, and the work of art stands in the *middle* between immediate sensuousness and ideal thought. It is *not yet* pure thought, but, despite its sensuousness, is *no longer* a purely material existent either, like stones, plants, and organic life; on the contrary, the sensuous in the work of art is itself something ideal, but which, not being ideal as thought is ideal, is still at the same time there externally as a thing. If spirit leaves the objects free yet without descending into their essential inner being (for if it did so they would altogether cease to exist for it externally as individuals), then this pure appearance of the sensuous presents itself to spirit from without as the shape, the appearance, or the sonority of things. Consequently the sensuous aspect of art is related only to the two theoretical senses of sight and hearing, while smell, taste, and touch remain excluded from the enjoyment of art. For smell, taste, and touch have to do with matter as such and its immediately sensible qualities—smell with material vola-

tility in air, taste with the material liquefaction of objects, touch with warmth, cold, smoothness, etc. For this reason these senses cannot have to do with artistic objects, which are meant to maintain themselves in their real independence and allow of no *purely* sensuous relationship. What is agreeable for these senses is not the beauty of art. Thus a t on its sensuous side deliberately produces only a shadow-world of shapes, sounds, and sights; and it is quite out of the question to maintain that, in calling works of art into existence, it is from mere impotence and because of his limitations that man produces no more than a surface of the sensuous, mere *schemata*. These sensuous shapes and sounds appear in a t not merely for the sake of themselves and their immediate shape, but with the aim, in this shape, of affording satisfaction to higher spiritual interests, since they have the power to call forth from all the depths of consciousness a sound and an echo in the spirit. In this way the sensuous aspect of art is *spiritualized*, ~~since the spirit appears in art as made sensuous.~~

(β) ~~But precisely for this reason an art-product is only there in so far as it has taken its passage through the spirit and has arisen from spiritual productive activity.~~ This leads on to the other question which we have to answer, namely in what way the necessary sensuous side of a t is operative in the a tist as his subjective productive activity.—This sort and manner of production contains in itself, as subjective activity, just the same characteristics which we found objectively present in the work of art; it must be a spiritual activity which yet contains at the same time the element of sensuousness and immediacy. Still, it is neither, on the one hand, purely mechanical work, a purely unconscious skill in sensuous manipulation or a formal activity according to fixed rules to be learnt by heart, nor, on the other hand, is it a scientific production which passes over from the sensuous to abstract ideas and thoughts or is active entirely in the element of pure thinking. ~~In artistic production the spiritual and the sensuous aspects must be as one.~~ For example, someone might propose to proceed in poetic composition by first apprehending the proposed theme as a prosaic thought and then putting it into poetical images, rhyme, and so forth, so that now the image would simply be hung on to the abstract reflections as an ornament and decoration. But such a procedure could only produce bad poetry, because in it there would be operative as *separate* activities what in artistic production

has validity only as an undivided unity. This genuine mode of production constitutes the activity of artistic imagination.

This activity is the rational element which exists as spirit only in so far as it actively drives itself forth into consciousness, yet what it bears within itself it places before itself only in sensuous form. Thus this activity has a spiritual content which yet it configures sensuously because only in this sensuous guise can it gain knowledge of the content. This can be compared with the characteristic mentality of a man experienced in life, or even of a man of quick wit and ingenuity, who, although he knows perfectly well what matters in life, what in substance holds men together, what moves them, what power dominates them, nevertheless has neither himself grasped this knowledge in general rules nor expounded it to others in general reflections. What fills his mind he just makes clear to himself and others in particular cases always, real or invented, in adequate examples, and so forth; for in his ideas anything and everything is shaped into concrete pictures, determined in time and space, to which there may not be wanting names and all sorts of other external circumstances. Yet such a kind of imagination rests rather on the recollection of situations lived through, of experiences enjoyed, instead of being creative itself. Recollection preserves and renews the individuality and the external fashion of the occurrence of such experiences, with all their accompanying circumstances, but does not allow the universal to emerge on its own account. But the productive fancy of an artist is the fancy of a great spirit and heart, the apprehension and creation of ideas and shapes, and indeed the exhibition of the profoundest and most universal human interests in pictorial and completely definite sensuous form.

Now from this it follows at once that, on one side, imagination rests of course on natural gifts and talent in general, because its productive activity requires sensuousness [as a medium]. We do indeed speak of 'scientific' talent too, but the sciences presuppose only the universal capacity for thinking, and thinking, instead of proceeding in a natural way, like imagination, precisely abstracts from all natural activity, and so we are righter to say that there is no specifically scientific talent, in the sense of a *merely* natural gift. On the other hand, imagination has at the same time a sort of instinct-like productiveness, in that the essential figurativeness and sensuousness of the work of art must be present in the artist

as a natural gift and natural impulse, and, as an unconscious operation, must belong to the natural side of man too. Of course natural capacity is not the *whole* of talent and genius, since the production of art is also of a spiritual, self-conscious kind, yet its spirituality must somehow have in itself an element of natural picturing and shaping. Consequently almost anyone can get up to a certain point in an art, but to get beyond this point, where art proper only now begins, an inborn, higher talent for art is indispensable.

As a natural gift, this talent declares itself after all in most cases in early youth,¹ and it shows itself in the driving restlessness to shape a specific sensuous material at once in a lively and active way and to seize this mode of expression and communication as the only one, or as the most important and appropriate one. And after all an early technical facility, which up to a certain point is effortless, is a sign of inborn talent. For a sculptor everything turns into shapes, and from early years he lays hold of clay in order to model it. In short, whatever ideas such talented men have, whatever rouses and moves them inwardly, turns at once into figure, drawing, melody, or poem.

(γ) Thirdly, and lastly, the subject-matter of art is in a certain respect also drawn from the sensuous, from nature; or, in any case, even if the subject is of a spiritual kind, it can still only be grasped by displaying spiritual things, like human relationships, in the shape of phenomena possessed of external reality.

(iii) *The Aim of Art*

Now the question arises of what interest or *end* man sets before himself when he produces such subject-matter in the form of works of art. This was the third point which we adduced [p. 25] with regard to the work of art, and its closer discussion will lead us on at last to the true concept of art itself.

If in this matter we cast a glance at what is commonly thought, one of the most prevalent ideas which may occur to us is

(a) the principle of the imitation of nature. According to this view, imitation, as facility in copying natural forms just as they are, in a way that corresponds to them completely, is supposed to constitute the essential end and aim of art, and the success of this

¹ Hegel either changed his mind on this subject or did not make himself clear. See p. 28 above and the section on Talent and Genius below.

portrayal in correspondence with nature is supposed to afford complete satisfaction.

(α) This definition contains, *prima facie*, only the purely formal aim that whatever exists already in the external world, and the manner in which it exists there, is now to be made over again as a copy, as well as a man can do with the means at his disposal. But this repetition can be seen at once to be

($\alpha\alpha$) a *superfluous* labour, since what pictures, theatrical productions, etc., display imitatively—animals, natural scenes, human affairs—we already possess otherwise in our gardens or in our own houses or in matters within our narrower or wider circle of acquaintance. And, looked at more closely, this superfluous labour may even be regarded as a presumptuous game

($\beta\beta$) which falls far short of nature. For art is restricted in its means of portrayal, and can only produce one-sided deceptions, for example a pure appearance of reality for *one* sense only, and, in fact, if it abides by the formal aim of *mere* imitation, it provides not the reality of life but only a pretence of life. After all, the Turks, as Mahommedans, do not, as is well known, tolerate any pictures or copies of men, etc. James Bruce in his journey to Abyssinia¹ showed paintings of a fish to a Turk; at first the Turk was astonished, but quickly enough he found an answer: 'If this fish shall rise up against you on the last day and say: "You have indeed given me a body but no living soul", how will you then justify yourself against this accusation?' The prophet too, as is recorded in the Sunna,² said to the two women, Ommi Habiba and Ommi Selma, who had told him about pictures in Ethiopian churches: 'These pictures will accuse their authors on the day of judgment.'

Even so, there are doubtless examples of completely deceptive copying. The grapes painted by Zeuxis have from antiquity onward been styled a triumph of art and also of the principle of the imitation of nature, because living doves are supposed to have pecked at them. To this ancient example we could add the modern one of Büttner's monkey³ which ate away a painting of a cock-

¹ *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile* (3rd edn., London, 1813, vol. vi, pp. 526-7). Hegel quotes from memory, and usually inaccurately, but here he has given the gist of the story accurately enough for his purpose.

² The Sunna is a body of traditions incorporating the history of Mahomet's life and so is a sort of supplement to the Koran.

³ For Zeuxis see, e.g., Pliny, *Natural History*, xxxv. 36. (J. F.) Blumenbach (1752-1840) told a story of an old fellow-student of Linnaeus (1707-78) called

chafer in Rösels *Insektbelustigungen* [Amusements of Insects] and was pardoned by his master because it had proved the excellence of the pictures in this book, although it had thus destroyed the most beautiful copy of this expensive work. But in such examples and others it must at least occur to us at once that, instead of praising works of art because they have deceived *even* doves and monkeys, we should just precisely censure those who think of exalting a work of art by predicating so miserable an effect as this as its highest and supreme quality. In sum, however, it must be said that, by mere imitation, art cannot stand in competition with nature, and, if it tries, it looks like a worm trying to crawl after an elephant.

(γγ) If we have regard to the continual, though comparative, failure of the copy compared with the original in nature, then there remains over as an aim nothing but taking pleasure in the conjuring trick of producing something *like* nature. And of course a man may enjoy himself in now producing over again by his own work, skill, and assiduity what otherwise is there already. But this enjoyment and admiration become in themselves the more frigid and cold, the more the copy is like the natural original, or they may even be perverted into tedium and repugnance. There are portraits which, as has been wittily said, are 'disgustingly like', and Kant,¹ in relation to this pleasure in imitation as such, cites another example, namely that we soon get tired of a man who can imitate to perfection the warbling of the nightingale (and there are such men); as soon as it is discovered that it is a man who is producing the notes, we are at once weary of the song. We then recognize in it nothing but a trick, neither the free production of nature, nor a work of art, since from the free productive power of man we expect something quite different from such music which interests us only when, as is the case with the nightingale's warbling, it gushes forth purposeless from the bird's own life, like the voice of human feeling. In general this delight in imitative skill can always be but restricted, and it befits man better to take delight in what he produces out of himself. In this sense the discovery of any insignificant technical product has higher value, and man can be prouder of having invented the hammer, the nail, etc., than of Büttner [? C. W., 1716-1801, professor in Göttingen] who put all his money into books and acquired a copy of Rösels' book with coloured plates, 'the most beautiful thing he had ever seen' etc. (Lasson, p. 30). A. J. Rösels, 1705-59, published his book in parts, 1746-55.

¹ *Critique of Judgment*, part i, § 42.

manufacturing tricks of imitation. For this enthusiasm for copying merely as copying is to be respected as little as the trick of the man who had learnt to throw lentils through a small opening without missing. He displayed this dexterity before Alexander, but Alexander gave him a bushel of lentils as a reward for this useless and worthless art.¹

(β) Now further, since the principle of imitation is purely formal, *objective beauty* itself disappears when this principle is made the end of art. For if it is, then there is no longer a question of the character of *what* is supposed to be imitated, but only of the correctness of the imitation. The object and content of the beautiful is regarded as a matter of complete indifference. Even if, apart from this, we speak of a difference between beauty and ugliness in relation to animals, men, localities, actions, or characters, yet according to that principle this remains a difference which does not properly belong to art, to which we have left nothing but imitation pure and simple. So that the above-mentioned lack of a criterion for the endless forms of nature leaves us, so far as the choice of objects and their beauty and ugliness are concerned, with mere subjective taste as the last word, and such taste will not be bound by rules, and is not open to dispute. And indeed if, in choosing objects for representation, we start from what people find beautiful or ugly and therefore worthy of artistic representation, i.e. from their taste, then all spheres of natural objects stand open to us, and none of them is likely to lack an admirer. For among us, e.g., it may not be every husband who finds his wife beautiful but he did before they were married, to the exclusion of all others too, and the fact that the subjective taste for this beauty has no fixed rule may be considered a good thing for both parties. If finally we look beyond single individuals and their capricious taste to the taste of *nations*, this too is of the greatest variety and contrariety. How often do we hear it said that a European beauty would not please a Chinese, or a Hottentot either, since the Chinese has inherently a totally different conception of beauty from the negro's, and his again from a European's, and so on. Indeed, if we examine the works of art of these non-European peoples, their images of the gods, for example, which have sprung from their fancy as sublime and worthy of veneration, they may present themselves to us as the most hideous idols; and while their music may sound in our

¹ The source of this story I have been unable to trace.

ears as the most detestable noise, they on their side will regard our sculptures, pictures, and music, as meaningless or ugly.

(γ) But even if we abstract from an objective principle for art, and if beauty is to be based on subjective and individual taste, we soon nevertheless find on the side of art itself that the imitation of nature, which indeed appeared to be a universal principle and one confirmed by high authority, is not to be adopted, at least in this general and wholly abstract form. For if we look at the different arts, it will be granted at once that, even if painting and sculpture portray objects that appear to be like natural ones or whose type is essentially drawn from nature, on the other hand works of architecture, which is also one of the fine arts, can as little be called imitations of nature as poetical works can, in so far as the latter are not confined, e.g., to mere description. In any case, if we still wanted to uphold this principle in relation to these latter arts, we would at least find ourselves compelled to take a long circuitous route, because we would have to attach various conditions to the proposition and reduce the so-called 'truth' of imitation to probability at least. But with probability we would again encounter a great difficulty, namely in settling what is probable and what is not, and, apart from this, we would not wish or be able to exclude from poetry all purely arbitrary and completely fanciful inventions.

↗ The aim of art must therefore lie in something still other than the purely mechanical imitation of what is there, which in every case can bring to birth only technical *tricks*, not *works*, of art. It is true that it is an essential element in a work of art to have a natural shape as its basis because what it portrays it displays in the form of an external and therefore also natural phenomenon. In painting, e.g., it is an important study to get to know and copy with precision the colours in their relation to one another, the effects of light, reflections, etc., as well as the forms and shapes of objects down to the last detail. It is in this respect, after all, that chiefly in recent times the principle of the imitation of nature, and of naturalism generally, has raised its head again in order to bring back to the vigour and distinctness of nature an art which had relapsed into feebleness and nebulosity; or, on the other hand, to assert the regular, immediate, and explicitly fixed sequences of nature against the manufactured and purely arbitrary conventionalism, really just as inartistic as unnatural, into which art had strayed. But whatever is right enough from one point of view in this

endeavour, still the naturalism demanded is as such not the substantial and primary basis of art, and, even if external appearance in its naturalness constitutes one essential characteristic of art, still neither is the given natural world the *rule* nor is the mere imitation of external phenomena, as external, the *aim* of art.

(b) Therefore the further question arises: what, then, is the content of art, and why is this content to be portrayed? In this matter our consciousness confronts us with the common opinion that the task and aim of art is to bring home to our sense, our feeling, and our inspiration everything which has a place in the human spirit. That familiar saying '*nihil humani a me alienum puto*'¹ art is supposed to make real in us.

Its aim therefore is supposed to consist in awakening and vivifying our slumbering feelings, inclinations, and passions of every kind, in filling the heart, in forcing the human being, educated or not, to go through the whole gamut of feelings which the human heart in its inmost and secret recesses can bear, experience, and produce, through what can move and stir the human breast in its depths and manifold possibilities and aspects, and to deliver to feeling and contemplation for its enjoyment whatever the spirit possesses of the essential and lofty in its thinking and in the Idea—the splendour of the noble, eternal, and true: moreover to make misfortune and misery, evil and guilt intelligible, to make men intimately acquainted with all that is horrible and shocking, as well as with all that is pleasurable and felicitous; and, finally, to let fancy loose in the idle plays of imagination and plunge it into the seductive magic of sensuously bewitching visions and feelings. According to this view, this universal wealth of subject-matter art is, on the one hand, ~~to embrace in order to complete the natural experience of our external existence, and, on the other hand, to arouse these passions in general so that the experiences of life do not leave us unmoved and so that we might now acquire a receptivity for all phenomena/~~ But [on this view] such a stimulus is not given in this field by actual experience itself, but only through the pure appearance of it, since art deceptively substitutes its productions for reality. The possibility of this deception through the pure appearance of art rests on the fact that, for man, all reality must come through the medium of perception and ideas, and only

¹ Terence: *Heauton Timorumenos*, I. i. 25. 'I count nothing human indifferent to me.' As usual, Hegel quotes inaccurately.

through this medium does it penetrate the heart and the will. Now here it is a matter of indifference whether a man's attention is claimed by immediate external reality or whether this happens in another way, namely through pictures, symbols, and ideas containing in themselves and portraying the material of reality. We can envisage things which are not real as if they *were* real. Therefore it remains all the same for our feelings whether it is external reality, or only the appearance of it, whereby a situation, a relation, or, in general, a circumstance of life, is brought home to us, in order to make us respond appropriately to the essence of such a matter, whether by grief or rejoicing, whether by being touched or agitated, or whether by making us go through the gamut of the feelings and passions of wrath, hatred, pity, anxiety, fear, love, reverence and admiration, honour and fame.

This arousing of all feelings in us, this drawing of the heart through all the circumstances of life, this actualizing of all these inner movements by means of a purely deceptive externally presented object is above all what is regarded, on the view we have been considering, as the proper and supreme power of art.

But now since, on this view, art is supposed to have the vocation of imposing on the heart and the imagination good and bad alike, strengthening man to the noblest ideals and yet enervating him to the most sensuous and selfish feelings of pleasure, art is given a purely formal task; and without any explicitly fixed aim would thus provide only the empty form for every possible kind of content and worth.

(c) In fact art does have also this formal side, namely its ability to adorn and bring before perception and feeling every possible material, just as the thinking of ratiocination can work on every possible object and mode of action and equip them with reasons and justifications. But confronted by such a multiple variety of content, we are at once forced to notice that the different feelings and ideas, which art is supposed to arouse or confirm, counteract one another, contradict and reciprocally cancel one another. Indeed, in this respect, the more art inspires to contradictory [emotions] the more it increases the contradictory character of feelings and passions and makes us stagger about like Bacchantes or even goes on, like ratiocination, to sophistry and scepticism. This variety of material itself compels us, therefore, not to stop at so formal a definition [of the aim of art], since rationality penetrates

this jumbled diversity and demands to see, and know to be attained, even out of elements so contradictory, a higher and inherently more universal end. It is claimed indeed similarly that the final end of the state and the social life of men is that *all* human capacities and *all* individual powers be developed and given expression in every way and in every direction. But against so formal a view the question arises soon enough: into what *unity* are these manifold formations to be brought together, what *single* aim must they have as their fundamental concept and final end? As with the Concept of the state, so too with the Concept of art there arises the need (a) for a *common* end for its particular aspects, but (b) also for a higher *substantial* end. As such a substantial end, the first thing that occurs to reflection is the view that [art has the capacity and the vocation to mitigate the ferocity of desires.]

(α) In respect of this first idea, we have only to discover in what feature peculiar to art there lies the capacity to cancel rudeness and to bridle and educate impulses, inclinations, and passions. Rudeness in general is grounded in a direct selfishness of the impulses which make straight away precisely and exclusively for the satisfaction of their concupiscence. But desire is all the ruder and imperious the more, as single and restricted, it engrosses the *whole man*, so that he loses the power to tear himself free, as a universal being, from this determinateness and become aware of himself as universal. And if the man says in such a case, as may be supposed, 'The passion is stronger than I', then for consciousness the abstract 'I' is separated from the particular passion, but only in a purely formal way, since all that is pronounced with this cleavage is that, in face of the power of the passion, the 'I' as a universal is of no account whatever. Thus the ferocity of passion consists in the unity of the 'I' as universal with the restricted object of his desire, so that the man has no longer any will beyond this single passion. Now such rudeness and untamed force of passion is *prima facie* mitigated by art, in that it gives a man an idea of what he feels and achieves in such a situation. And even if art restricts itself to setting up pictures of passions for contemplation, even if indeed it were to flatter them, still there is here already a power of mitigation, since thereby a man is at least made *aware* of what otherwise he only immediately *is*. For then the man contemplates his impulses and inclinations, and while previously they carried him reflectionless away, he now sees them outside himself and already begins

to be free from them because they confront him as something objective.

For this reason it may often be the case with an artist that, overtaken by grief, he mitigates and weakens for himself the intensity of his own feeling by representing it in art. Tears, even, provide some comfort; at first entirely sunk and concentrated in grief, a man may then in this direct way utter this purely inward feeling. But still more of an alleviation is the expression of one's inner state in words, pictures, sounds, and shapes. For this reason it was a good old custom at deaths and funerals to appoint wailing women in order that by its expression grief might be contemplated. Even by expressions of condolence the burden of a man's misfortune is brought before his mind; if it is much spoken about he has to reflect on it, and this alleviates his grief. And so to cry one's eyes out and to speak out has ever been regarded as a means of freeing oneself from the oppressive burden of care or at least of relieving the heart. The mitigation of the power of passions therefore has its universal ground in the fact that man is released from his immediate imprisonment in a feeling and becomes conscious of it as something external to him, to which he must now relate himself in an ideal way. Art by means of its representations, while remaining within the sensuous sphere, liberates man at the same time from the power of sensuousness. Of course we may often hear favourite phraseology about man's duty to remain in immediate unity with nature; but such unity, in its abstraction, is purely and simply rudeness and ferocity, and by dissolving this unity for man, art lifts him with gentle hands out of and above imprisonment in nature. For man's preoccupation with artistic objects remains purely contemplative, and thereby it educates, even if at first only an attention to artistic portrayals in general, later on an attention to their meaning and to a comparison with other subjects, and it opens the mind to a general consideration of them and the points of view therein involved.

(β) Now on this there follows quite logically the second characteristic that has been attributed to art as its essential aim, namely the *purification* of the passions, instruction, and *moral* improvement. For the theory that art was to curb rudeness and educate the passions, remained quite formal and general, so that it has become again a matter of what *specific* sort of education this is and what is its essential aim.

($\alpha\alpha$) It is true that the doctrine of the purification of passion still suffers the same deficiency as the previous doctrine of the mitigation of desires, yet it does at least emphasize more closely the fact that artistic representations needed a criterion for assessing their worth or unworthiness. This criterion [on this view] is just their effectiveness in separating pure from impure in the passions. This effectiveness therefore requires a content which can exercise this purifying force, and, in so far as producing such an effect is supposed to constitute the substantial aim of art, the purifying content will have to be brought into consciousness in accordance with its *universality* and *essentiality*.

($\beta\beta$) From this latter point of view, the aim of art has been pronounced to be that it should *instruct*. On this view, on the one hand, the special character of art consists in the movement of feelings and in the satisfaction lying in this movement, lying even in fear, in pity, in grievous emotion and agitation, i.e. in the satisfying enlistment of feelings and passions, and to that extent in a gusto, a pleasure, and delight in artistic subjects, in their representation and effect. But, on the other hand, this aim of art is supposed to have its higher criterion only in its instructiveness, in *fabula docet*,¹ and so in the useful influence which the work of art may exert on the individual. In this respect the Horatian aphorism *Et prodesse volunt et delectare poetae*² contains, concentrated in a few words, what later has been elaborated in an infinite degree, diluted, and made into a view of art reduced to the uttermost extreme of shallowness.—Now in connection with such instruction we must ask at once whether it is supposed to be contained in the work of art directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly. If, in general, what is at issue is a universal and non-contingent aim, then this end and aim, in view of the essentially spiritual nature of art, can itself only be a spiritual one, and moreover one which is not contingent but absolute. This aim in relation to teaching could only consist in bringing into consciousness, by means of the work of art, an absolutely essential spiritual content. From this point of view we must assert that the more highly art is ranked the more it has to adopt such a content into itself and find only in the essence of that content the criterion of whether what is expressed is appropriate or not. [Art has in fact been the first *instructress* of peoples.]

¹ See below, Part II, ch. III, A 1.

² *Ars poetica*, 333. 'Poets wish alike to benefit and to please.'

If, however, the aim of instruction is treated as an aim in such a way that the universal nature of the content represented is supposed to emerge and be explained directly and explicitly as an abstract proposition, prosaic reflection, or general doctrine, and not to be contained implicitly and only indirectly in the concrete form of a work of art, then by this separation the sensuous pictorial form, which is precisely what alone makes a work of art a work of art, becomes a useless appendage, a veil and a pure appearance, expressly pronounced to be a mere veil and a mere pure appearance. But thereby the nature of the work of art itself is distorted. For the work of art should put before our eyes a content, not in its universality as such, but one whose universality has been absolutely individualized and sensuously particularized. If the work of art does not proceed from this principle but emphasizes the universality with the aim of [providing] abstract instruction, then the pictorial and sensuous element is only an external and superfluous adornment, and the work of art is broken up internally, form and content no longer appear as coalesced. In that event the sensuously individual and the spiritually universal have become external to one another.

Now, further, if the aim of art is restricted to this usefulness for instruction, the other side, pleasure, entertainment, and delight, is pronounced explicitly to be inessential, and ought to have its substance only in the utility of the doctrine on which it is attendant. But what is implied here at the same time is that art does not carry its vocation, end, and aim in itself, but that its essence lies in something else to which it serves as a means. In that event art is only one amongst several means which are proved useful for and applied to the end of instruction. But this brings us to the boundary at which art is supposed to cease to be an end in itself, because it is reduced either to a mere entertaining game or a mere means of instruction.

(γγ) This boundary is most sharply marked if in turn a question is raised about a supreme aim and end for the sake of which passions are to be purified and men instructed. As this aim, *moral* betterment has often been adduced in recent times, and the end of art has been placed in the function of preparing inclinations and impulses for moral perfection and of leading them to this final end. This idea unites instruction with purification, inasmuch as art, by affording an insight into genuinely moral goodness and so by

instruction, at the same time incites to purification and only so is to accomplish the betterment of mankind as its utility and its highest aim.

Now as regards art in relation to moral betterment, the same must be said, in the first place, about the aim of art as instruction. It is readily granted that art may not take immorality and the intention of promoting it as its principle. But it is one thing to make immorality the express aim of the presentation, and another not to take morality as that aim. From every genuine work of art a good moral may be drawn, yet of course all depends on interpretation and on *who* draws the moral.¹ We can hear the most immoral presentations defended on the ground that one must be acquainted with evil and sins in order to act morally; conversely, it has been said that the portrayal of Mary Magdalene, the beautiful sinner who afterwards repented, has seduced many into sin, because art makes repentance look so beautiful, and sinning must come before repentance. But the doctrine of moral betterment, carried through logically, is not content with holding that a moral may be pointed from a work of art; on the contrary, it would want the moral instruction to shine forth clearly as the substantial aim of the work of art, and indeed would expressly permit the presentation of none but moral subjects, moral characters, actions, and events. For art can choose its subjects, and is thus distinct from history or the sciences, which have their material given to them.

In order, in this aspect of the matter, to be able to form a thorough estimate of the view that the aim of art is moral, we must first ask what specific standpoint of morality this view professes. If we keep more clearly in view the standpoint of the 'moral' as we have to take it in the best sense of the word today, it is soon obvious that its concept does not immediately coincide with what apart from it we generally call virtue, conventional life, respectability, etc. From this point of view a conventionally virtuous man is not *ipso facto moral*, because to be moral needs *reflection*, the specific consciousness of what accords with duty, and action on this preceding consciousness. Duty itself is the law of the will, a law which man nevertheless freely lays down out of himself,

¹ e.g., for one reader the moral of Goethe's *Elective Affinities* is approval of marriage, while for another reader it is disapproval (G. H. Lewes, *Life of Goethe*, bk. vii, ch. iv). In a work of art, as in life, the greater a man's character the more are different interpretations put on it by different people.

and then he ought to determine himself to this duty for the sake of duty and its fulfilment, by doing good solely from the conviction he has won that it is the good.¹ But this law, the duty chosen for duty's sake as a guide out of free conviction and inner conscience, and then carried out, is by itself the abstract universal of the will and this has its direct opposite in nature, in sensuous impulses, selfish interests, passions, and everything grouped together under the name of feeling and emotion. In this opposition one side is regarded as *cancelling* the other, and since both are present in the subject as opposites, he has a choice, since his decision is made from within, between following either the one or the other. But such a decision is a *moral* one, from the standpoint we are considering, and so is the action carried out in accordance with it, but only if it is done, on the one hand, from a free conviction of duty, and, on the other hand, by the conquest not only of the particular will, natural impulses, inclinations, passions, etc., but also of noble feelings and higher impulses. For the modern moralistic view starts from the fixed opposition between the will in its spiritual universality and the will in its sensuous natural particularity; and it consists not in the complete reconciliation of these opposed sides, but in their reciprocal battle against one another, which involves the demand that impulses in their conflict with duty must give way to it.²

Now this opposition does not arise for consciousness in the restricted sphere of moral action alone; it emerges in a thorough-going cleavage and opposition between what is *absolute* and what is external reality and existence. Taken quite abstractly, it is the opposition of universal and particular, when each is fixed over against the other on its own account in the same way; more concretely, it appears in nature as the opposition of the abstract law to the abundance of individual phenomena, each explicitly with its own character; in the spirit it appears as the contrast between the sensuous and the spiritual in man, as the battle of spirit against flesh, of duty for duty's sake, of the cold command against particular interest, warmth of heart, sensuous inclinations and impulses,

¹ With this Kantian passage compare my article 'Hegel's attitude to Kant's Ethics' (*Kant-Studien*, 1957-8, 70 ff.).

² Here Hegel's interpretation of Kant, like Schiller's, is based on a measure of misunderstanding. See, e.g., translation of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (Oxford, 1942), § 124, of his *Early Theological Writings* (Chicago, 1948), p. 211, and H. J. Paton: *The Categorical Imperative* (London, n.d.), pp. 48 and 84.

against the individual disposition in general; as the harsh opposition between inner freedom and the necessity of external nature, further as the contradiction between the dead inherently empty concept, and the full concreteness of life, between theory or subjective thinking, and objective existence and experience.

These are oppositions which have not been invented at all by the subtlety of reflection or the pedantry of philosophy; in numerous forms they have always preoccupied and troubled the human consciousness, even if it is modern culture that has first worked them out most sharply and driven them up to the peak of harshest contradiction. Spiritual culture, the modern intellect, produces this opposition in man which makes him an amphibious animal, because he now has to live in two worlds which contradict one another. The result is that now consciousness wanders about in this contradiction, and, driven from one side to the other, cannot find satisfaction for itself in either the one or the other. For on the one side we see man imprisoned in the common world of reality and earthly temporality, borne down by need and poverty, hard pressed by nature, enmeshed in matter, sensuous ends and their enjoyment, mastered and carried away by natural impulses and passions. On the other side, he lifts himself to eternal ideas, to a realm of thought and freedom, gives to himself, as *will*, universal laws and prescriptions, strips the world of its enlivened and flowering reality and dissolves it into abstractions, since the spirit now upholds its right and dignity only by mishandling nature and denying its right, and so retaliates on nature the distress and violence which it has suffered from it itself. But for modern culture and its intellect this discordance in life and consciousness involves the demand that such a contradiction be resolved. Yet the intellect cannot cut itself free from the rigidity of these oppositions; therefore the solution remains for consciousness a mere *ought*, and the present and reality move only in the unrest of a hither and thither which seeks a reconciliation without finding one. Thus the question then arises whether such a universal and thoroughgoing opposition, which cannot get beyond a mere ought and a postulated solution, is in general the absolute truth and supreme end. If general culture has run into such a contradiction, it becomes the task of philosophy to supersede the oppositions, i.e. to show that neither the one alternative in its abstraction, nor the other in the like one-sidedness, possesses truth, but that they are both self-dis-

solving; that truth lies only in the reconciliation and mediation of both, and that this mediation is no mere demand, but what is absolutely accomplished and is ever self-accomplishing. This insight coincides immediately with the ingenuous faith and will which does have precisely this dissolved opposition steadily present to its view, and in action makes it its end and achieves it. Philosophy affords a reflective insight into the essence of the opposition only in so far as it shows how truth is just the dissolving of opposition and, at that, not in the sense, as may be supposed, that the opposition and its two sides *do not exist at all*, but that they exist reconciled.

Now since the ultimate end, moral betterment, has pointed to a higher standpoint, we will have to vindicate this higher standpoint for art too. Thereby the false position, already noticed, is at once abandoned, the position, namely, that art has to serve as a means to moral purposes, and the moral end of the world in general, by instructing and improving, and thus has its substantial aim, not in itself, but in something else. If on this account we now continue to speak of a final end and aim, we must in the first place get rid of the perverse idea which, in the question about an end, clings to the accessory meaning of the question, namely that it is one about utility. The perversity lies here in this, that in that case the work of art is supposed to have a bearing on something else which is set before our minds as the essential thing or as what ought to be, so that then the work of art would have validity only as a useful tool for realizing this end which is independently valid on its own account outside the sphere of art. Against this we must maintain that art's vocation is to unveil the *truth* in the form of sensuous artistic configuration, to set forth the reconciled opposition just mentioned, and so to have its end and aim in itself, in this very setting forth and unveiling. For other ends, like instruction, purification, bettering, financial gain, struggling for fame and honour, have nothing to do with the work of art as such, and do not determine its nature.

[7] *Historical Deduction of the True Concept of Art*

Now, starting from this point of view in which consideration of the matter by the Understanding's abstract reflection is dissolved, we must proceed to grasp the concept of art in its inner necessity,

as after all it was from this view too that the true reverence and understanding of art arose historically. For that opposition on which we touched, asserted itself not only in the abstract reflection of general culture, but even in philosophy as such, and only now, when philosophy has thoroughly understood how to overcome this opposition, has it grasped its own essence and therefore at the same time the essence of nature and art.

So this point of view is not only the reawakening of philosophy in general, but also the reawakening of the science of art; indeed it is this reawakening alone that aesthetics proper, as a science, has really to thank for its genuine origin, and art for its higher estimation.

I will therefore touch briefly on the history of the transition which I have in mind, partly for the sake of the history itself, partly because in this way there are more closely indicated the views which are important and on which as a foundation we will build further. This foundation in its most general character consists in recognizing that the beauty of art is one of the means which dissolve and reduce to unity the above-mentioned opposition and contradiction between the abstractly self-concentrated spirit and nature—both the nature of external phenomena and that of inner subjective feeling and emotion.

(i) *The Kantian Philosophy*

It is the *Kantian* philosophy which has not only felt the need for this point of union, but has also clearly recognized it and brought it before our minds. In general, as the foundation alike of intelligence and will, Kant took self-related rationality, freedom, self-consciousness finding and knowing itself as inherently infinite. This recognition of the absoluteness of reason in itself, which has occasioned philosophy's turning-point in modern times, this absolute starting-point, must be recognized, and, even if we pronounce Kant's philosophy to be inadequate, this feature in it is not to be refuted. But since Kant fell back again into the fixed opposition between subjective thinking and objective things, between the abstract universality and the sensuous individuality of the will, he it was above all who emphasized as supreme the afore-mentioned opposition in the moral life, since besides he exalted the practical side of the spirit above the theoretical. Having accepted this fixity of opposition recognized by the thinking of the Understanding,

he was left with no alternative but to express the unity purely in the form of subjective Ideas of Reason, for which no adequate reality could be demonstrated, and therefore as postulates, which indeed are to be deduced from the practical reason, but whose essential inner character remained unknowable by thinking and whose practical fulfilment remained a mere ought steadily deferred to infinity. And so Kant had indeed brought the reconciled contradiction before our minds, but yet could neither develop its true essence scientifically nor demonstrate it as what is truly and alone actual. It is true that Kant did press on still further in so far as he found the required unity in what he called the *intuitive understanding*; but even here he stopped again at the opposition of the subjective to objectivity, so that while he does affirm the abstract dissolution of the opposition between concept and reality, universal and particular, understanding and sense, and therefore the Idea, he makes this dissolution and reconciliation itself into a purely *subjective* one again, not one absolutely true and actual.

10 In this connection his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, in which he deals with the aesthetic and teleological powers of judgement, is instructive and remarkable. The beautiful objects of nature and art, the purposeful products of nature, through which Kant comes nearer to the concept of the organic and living, he treats only from the point of view of a reflection which judges them subjectively. And indeed Kant defines the power of judgement in general as 'the ability to think the particular as contained under the universal',¹ and he calls the power of judgement *reflective* 'when it has only the particular given to it and has to find the universal under which it comes'. To this end it needs a law, a principle, which it has to give to itself, and as this law Kant propounds 'purposiveness' or teleology. In the concept of freedom in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, the accomplishment of the end does not get beyond a mere ought, but, in the *teleological* judgement of living things, Kant comes to the point of so regarding the living organism that in it the concept, the universal, contains the particular too, and, as an end, it determines the particular and external, the disposition of the limbs, not from without but from within, and in such a way that the particular corresponds to the end of its own accord. Yet, once again, with such a judgement the

¹ These quotations from the *Critique of Judgment* are from § iv of the Introduction.

objective nature of the object is not supposed to be known; all that is expressed is a subjective mode of reflection. Similarly, Kant interprets the *aesthetic* judgement as proceeding neither from the Understanding as such, as the capacity for concepts, nor from sensuous intuition and its manifold variety as such, but from the free play of Understanding and imagination. In this concord of the faculties of knowledge, the object becomes related to the subject and his feeling of pleasure and complacency.

(a) Now, in the *first* place, this complacency is to be devoid of all interest, i.e. to be *without any relation* to our *appetitive faculty*. If we have an interest, curiosity for example, or a sensuous interest on behalf of our sensuous need, a desire for possession and use, then the objects are not important to us on their own account, but only because of our need. In that event what exists has a value only in respect of such a need, and the situation is such that, on the one side, there is the object, and, on the other, a determinate need distinct from it, to which we yet relate it. If, for example, I consume an object for the sake of nourishment, this interest resides solely in me and is foreign to the object itself. Now the situation with the beautiful, Kant maintains,¹ is not of this kind. The aesthetic judgement lets the external existent subsist free and independent, and it proceeds from a pleasure to which the object on its own account corresponds, in that the pleasure permits the object to have its end in itself. This, as we saw already above [pp. 36 ff.], is an important consideration.

(b) *Secondly*, the beautiful, Kant says,² should be that which is put before us without a concept, i.e. without a category of the Understanding, as an object of *universal* pleasure. To estimate the beautiful requires a cultured spirit; the uneducated man has no judgement of the beautiful, since this judgement claims universal validity. True, the universal is as such *prima facie* an abstraction; but what is absolutely true carries in itself the demand for, and the characteristic of, universal validity. In this sense the beautiful too ought to be universally recognized, although the mere concepts of the Understanding are not competent to judge it. The good or the right, for example, in individual actions is subsumed under universal concepts, and the action counts as good if it can correspond with these concepts. The beautiful, on the other hand, is to invoke a universal pleasure directly without any such relation

¹ *Critique of Judgment*, book 1, § 2.

² *Ibid.*, book 1, § 6.

[or correspondence]. This only means that, in considering the beautiful, we are unaware of the concept and subsumption under it, and that the separation between the individual object and the universal concept, which elsewhere is present in judgement, is impermissible here.

(c) *Thirdly*, the beautiful is to have the form of *purposiveness*¹ in so far as the purposiveness is perceived in the object without any presentation of a purpose. At bottom this repeats what we have just discussed. Any natural product, a plant, for example, or an animal, is purposefully organized, and in this purposiveness it is so directly there for us that we have no idea of its purpose explicitly separate and distinct from its present reality. In this way the beautiful too is to appear to us as purposiveness. In finite purposiveness, end and means remain external to one another, since the end stands in no inner essential relation to the material of its realization.² In this case the idea of the end is explicitly distinguished from the object in which the end appears as realized. The beautiful, on the other hand, exists as purposeful in itself, without means and end showing themselves separated as different aspects of it. The purpose of the limbs, for example, of an organism is the life which exists as actual in the limbs themselves; separated they cease to be limbs. For in a living thing purpose and the material for its realization are so directly united that it exists only in so far as its purpose dwells in it. Looked at from this side, the beautiful should not wear purposiveness as an external form; on the contrary, the purposeful correspondence of inner and outer should be the immanent nature of the beautiful object.

(d) *Fourthly*, and lastly, Kant in treating of the beautiful holds firmly that it is recognized, without a concept, as the object of a *necessary* delight.³ Necessity is an abstract category and it indicates an inner essential relation of two sides; if and because the

¹ Throughout this passage Hegel is dealing with Kant and indicating his connection between artistic and teleological judgement. *Zweck* I have to translate as 'purpose' instead of 'end', and *Zweckmässigkeit* as 'purposiveness'. Bosanquet translates the latter by 'teleology', but he does sometimes translate *Zweck* by 'purpose'. This first sentence is a quotation from Kant, op. cit., § 17 *ad fin.*

² We make (finite) things for a purpose, e.g. a knife for cutting, but there is no essential relation between means and end. Cutting can be done with a razor. But in an organism limbs and life, means and end, are related essentially.

³ *Critique of Judgment*, § 22 *ad fin.*

one is, so also the other is. The one in its specific character contains the other at the same time, as, for example, cause is meaningless without effect. Such a necessity of giving pleasure the beautiful has in itself without any relation whatever to concepts, i.e. to the categories of the Understanding. So, for example, regularity,¹ which is produced according to a category of the Understanding, does please us, although Kant requires for pleasure still more than the unity and equality belonging to such a category of the Understanding.

Now what we find in all these Kantian propositions is an inseparability of what in all other cases is presupposed in our consciousness as distinct. This cleavage finds itself cancelled in the beautiful, where universal and particular, end and means, concept and object, perfectly interpenetrate one another. Thus Kant sees the beauty of *art* after all as a correspondence in which the particular itself accords with the concept. Particulars as such are *prima facie* accidental, alike to one another and to the universal; and precisely this accidental element—sense, feeling, emotion, inclination—is now not simply, in the beauty of art, *subsumed* under universal categories of the Understanding, and *dominated* by the concept of freedom in its abstract universality, but is so bound up with the universal that it is inwardly and absolutely adequate to it. Therefore thought is incarnate in the beauty of art, and the material is not determined by thought externally, but exists freely on its own account—in that the natural, the sensuous, the heart, etc., have in themselves proportion, purpose, and harmony; and intuition and feeling are elevated to spiritual universality, just as thought not only renounces its hostility to nature but is enlivened thereby; feeling, pleasure, and enjoyment are justified and sanctified; so that nature and freedom, sense and concept, find their right and satisfaction all in one. But this apparently perfect reconciliation is still supposed by Kant at the last to be only subjective in respect of the judgement and the production [of art], and not itself to be absolutely true and actual.

These we may take to be the chief results of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* in so far as they can interest us here. His *Critique* constitutes the starting point for the true comprehension of the beauty of art, yet only by overcoming Kant's deficiencies could this comprehension assert itself as the higher grasp of the true

¹ See below, Part I, ch. II, B 1(a).

unity] of necessity and freedom, particular and universal, sense and reason.

(ii) *Schiller, Winckelmann, Schelling*

Therefore it has to be admitted that the artistic sense of a profound and philosophic mind has demanded, and expressed, totality and reconciliation (earlier than philosophy as such had recognized them) as against that abstract endlessness of ratiocination, that duty for duty's sake, that formless intellectualism, which apprehends nature and actuality, sense and feeling, as just a barrier, just contradicting it and hostile. It is *Schiller* [1759-1805] who must be given great credit for breaking through the Kantian subjectivity and abstraction of thinking and for venturing on an attempt to get beyond this by [intellectually grasping the unity and reconciliation as the truth and by actualizing them in artistic production.] For Schiller in his aesthetic writings has not merely taken good note of art and its interest, without any regard for its relation to philosophy proper, but he has also compared his interest in the beauty of art with philosophical principles, and only by starting from them and with their aid did he penetrate into the deeper nature and concept of the beautiful. Even so, one feels that at one period of his work he busied himself with thought more even than was advantageous for the naïve beauty of his works of art. Deliberate concentration on abstract reflections and even an interest in the philosophical Concept is noticeable in many of his poems. For this he has been reproached, and especially blamed and depreciated in comparison with Goethe's objectivity and his invariable naïveté, steadily undisturbed by the Concept. But in this respect Schiller, as a poet, only paid the debt of his time, and what was to blame was a perplexity which turned out only to the honour of this sublime soul and profound mind and only to the advantage of science and knowledge.

At the same period this same scientific impulse withdrew Goethe too from his proper sphere—poetry. Yet, just as Schiller immersed himself in the consideration of the inner depths of the *spirit*, so Goethe pursued his own proper genius into the *natural* side of art, into external nature, to the organisms of plants and animals, to crystals, the formation of clouds, and colours. To this scientific research Goethe brought his great genius which in these subjects had altogether thrown to the winds the outlook of the mere

Understanding with its error, just as Schiller, on the other side, had succeeded in asserting, against the Understanding's treatment of willing and thinking, the Idea of the free totality of beauty. A number of Schiller's writings is devoted to this insight into the nature of art, especially his *Letters on Aesthetic Education*.¹

In these *Letters* the chief point from which Schiller starts is that every individual man bears within himself the capacity for ideal manhood. This genuine man, he holds, is represented by the State which he takes to be the objective, universal, and as it were canonical, form in which the diversity of individual persons aims at collecting and combining itself into a unity. Now he thought that there were two ways of presenting how man, living in time, might correspond with man in the Idea: on the one hand, the State, as the genus of ethics, law, and intelligence, might cancel individuality; on the other hand, the individual might raise himself to the genus, and the man of time ennoble himself into the man of the Idea. Reason, he thinks, demands unity as such, what accords with the genus, while nature demands multiplicity and individuality; and both these legislatures make equal claims on man. Now in the conflict of these opposite sides, aesthetic education is precisely to actualize the demand for their mediation and reconciliation, since, according to Schiller, it proceeds by so developing inclination, sensuousness, impulse, and heart that they become rational in themselves; and in this way reason too, freedom, and spirituality emerge from their abstraction and, united with the natural element, now rationalized, acquire flesh and blood in it. The beautiful is thus pronounced to be the mutual formation of the rational and the sensuous, and this formation to be the genuinely actual. In general this view of Schiller's can be recognized already in his *Anmut und Würde* [*Grace and Dignity*, 1793], as well as in his poems, because he makes the praise of women his special subject matter, for in their character he recognized and emphasized just that spontaneously present unification of spirit and nature.

This *unity* of universal and particular, freedom and necessity, spirit and nature, which Schiller grasped scientifically as the principle and essence of art and which he laboured unremittingly to call into actual life by art and aesthetic education, has now, as

¹ First published in his periodical, *Die Horen*, later in a collection of his prose writings (Leipzig, 1801, part 3).

the *Idea itself*, been made the principle of knowledge and existence, and the Idea has become recognized as that which alone is true and actual. Thereby philosophy has attained, with Schelling,¹ its absolute standpoint; and while art had already begun to assert its proper nature and dignity in relation to the highest interests of mankind, it was now that the *concept* of art, and the place of art in philosophy was discovered, and art has been accepted, even if in one aspect in a distorted way (which this is not the place to discuss), still in its high and genuine vocation. Likewise Winckelmann² at an earlier date was inspired by his insight into the ideals of the Greeks in a way whereby he opened up a new sense for considering art; he rescued it from ways of regarding it as serving common ends or merely imitating nature, and has powerfully encouraged the discovery of the Idea of art in works of art and the history of art. For Winckelmann is to be regarded as one of the men who, in the field of art, have opened up for the spirit a new organ and totally new modes of treatment. Still, on the theory and philosophical knowledge of art his view has had less influence.

To touch briefly on the course of the further development of the subject, alongside the reawakening of the philosophical Idea, A. W. and Friedrich von Schlegel,³ greedy for novelty in the search for the distinctive and extraordinary, appropriated from the philosophical Idea as much as their completely non-philosophical, but essentially critical natures were capable of accepting. For neither of them can claim a reputation for speculative thought. Nevertheless, it was they who, with their critical talent, put themselves near the standpoint of the Idea, and with great freedom of speech and boldness of innovation, even if with miserable philosophical ingredients, directed a spirited polemic against the views of their predecessors. And thus in different branches of art they did introduce a new standard of judgement and new considerations which were higher than those they attacked. But since their criticism was not accompanied by a thoroughly philosophical knowledge of their standard, this standard retained a somewhat indefinite and vacillating character, so that they sometimes achieved too much, sometimes too little. It must also be put to their credit that they brought to light again and lovingly exalted things that were antiquated and

¹ 1775-1854. See his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800).

² His *History of Art in Antiquity* appeared in 1764.

³ 1769-1845 and 1772-1829 respectively.

too little valued at the time, as, for instance, the older Italian and Dutch painting, the *Nibelungenlied*, etc., and that they endeavoured with enthusiasm to learn and teach things little known, like Indian poetry and mythology. But however high their credit is for this, they set too high a value on these epochs, and sometimes fell into the error of admiring the mediocre, e.g. Holberg's¹ comedies, of ascribing universal worth to what was only relatively valuable, or even having the audacity to show themselves enthused by a perverse tendency and a subordinate standpoint, as if it were something supreme.

(iii) *Irony*

From this tendency, and especially from the convictions and doctrines of F. von Schlegel, there was further developed in diverse shapes the so-called 'irony'.² This had its deeper root, in one of its aspects, in Fichte's philosophy, in so far as the principles of this philosophy were applied to art. F. von Schlegel, like Schelling, started from Fichte's standpoint, Schelling to go beyond it altogether, Schlegel to develop it in his own way and to tear himself loose from it. Now so far as concerns the closer connection of Fichte's propositions with one tendency of irony, we need in this respect emphasize only the following points about this irony, namely that [*first*] Fichte sets up the *ego* as the absolute principle of all knowing, reason, and cognition, and at that the *ego* that remains throughout abstract and formal. *Secondly*, this *ego* is therefore in itself just simple, and, on the one hand, every particularity, every characteristic, every content is negated in it, since everything is submerged in this abstract freedom and unity, while, on the other hand, every content which is to have value for the *ego* is only put and recognized by the *ego* itself. Whatever is, is only by the instrumentality of the *ego*, and what exists by my instrumentality I can equally well annihilate again.

Now if we stop at these absolutely empty forms which originate from the absoluteness of the abstract *ego*, nothing is treated *in and for itself* and as valuable in itself, but only as produced by the subjectivity of the *ego*. But in that case the *ego* can remain lord and master of everything, and in no sphere of morals, law, things

¹ Baron L. Holberg, 1684-1754, Danish dramatist and historian.

² See *Philosophy of Right*, § 140(f), Eng. tr. (Oxford, 1942), pp. 101-3, 258. Also see below, p. 69, note, and index, s.v.

human and divine, profane and sacred, is there anything that would not first have to be laid down by the *ego*, and that therefore could not equally well be destroyed by it. Consequently everything genuinely and independently real becomes only a show, not true and genuine on its own account or through itself, but a mere appearance due to the *ego* in whose power and caprice and at whose free disposal it remains. To admit or cancel it depends wholly on the pleasure of the *ego*, already absolute in itself simply as *ego*.

Now *thirdly*, the *ego* is a *living*, active individual, and its life consists in making its individuality real in its own eyes and in those of others, in expressing itself, and bringing itself into appearance. For every man, by living, tries to realize himself and does realize himself. Now in relation to beauty and art, this acquires the meaning of living as an artist and forming one's life *artistically*. But on this principle, I live as an artist when all my action and my expression in general, in connection with any content whatever, remains for me a mere show and assumes a shape which is wholly in my power. In that case I am not really in *earnest* either with this content or, generally, with its expression and actualization. For genuine earnestness enters only by means of a substantial interest, something of intrinsic worth like truth, ethical life, etc.,—by means of a content which counts as such for me as essential, so that I only become essential myself in my own eyes in so far as I have immersed myself in such a content and have brought myself into conformity with it in all my knowing and acting. When the *ego* that sets up and dissolves everything out of its own caprice is the artist, to whom no content of consciousness appears as absolute and independently real but only as a self-made and destructible show, such earnestness can find no place, since validity is ascribed only to the formalism of the *ego*.

True, in the eyes of others the appearance which I present to them may be regarded seriously, in that they take me to be really concerned with the matter in hand, but in that case they are simply deceived, poor limited creatures, without the faculty and ability to apprehend and reach the loftiness of my standpoint. Therefore this shows me that not everyone is so free (i.e. formally free)¹ as to see in everything which otherwise has value, dignity, and sanctity for mankind just a product of his own power of caprice, whereby

¹ i.e. not even merely capricious enough.

he is at liberty either to grant validity to such things, to determine himself and fill his life by means of them, or the reverse. Moreover this virtuosity of an ironical artistic life apprehends itself as a divine creative genius for which anything and everything is only an unsubstantial creature, to which the creator, knowing himself to be disengaged and free from everything, is not bound, because he is just as able to destroy it as to create it. In that case, he who has reached this standpoint of divine genius looks down from his high rank on all other men, for they are pronounced dull and limited, inasmuch as law, morals, etc., still count for them as fixed, essential, and obligatory. So then the individual, who lives in this way as an artist, does give himself relations to others: he lives with friends, mistresses, etc.; but, by his being a genius, this relation to his own specific reality, his particular actions, as well as to what is absolute and universal, is at the same time null; his attitude to it all is ironical.

These three points comprise the general meaning of the divine irony of genius, as this concentration of the *ego* into itself, for which all bonds are snapped and which can live only in the bliss of self-enjoyment. This irony was invented by Friedrich von Schlegel, and many others have babbled about it or are now babbling about it again.

The next form of this negativity of irony is, on the one hand, the vanity of everything factual, moral, and of intrinsic worth, the nullity of everything objective and absolutely valid. If the *ego* remains at this standpoint, everything appears to it as null and vain, except its own subjectivity which therefore becomes hollow and empty and itself mere vanity.¹ But, on the other hand, the *ego* may, contrariwise, fail to find satisfaction in this self-enjoyment and instead become inadequate to itself, so that it now feels a craving for the solid and the substantial, for specific and essential interests. Out of this comes misfortune, and the contradiction that, on the one hand, the subject does want to penetrate into truth and longs for objectivity, but, on the other hand, cannot renounce his isolation and withdrawal into himself or tear himself free from this unsatisfied abstract inwardness. Now he is attacked by the yearning which also we have seen proceeding from Fichteian philosophy. The dissatisfaction of this quiescence and impotence—which may not do or touch anything for fear of losing its inner harmony and

¹ *Eitelkeit*. Hegel is playing on its two meanings, vacuity and conceit.

which, even if pure in itself, is still unreal and empty despite its desire for reality and what is absolute—is the source of yearning and a *morbid* beautiful soul. For a *truly* beautiful soul acts and is actual. That longing, however, is only the empty vain subject's sense of nullity, and he lacks the strength to escape from this vanity and fill himself with a content of substance.

But in so far as irony has been made into a form of art, it has not stopped at giving artistic form merely to the personal life and particular individuality of the ironical artist; apart from the artistic work presented in his own actions, etc., the artist was supposed to produce external works of art also as the product of his imagination. The principle of these productions, which can emerge for the most part only in poetry, is now over again to represent the Divine as the ironical. But the ironical, as the individuality of genius, lies in the self-destruction of the noble, great, and excellent; and so the objective art-formations too will have to display only the principle of absolute subjectivity, by showing forth what has worth and dignity for mankind as null in its self-destruction. This then implies that not only is there to be no seriousness about law, morals, and truth, but that there is nothing in what is lofty and best, since, in its appearance in individuals, characters, and actions, it contradicts and destroys itself and so is ironical about itself.

This form, taken abstractly, borders nearly on the principle of the comic; yet in this kinship the comic must be essentially distinguished from the ironic. For the comic must be restricted to showing that what destroys itself is something inherently null, a false and contradictory phenomenon, a whim, e.g., an oddity, a particular caprice in comparison with a mighty passion, or even a *supposedly* tenable principle and firm maxim. But it is a totally different thing if what is in fact moral and true, any inherently substantial content, displays itself in an individual, and by his agency, as null. In such an event the individual is null in character and contemptible, and his weakness and lack of character is brought into his portrayals also. Therefore in this difference between the ironic and the comic what is essentially at issue is the content of what is destroyed. There *are* bad, useless people who cannot stick to their fixed and important aim but abandon it again and let it be destroyed in themselves. Irony loves this irony of loss of character. For true character implies, on the one hand,

essentially worthy aims, and, on the other hand, a firm grip of such aims, so that the whole being of its individuality would be lost if the aims had to be given up and abandoned. This fixity and substantiality constitutes the keynote of character. Cato can live only as a Roman and a republican. But if irony is taken as the keynote of the representation, then the most inartistic of all principles is taken to be the principle of the work of art. For the result is to produce, in part, commonplace figures, in part, figures worthless and without bearing, since the substance of their being proves in them to be a nullity; in part, finally, there appear attached to them those yearnings and unresolved contradictions of the heart [which we mentioned above]. Such representations can awaken no genuine interest. For this reason, after all, on the part of irony there are steady complaints about the public's deficiency in profound sensibility, artistic insight, and genius, because it does not understand this loftiness of irony; i.e. the public does not enjoy this mediocrity and what is partly wishy-washy, partly characterless. And it is a good thing that these worthless yearning natures do not please; it is a comfort that this insincerity and hypocrisy are not to people's liking, and that on the contrary people want full and genuine interests as well as characters which remain true to their important intrinsic worth.

As an historical remark it may be added that it was especially Solger and Ludwig Tieck¹ who adopted irony as the supreme principle of art.

Of Solger this is not the place to speak at the length he deserves, and I must confine myself to a few observations. Solger was not content, like the others, with superficial philosophical culture; on the contrary; his genuinely speculative inmost need impelled him to plumb the depths of the philosophical Idea. In this process he came to the dialectical moment of the Idea, to the point which I call 'infinite absolute negativity', to the activity of the Idea in so negating itself as infinite and universal as to become finitude and particularity, and in nevertheless cancelling this negation in turn and so re-establishing the universal and infinite in the finite and particular. To this negativity Solger firmly clung, and of course it is

¹ K. W. F. Solger, 1780-1819. See *Philosophy of Right* (Eng. tr. cit., pp. 101-2). Tieck, 1773-1853. See below, section on *The Ancient Epigram*. Hegel dealt at some length with Solger and Tieck in a review of Solger's posthumous writings in 1828.

one element in the speculative Idea, yet interpreted as this purely dialectical unrest and dissolution of both infinite and finite, only *one element*, and not, as Solger will have it, the *whole* Idea. Unfortunately Solger's life was broken off too soon for him to have been able to reach the concrete development of the philosophical Idea. So he got no further than this aspect of negativity which has an affinity with the ironic dissolution of the determinate and the inherently substantial alike, and in which he also saw the principle of artistic activity. Yet in his actual life, having regard to the firmness, seriousness, and stoutness of his character, he was neither himself an ironic artist of the kind depicted above, nor was his profound sense for genuine works of art, nurtured by his persistent study of art, in this respect of an ironical nature. So much in justification of Solger, who in his life, philosophy, and art deserves to be distinguished from the previously mentioned apostles of irony.

As regards Ludwig Tieck, his culture too dates from that period in which Jena was for some time the cultural centre. Tieck and others of these distinguished people are indeed very familiar with such expressions as 'irony', but without telling us what they mean. So Tieck does always demand irony; yet when he goes on himself to judge works of art, while it is true that his recognition and description of their greatness is excellent, if we hope to find here the best opportunity of showing what the irony is in such a work as, e.g., *Romeo and Juliet*, we are deceived. We hear no more about irony.¹

[8] *Division of the Subject*

After the foregoing introductory remarks it is now time to pass on to the study of our subject itself. But the introduction, where we still are, can in this respect do no more than sketch for our apprehension a conspectus of the entire course of our subsequent

¹ The term 'Romantic Irony' seems to be derived from F. von Schlegel and it is generally understood to mean that the writer, while still creative and emotional, should remain aloof and self-critical. What Hegel says of Tieck is correct. In Tieck's critical essays, especially on Shakespeare, he seldom, if ever, has anything to say about irony. Hegel may have in mind the preface to volume 6 of Tieck's collected Works; it appeared in 1828 and mentions Solger. (I owe this note to Professor James Trainer.) For a full treatment of Romantic Irony and Hegel's attitude to it, see O. Pöggeler, *Hegels Kritik der Romantik* (Bonn, 1956).

scientific studies. But since we have spoken of art as itself proceeding from the absolute Idea, and have even pronounced its end to be the sensuous presentation of the Absolute itself, we must proceed, even in this conspectus, by showing, at least in general, how the particular parts of the subject emerge from the conception of artistic beauty as the presentation of the Absolute. Therefore we must attempt, in the most general way, to awaken an idea of this conception.

It has already been said that the content of art is the Idea, while its form is the configuration of sensuous material. Now art has to harmonize these two sides and bring them into a free reconciled totality. The *first* point here is the demand that the content which is to come into artistic representation should be in itself qualified for such representation. For otherwise we obtain only a bad combination, because in that case a content ill-adapted to figurativeness and external presentation is made to adopt this form, or, in other words, material explicitly prosaic is expected to find a really appropriate mode of presentation in the form antagonistic to its nature.

The *second* demand, derived from the first, requires of the content of art that it be not anything abstract in itself, but concrete, though not concrete in the sense in which the sensuous is concrete when it is contrasted with everything spiritual and intellectual and these are taken to be simple and abstract. For everything genuine in spirit and nature alike is inherently concrete and, despite its universality, has nevertheless subjectivity and particularity in itself. If we say, for example, of God that he is simply *one*, the supreme being as such, we have thereby only enunciated a dead abstraction of the sub-rational Understanding. Such a God, not apprehended himself in his concrete truth, will provide no content for art, especially not for visual art. Therefore the Jews and the Turks have not been able by art to represent their God, who does not even amount to such an abstraction of the Understanding, in the positive way that the Christians have. For in Christianity God is set forth in his truth, and therefore as thoroughly concrete in himself, as person, as subject, and, more closely defined, as spirit. What he is as spirit is made explicit for religious apprehension as a Trinity of Persons, which yet at the same time is self-aware as *one*. Here we have essentiality or universality, and particularization, together with their reconciled unity, and only such unity is

the concrete. Now since a content, in order to be true at all, must be of this concrete kind, art too demands similar concreteness, because the purely abstract universal has not in itself the determinate character of advancing to particularization and phenomenal manifestation and to unity with itself in these.

Now, *thirdly*, if a sensuous form and shape is to correspond with a genuine and therefore concrete content, it must likewise be something individual, in itself completely concrete and single. The fact that the concrete accrues to both sides of art, i.e. to both content and its presentation, is precisely the point in which both can coincide and correspond with one another; just as, for instance, the natural shape of the human body is such a sensuously concrete thing, capable of displaying spirit, which is concrete in itself, and of showing itself in conformity with it. Therefore, after all, we must put out of our minds the idea that it is purely a matter of chance that to serve as such a genuine shape an actual phenomenon of the external world is selected. For art does not seize upon this form either because it just finds it there or because there is no other; on the contrary, the concrete content itself involves the factor of external, actual, and indeed even sensuous manifestation. But then in return this sensuous concrete thing, which bears the stamp of an essentially spiritual content, is also essentially *for* our inner [apprehension]; the external shape, whereby the content is made visible and imaginable, has the purpose of existing solely for our mind and spirit. For this reason alone are content and artistic form fashioned in conformity with one another. The *purely* sensuously concrete—external nature as such—does not have this purpose for the sole reason of its origin. The variegated richly coloured plumage of birds shines even when unseen, their song dies away unheard; the torch-thistle, which blooms for only one night, withers in the wilds of the southern forests without having been admired, and these forests, jungles themselves of the most beautiful and luxuriant vegetation, with the most sweet-smelling and aromatic perfumes, rot and decay equally unenjoyed. But the work of art is not so naïvely self-centred; it is essentially a question, an address to the responsive breast, a call to the mind and the spirit.

Although illustration by art is not in this respect a matter of chance, it is, on the other hand, not the highest way of apprehending the spiritually concrete. The higher way, in contrast to

representation by means of the sensuously concrete, is thinking, which in a relative sense is indeed abstract, but it must be concrete, not one-sided, if it is to be true and rational. How far a specific content has its appropriate form in sensuous artistic representation, or whether, owing to its own nature, it essentially demands a higher, more spiritual, form, is a question of the distinction which appears at once, for example, in a comparison between the Greek gods and God as conceived by Christian ideas. The Greek god is not abstract but individual, closely related to the natural [human] form. The Christian God too is indeed a concrete personality, but is *pure* spirituality and is to be known as *spirit* and in spirit. His medium of existence is therefore essentially inner knowledge and not the external natural form through which he can be represented only imperfectly and not in the whole profundity of his nature.

But since art has the task of presenting the Idea to immediate perception in a sensuous shape and not in the form of thinking and pure spirituality as such, and, since this presenting has its value and dignity in the correspondence and unity of both sides, i.e. the Idea and its outward shape, it follows that the loftiness and excellence of art in attaining a reality adequate to its Concept will depend on the degree of inwardness and unity in which Idea and shape appear fused into one.

In this point of higher truth, as the spirituality which the artistic formation has achieved in conformity with the Concept of spirit, there lies the basis for the division of the philosophy of art. For, before reaching the true Concept of its absolute essence, the spirit has to go through a course of stages, a series grounded in this Concept itself; and to this course of the content which the spirit gives to itself there corresponds a course, immediately connected therewith, of configurations of art, in the form of which the spirit, as artist, gives itself a consciousness of itself.

This course within the spirit of art has itself in turn, in accordance with its own nature, two sides. *First*, this development is itself a spiritual and universal one, since the sequence of definite conceptions of the world, as the definite but comprehensive consciousness of nature, man, and God, gives itself artistic shape.¹

¹ i.e. the art expressive of one world-view differs from that which expresses another: Greek art as a whole differs from Christian art as a whole. The sequence of different religions gives rise to a sequence of different art-forms.

Secondly, this inner development of art has to give itself immediate existence and sensuous being, and the specific modes of the sensuous being of art are themselves a totality of necessary differences in art, i.e. the *particular arts*. Artistic configuration and its differences are, on the one hand, as spiritual, of a more universal kind and not bound to *one* material [e.g. stone or paint], and sensuous existence is itself differentiated in numerous ways; but since this existence, like spirit, has the Concept implicitly for its inner soul, a specific sensuous material does thereby, on the other hand, acquire a closer relation and a secret harmony with the spiritual differences and forms of artistic configuration.

However, in its completeness our science is divided into three main sections:

First, we acquire a *universal* part. This has for its content and subject both the universal Idea of artistic beauty as the Ideal, and also the nearer relation of the Ideal to nature on the one hand and to subjective artistic production on the other.

Secondly, there is developed out of the conception of artistic beauty a *particular* part, because the essential differences contained in this conception unfold into a sequence of particular forms of artistic configuration.

Thirdly, there is a *final* part which has to consider the individualization of artistic beauty, since art advances to the sensuous realization of its creations and rounds itself off in a system of single arts and their genera and species.

(i) *The Idea of the Beauty of Art or the Ideal*

In the first place, so far as the first and second parts are concerned, we must at once, if what follows is to be made intelligible, recall again that the Idea as the beauty of art is not the Idea as such, in the way that a metaphysical logic has to apprehend it as the Absolute, but the Idea as shaped forward into reality and as having advanced to immediate unity and correspondence with this reality. For the *Idea as such* is indeed the absolute truth itself, but the truth only in its not yet objectified universality, while the Idea as the *beauty of art* is the Idea with the nearer qualification of being both essentially individual reality and also an individual configuration of reality destined essentially to embody and reveal the Idea. Accordingly there is here expressed the demand that the Idea and its configuration as a concrete reality shall be made

completely adequate to one another. Taken thus, the Idea as reality, shaped in accordance with the Concept of the Idea, is the *Ideal*.

The problem of such correspondence might in the first instance be understood quite formally in the sense that any Idea at all might serve, if only the actual shape, no matter which, represented precisely this specific Idea. But in that case the demanded *truth* of the Ideal is confused with mere *correctness* which consists in the expression of some meaning or other in an appropriate way and therefore the direct rediscovery of its sense in the shape produced. The Ideal is not to be thus understood. For any content can be represented quite adequately, judged by the standard of its own essence, without being allowed to claim the artistic beauty of the Ideal. Indeed, in comparison with ideal beauty, the representation will even appear defective. In this regard it may be remarked in advance, what can only be proved later, namely that the defectiveness of a work of art is not always to be regarded as due, as may be supposed, to the artist's lack of skill; on the contrary, defectiveness of *form* results from defectiveness of *content*. So, for example, the Chinese, Indians, and Egyptians, in their artistic shapes, images of gods, and idols, never get beyond formlessness or a bad and untrue definiteness of form. They could not master true beauty because their mythological ideas, the content and thought of their works of art, were still indeterminate, or determined badly, and so did not consist of the content which is absolute in itself. Works of art are all the more excellent in expressing true beauty, the deeper is the inner truth of their content and thought. And in this connection we are not merely to think, as others may, of any greater or lesser skill with which natural forms as they exist in the external world are apprehended and imitated. For, in certain stages of art-consciousness and presentation, the abandonment and distortion of natural formations is not unintentional lack of technical skill or practice, but intentional alteration which proceeds from and is demanded by what is in the artist's mind. Thus, from this point of view, there is imperfect art which in technical and other respects may be quite perfect in its *specific* sphere, and yet it is clearly defective in comparison with the concept of art itself and the Ideal.

Only in the highest art are Idea and presentation truly in conformity with one another, in the sense that the shape given to the

Idea is in itself the absolutely true shape, because the content of the Idea which that shape expresses is itself the true and genuine content. Associated with this, as has already been indicated, is the fact that the Idea must be determined in and through itself as a concrete totality, and therefore possess in itself the principle and measure of its particularization and determinacy in external appearance. For example, the Christian imagination will be able to represent God in human form and its expression of *spirit*, only because God himself is here completely known in himself as *spirit*. Determinacy is, as it were, the bridge to appearance. Where this determinacy is not a totality emanating from the Idea itself, where the Idea is not presented as self-determining and self-particularizing, the Idea remains abstract and has its determinacy, and therefore the principle for its particular and solely appropriate mode of appearance, not in itself, but outside itself. On this account, then, the still abstract Idea has its shape also external to itself, not settled by itself. On the other hand, the inherently concrete Idea carries within itself the principle of its mode of appearance and is therefore its own free configurator. Thus the truly concrete Idea alone produces its true configuration, and this correspondence of the two is the Ideal.

(ii) *Development of the Ideal into the Particular Forms of the Beauty of Art*

But because the Idea is in this way a concrete unity, this unity can enter the art-consciousness only through the unfolding and then the reconciliation of the particularizations of the Idea, and, through this development, artistic beauty acquires a *totality of particular stages and forms*. Therefore, after studying artistic beauty in itself and on its own account, we must see how beauty as a whole decomposes into its particular determinations. This gives, as the *second* part of our study, the doctrine of the *forms of art*. These forms find their origin in the different ways of grasping the Idea as content, whereby a difference in the configuration in which the Idea appears is conditioned. Thus the forms of art are nothing but the different relations of meaning and shape, relations which proceed from the Idea itself and therefore provide the true basis for the division of this sphere. For division must always be implicit in the concept, the particularization and division of which is in question.

We have here to consider *three* relations of the Idea to its configuration.

(a) *First*, art begins when the Idea, still in its indeterminacy and obscurity, or in bad and untrue determinacy, is made the content of artistic shapes. Being indeterminate, it does not yet possess in itself that individuality which the Ideal demands; its abstraction and one-sidedness leave its shape externally defective and arbitrary. The first form of art is therefore rather a *mere search* for portrayal than a capacity for true presentation; the Idea has not found the form even in itself and therefore remains struggling and striving after it. We may call this form, in general terms, the *symbolic* form of art. In it the abstract Idea has its shape outside itself in the natural sensuous material from which the process of shaping starts¹ and with which, in its appearance, this process is linked. Perceived natural objects are, on the one hand, primarily left as they are, yet at the same time the substantial Idea is imposed on them as their meaning so that they now acquire a vocation to express it and so are to be interpreted as if the Idea itself were present in them. A corollary of this is the fact that natural objects have in them an aspect according to which they are capable of representing a universal meaning. But since a complete correspondence is not yet possible, this relation can concern only an *abstract* characteristic, as when, for example, in a lion strength is meant.

On the other hand, the abstractness of this relation brings home to consciousness even so the foreignness of the Idea to natural phenomena, and the Idea, which has no other reality to express it, launches out in all these shapes, seeks itself in them in their unrest and extravagance, but yet does not find them adequate to itself. So now the Idea exaggerates natural shapes and the phenomena of reality itself into indefiniteness and extravagance; it staggers round in them, it bubbles and ferments in them, does violence to them, distorts and stretches them unnaturally, and tries to elevate their phenomenal appearance to the Idea by the diffuseness, immensity, and splendour of the formations employed. For the Idea is here still more or less indeterminate and unshapable, while the natural objects are thoroughly determinate in their shape.

¹ An unknown block of stone may symbolize the Divine, but it does not represent it. Its natural shape has no connection with the Divine and is therefore external to it and not an embodiment of it. When shaping begins, the shapes produced are symbols, perhaps, but in themselves are fantastic and monstrous.

In the incompatibility of the two sides to one another, the relation of the Idea to the objective world therefore becomes a *negative* one, since the Idea, as something inward, is itself unsatisfied by such externality, and, as the inner universal substance thereof, it persists *sublime* above all this multiplicity of shapes which do not correspond with it. In the light of this sublimity, the natural phenomena and human forms and events are accepted, it is true, and left as they are, but yet they are recognized at the same time as incompatible with their meaning which is raised far above all mundane content.

These aspects constitute in general the character of the early artistic pantheism of the East, which on the one hand ascribes absolute meaning to even the most worthless objects, and, on the other, violently coerces the phenomena to express its view of the world whereby it becomes bizarre, grotesque, and tasteless, or turns the infinite but abstract freedom of the substance [i.e. the one Lord] disdainfully against all phenomena as being null and evanescent. By this means the meaning cannot be completely pictured in the expression and, despite all striving and endeavour, the incompatibility of Idea and shape still remains unconquered.— This may be taken to be the first form of art, the symbolic form with its quest, its fermentation, its mysteriousness, and its sublimity.

(b) In the *second* form of art which we will call the *classical*, the double defect of the symbolic form is extinguished. The symbolic shape is imperfect because, (i) in it the Idea is presented to consciousness only as indeterminate or determined *abstractly*, and, (ii) for this reason the correspondence of meaning and shape is always defective and must itself remain purely abstract. The classical art-form clears up this double defect; it is the free and adequate embodiment of the Idea in the shape peculiarly appropriate to the Idea itself in its essential nature. With this shape, therefore, the Idea is able to come into free and complete harmony. Thus the classical art-form is the first to afford the production and vision of the completed Ideal and to present it as actualized in fact.

Nevertheless, the conformity of concept and reality in classical art must not be taken in the purely *formal* sense of a correspondence between a content and its external configuration, any more than this could be the case with the Ideal itself. Otherwise every

portrayal of nature, every cast of features, every neighbourhood, flower, scene, etc., which constitutes the end and content of the representation, would at once be classical on the strength of such congruity between content and form. On the contrary, in classical art the peculiarity of the content consists in its being itself the concrete Idea, and as such the concretely spiritual, for it is the spiritual alone which is the truly inner [self]. Consequently, to suit such a content we must try to find out what in nature belongs to the spiritual in and for itself. The *original* Concept¹ itself it must be which *invented* the shape for concrete spirit, so that now the *subjective* Concept—here the spirit of art—has merely *found* this shape and made it, as a natural shaped existent, appropriate to free individual spirituality. This shape, which the Idea as spiritual—indeed as individually determinate spirituality—assumes when it is to proceed out into a temporal manifestation, is the human form. Of course personification and anthropomorphism have often been maligned as a degradation of the spiritual, but in so far as art's task is to bring the spiritual before our eyes in a sensuous manner, it must get involved in this anthropomorphism, since spirit appears sensuously in a satisfying way only in its body. The transmigration of souls is in this respect an abstract idea,² and physiology should have made it one of its chief propositions that life in its development had necessarily to proceed to the human form as the one and only sensuous appearance appropriate to spirit.

But the human body in its forms counts in classical art no longer as a merely sensuous existent, but only as the existence and natural shape of the spirit, and it must therefore be exempt from all the deficiency of the purely sensuous and from the contingent finitude of the phenomenal world. While in this way the shape is purified in order to express in itself a content adequate to itself, on the other hand, if the correspondence of meaning and shape is to be perfect, the spirituality, which is the content, must be of such a kind that it can express itself completely in the natural human form, without towering beyond and above this expression in

¹ Bosanquet (op. cit., p. 185) seems to be right in suggesting that 'original Concept' means 'God', and that he *invented* man as an expression of spirit; art *finds* him as appropriate to express the individual spirit. Hegel is fond of the play on words between *erfinden* (invent) and *finden* (find).

² Bosanquet points out that the idea is abstract because it represents the soul as independent of an appropriate body—the human soul as capable of existing in a beast's body (op. cit., p. 186).

sensuous and bodily terms. Therefore here the spirit is at once determined as particular and human, not as purely absolute and eternal, since in this latter sense it can proclaim and express itself only as spirituality.

This last point in its turn is the defect which brings about the dissolution of the classical art-form and demands a transition to a higher form, the *third*, namely the *romantic*.

(c) The romantic form of art cancels again the completed unification of the Idea and its reality, and reverts, even if in a higher way, to that difference and opposition of the two sides which in symbolic art remained unconquered. The classical form of art has attained the pinnacle of what illustration by art could achieve, and if there is something defective in it, the defect is just art itself and the restrictedness of the sphere of art. This restrictedness lies in the fact that art in general takes as its subject-matter the spirit (i.e. the *universal*, infinite and concrete in its nature) in a *sensuously* concrete form, and classical art presents the complete unification of spiritual and sensuous existence as the *correspondence* of the two. But in this blending of the two, spirit is not in fact represented in its *true nature*. For spirit is the infinite subjectivity of the Idea, which as absolute inwardness cannot freely and truly shape itself outwardly on condition of remaining moulded into a bodily existence as the one appropriate to it.¹

Abandoning this [classical] principle, the romantic form of art cancels the undivided unity of classical art because it has won a content which goes beyond and above the classical form of art and its mode of expression. This content—to recall familiar ideas—coincides with what Christianity asserts of God as a spirit, in distinction from the Greek religion which is the essential and most appropriate content for classical art. In classical art the concrete content is *implicitly* the unity of the divine nature with the human, a unity which, just because it is only immediate and implicit, is adequately manifested also in an immediate and sensuous way. The Greek god is the object of naïve intuition and sensuous imagination, and therefore his shape is the bodily shape of man. The range of his power and his being is individual and particular.

¹ In other words, thought is 'inwardness' in the sense that thoughts are not outside one another in the way that the parts of a body are. This is why the spirit cannot find an adequate embodiment in things but only in thoughts, or at least only in the inner life.

Contrasted with the individual he is a substance and power with which the individual's inner being is only implicitly at one but without itself possessing this oneness as inward subjective knowledge. Now the higher state is the *knowledge* of that *implicit* unity which is the content of the classical art-form and is capable of perfect presentation in bodily shape. But this elevation of the implicit into self-conscious knowledge introduces a tremendous difference. It is the infinite difference which, for example, separates man from animals. Man is an animal, but even in his animal functions, he is not confined to the implicit, as the animal is; he becomes conscious of them, recognizes them, and lifts them, as, for instance, the process of digestion, into self-conscious science. In this way man breaks the barrier of his implicit and immediate character, so that precisely because he *knows* that he is an animal, he ceases to be an animal and attains knowledge of himself as spirit.

Now if in this way what was implicit at the previous stage, the unity of divine and human nature, is raised from an *immediate* to a *known* unity, the *true* element for the realization of this content is no longer the sensuous immediate existence of the spiritual in the bodily form of man, but instead the *inwardness of self-consciousness*. Now Christianity brings God before our imagination as spirit, not as an individual, particular spirit, but as absolute in spirit and in truth. For this reason it retreats from the sensuousness of imagination into spiritual inwardness and makes this, and not the body, the medium and the existence of truth's content. Thus the unity of divine and human nature is a known unity, one to be realized only by *spiritual* knowing and *in spirit*. The new content, thus won, is on this account not tied to sensuous presentation, as if that corresponded to it, but is freed from this immediate existence which must be set down as negative, overcome, and reflected into the spiritual unity. In this way romantic art is the self-transcendence of art but within its own sphere and in the form of art itself.

We may, therefore, in short, adhere to the view that at this third stage the subject-matter of art is *free concrete spirituality*, which is to be manifested as *spirituality* to the spiritually inward. In conformity with this subject-matter, art cannot work for sensuous intuition. Instead it must, on the one hand, work for the inwardness which coalesces with its object simply as if with itself, for

subjective inner depth, for reflective emotion, for feeling which, as spiritual, strives for freedom in itself and seeks and finds its reconciliation only in the inner spirit. This *inner* world constitutes the content of the romantic sphere and must therefore be represented as this inwardness and in the pure appearance of this depth of feeling. Inwardness celebrates its triumph over the external and manifests its victory in and on the external itself, whereby what is apparent to the senses alone sinks into worthlessness.

On the other hand, however, this romantic form too, like all art, needs an external medium for its expression. Now since spirituality has withdrawn into itself out of the external world and immediate unity therewith, the sensuous externality of shape is for this reason accepted and represented, as in symbolic art, as something inessential and transient; and the same is true of the subjective finite spirit and will, right down to the particularity and caprice of individuality, character, action, etc., of incident, plot, etc. The aspect of external existence is consigned to contingency and abandoned to the adventures devised by an imagination whose caprice can mirror what is present to it, *exactly as it is*, just as readily as it can jumble the shapes of the external world and distort them grotesquely. For this external medium has its essence and meaning no longer, as in classical art, in itself and its own sphere, but in the heart which finds its manifestation in itself instead of in the external world and *its* form of reality, and this reconciliation with itself it can preserve or regain in every chance, in every accident that takes independent shape, in all misfortune and grief, and indeed even in crime.

Thereby the separation of Idea and shape, their indifference and inadequacy to each other, come to the fore again, as in symbolic art, but with this essential difference, that, in romantic art, the Idea, the deficiency of which in the symbol brought with it deficiency of shape, now has to appear *perfected* in itself as spirit and heart. Because of this higher perfection, it is not susceptible of an adequate union with the external, since its true reality and manifestation it can seek and achieve only within itself.

This we take to be the general character of the symbolic, classical, and romantic forms of art, as the three relations of the Idea to its shape in the sphere of art. They consist in the striving for, the attainment, and the transcendence of the Ideal as the true Idea of beauty.

(iii) *The System of the Individual Arts*

Now the *third* part of our subject, in contradistinction from the two just described, presupposes the concept of the Ideal and also the three general forms of art, since it is only the realization of these in specific sensuous materials. Therefore we now no longer have to do with the inner development of artistic beauty in its general fundamental characteristics. Instead we have to consider how these characteristics pass into existence, are distinguished from one another externally, and actualize every feature in the conception of beauty independently and explicitly as a *work of art* and not merely as a *general form*. But since it is the differences immanent in the Idea of beauty, and proper to it, that art transfers into external existence, it follows that in this Part III the general forms of art must likewise be the fundamental principle for the articulation and determination of the individual arts; in other words, the kinds of art have the same essential distinctions in themselves which we came to recognize in the general forms of art. Now the *external* objectivity into which these forms are introduced through a sensuous and therefore *particular* material, makes these forms *fall apart* from one another independently, to become distinct ways of their realization, i.e. the particular arts. For each form finds its specific character also in a specific external material, and its adequate realization in the mode of portrayal which that material requires. But, on the other hand, these art-forms, universal as they are despite their determinateness, break the bounds of a *particular* realization through a *specific* kind of art and achieve their existence equally through the other arts, even if in a subordinate way. Therefore the particular arts belong, on the one hand, specifically to *one* of the general forms of art and they shape its adequate external artistic actuality, and, on the other hand, in their own individual way of shaping externality, they present the totality of the forms of art.¹

¹ The forms of art are the symbolic, classical, and romantic. The kinds of art are sculpture, painting, etc. There is a sense in which one kind of art (e.g. sculpture) is the adequate mode in which one form of art (e.g. the classical) is actualized. But no form of art is wholly actualized in one kind of art alone; it requires the others, even if they take a subordinate place. Thus while one kind of art may belong *par excellence* to one form of art, it also appears to some extent in the other forms and may be said to present them all. This whole section on the kinds of art is not easily intelligible except in the light of Hegel's full discussion in Part III of these lectures.

In general terms, that is to say, in Part III of our subject we have to deal with the beauty of art as it unfolds itself, in the arts and their productions, into a world of actualized beauty. The content of this world is the beautiful, and the true beautiful, as we saw, is spirituality given shape, the Ideal, and, more precisely, absolute spirit, the truth itself. This region of divine truth, artistically represented for contemplation and feeling, forms the centre of the whole world of art. It is the independent, free, and divine shape which has completely mastered the externality of form and material and wears it only as a manifestation of itself. Still, since the beautiful develops itself in this region as *objective* reality and therefore distinguishes within itself its single aspects and factors, granting them independent particularity, it follows that this centre now arrays its extremes, realized in their appropriate actuality, as contrasted with itself. One of these extremes therefore forms a still *spiritless objectivity*, the merely natural environment of God. Here the external as such takes shape as something having its spiritual end and content not in itself but in another.

The other extreme is the Divine as inward, as something known, as the variously particularized *subjective* existence of the Deity: the truth as it is effective and living in the sense, heart, and spirit of individual persons, not remaining poured out into its external shape, but returning into the subjective individual inner life. Thereby the Divine as such is at the same time distinguished from its pure manifestation as *Deity*, and thereby enters itself into the particularity characteristic of all individual subjective knowledge, emotion, perception, and feeling. In the analogous sphere of religion, with which art at its highest stage is immediately connected, we conceive this same difference as follows. *First*, earthly natural life in its finitude confronts us on one side; but then, *secondly*, our consciousness makes *God* its object wherein the difference of objectivity and subjectivity falls away, until, *thirdly*, and lastly, we advance from God as such to worship by the *community*, i.e. to God as living and present in subjective consciousness. These three fundamental differences arise also in the world of art in independent development.

(a) The *first* of the particular arts, the one with which we have to begin in accordance with this fundamental characterization of them, is *architecture* as a fine art. Its task consists in so manipulating external inorganic nature that, as an external world conformable to

art, it becomes cognate to spirit. Its material is matter itself in its immediate externality as a mechanical heavy mass, and its forms remain the forms of inorganic nature, set in order according to relations of the abstract Understanding, i.e. relations of symmetry. In this material and in these forms the Ideal, as concrete spirituality, cannot be realized. Hence the reality presented in them remains opposed to the Idea, because it is something external not penetrated by the Idea or only in an abstract relation to it. Therefore the fundamental type of the art of building is the *symbolic* form of art. For architecture is the first to open the way for the adequate actuality of the god, and in his service it slaves away with objective nature in order to work it free from the jungle of finitude and the monstrosity of chance. Thereby it levels a place for the god, forms his external environment, and builds for him his temple as the place for the inner composure of the spirit and its direction on its absolute objects. It raises an enclosure for the assembly of the congregation, as protection against the threat of storm, against rain, tempest, and wild animals, and it reveals in an artistic way, even if in an external one, the wish to assemble. This meaning it can build into its material and the forms thereof with greater or lesser effect, in proportion as the determinate character of the content for which it undertakes its work is more significant or insignificant, more concrete or abstract, more profoundly plumbing its own depths, or more obscure and superficial. Indeed in this respect architecture may itself attempt to go so far as to fashion in its forms and material an adequate artistic existence for that content; but in that event it has already stepped beyond its own sphere and is swinging over to sculpture, the stage above it. For its limitation lies precisely in retaining the spiritual, as something inner, over against its own external forms and thus pointing to what has soul only as to something distinct from these.

(b) But by architecture, after all, the inorganic external world has been purified, set in order symmetrically, and made akin to spirit, and the god's temple, the house of his community, stands there ready. Then into this temple, *secondly*, the god enters himself as the lightning-flash of individuality striking and permeating the inert mass, and the infinite, and no longer merely symmetrical, form of spirit itself concentrates and gives shape to something corporeal. This is the task of *sculpture*.

In so far as in sculpture the spiritual inner life, at which architecture can only hint, makes itself at home in the sensuous shape and its external material, and in so far as these two sides are so mutually formed that neither preponderates, sculpture acquires the *classical* art-form as its fundamental type. Therefore, no expression is left to the sensuous which is not an expression of spirit itself, just as, conversely, for sculpture no spiritual content can be perfectly represented unless it can be fully and adequately presented to view in bodily form. For through sculpture the spirit should stand before us in blissful tranquillity in its bodily form and in immediate unity therewith, and the form should be brought to life by the content of spiritual individuality. So the external sensuous material is no longer processed either according to its mechanical quality alone, as a mass possessing weight, or in forms of the inorganic world, or as indifferent to colour, etc., but in the ideal forms of the human figure and in all three spatial dimensions too. In this last respect we must claim for sculpture that in it the inward and the spiritual come into appearance for the first time in their eternal peace and essential self-sufficiency. To this peace and unity with itself only that external shape corresponds which itself persists in this unity and peace. This is shape according to its *abstract spatiality*.¹ The spirit which sculpture presents is spirit compact in itself, not variously splintered into the play of accidents and passions. Consequently sculpture does not abandon spirit's external form to this variety of appearance, but picks up therein only this one aspect, abstract spatiality in the totality of its dimensions.

(c) Now when architecture has built its temple and the hand of sculpture has set up within it the statues of the god, this sensuously present god is confronted, *thirdly*, in the wide halls of his house, by the *community*. The community is the spiritual reflection into itself of this sensuous existent, and is animating subjectivity and inwardness. With these, therefore, it comes about that the determining principle, alike for the content of art and for the material that represents it outwardly, is particularization and individualization and their requisite subjective apprehension. The compact unity in itself which the god has in sculpture disperses into the plurality of the inner lives of individuals whose unity is not

¹ i.e. shape taken simply as an object occupying space (Bosanquet, op. cit., p. 199).

sensuous but purely ideal.¹ And so only here is God himself truly spirit, spirit in his community, God as this to-and-fro, as this exchange of his inherent unity with his actualization in subjective knowing and its individualization as well as in the universality and union of the multitude. In the community God is released alike from the abstraction of undeveloped self-identity and from his sculptural representation as immediately immersed in a bodily medium; and he is raised to spirituality and knowledge, i.e. to spirit's mirror-image which essentially appears as inward and as subjectivity. Consequently the higher content is now the spiritual, the spiritual as absolute. But at the same time, owing to the dispersal mentioned just now, the spiritual appears here as *particular* spirituality, an individual mind. And it is not the self-sufficient peace of the god in himself, but appearance as such, being *for* another, that manifestation of the self, which comes to the fore here as the chief thing; so now what becomes on its own account an object of artistic representation is the most manifold subjectivity in its living movement and activity as human passion, action, and adventure, and, in general, the wide range of human feeling, willing, and neglect.

Now in conformity with this content the sensuous element in art has likewise to show itself particularized in itself and appropriate to subjective inwardness. Material for this is afforded by colour, musical sound, and finally sound as the mere indication of inner intuitions and ideas. And as modes of realizing the content in question by means of these materials we have painting, music, and poetry. Here the sensuous medium appears as particularized in itself and posited throughout as ideal. Thus it best corresponds with the generally spiritual content of art, and the connection of spiritual meaning with sensuous material grows into a deeper intimacy than was possible in architecture and sculpture. Nevertheless this is a more inner unity which lies entirely on the subjective side, and which, in so far as form and content have to particularize themselves and posit themselves as ideal, can only come about at the expense of the objective universality of the content and its fusion with the immediately sensuous element.

Now in these arts form and content raise themselves to ideality,

¹ The unity of the members of a church is not visible, but exists in their common belief and in the recognition of their community (Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, p. 200).

and thus, since they leave behind symbolic architecture and the classical idea of sculpture, they acquire their type from the *romantic* form of art on whose mode of configuration they are adapted to impress themselves in the most appropriate manner. But they are a totality of arts, because the romantic is in itself the most concrete form of art.

The inner articulation of this *third sphere* of the individual arts may be established as follows:

(α) The *first* art, standing next to sculpture, is *painting*. It uses as material for its content, and its content's configuration, visibility as such, in so far as this is at the same time particularized, i.e. developed into colour. True, the material of architecture and sculpture is likewise visible and coloured, but it is not, as in painting, the making visible as such; it is not the simple light which, differentiating itself in its contrast with darkness, and in combination therewith, becomes colour.¹ This quality of visibility inherently subjectivized and posited as ideal, needs neither the abstract mechanical difference of mass operative in heavy matter, as in architecture, nor the totality of sensuous spatiality which sculpture retains, even if concentrated and in organic shapes. On the contrary, the visibility and the making visible which belong to painting have their differences in a more ideal way, i.e. in the particular colours, and they free art from the *complete* sensuous spatiality of material things by being restricted to the dimensions of a *plane* surface.

On the other hand, the content too attains the widest particularization. Whatever can find room in the human breast as feeling, idea, and purpose, whatever it is capable of shaping into act, all this multiplex material can constitute the variegated content of painting. The whole realm of particularity from the highest ingredients of spirit right down to the most isolated natural objects finds its place here. For even finite nature in its particular scenes and phenomena can come on the stage in painting, if only some allusion to an element of spirit allies it more closely with thought and feeling.

(β) The *second* art through which the romantic form is actualized is, as contrasted with painting, *music*. Its material, though still sensuous, proceeds to still deeper subjectivity and particularization.

¹ An obvious reference to Goethe's theory of colour, one of Hegel's favourite topics.

I mean that music's positing of the sensuous as ideal is to be sought in the fact that it cancels, and idealizes into the individual singularity of one point, the indifferent self-externality of space, the total appearance of which is accepted by painting and deliberately simulated. But as this negativity, the point is concrete in itself and an active cancellation within the material by being a movement and tremor of the material body in itself in its relation to itself. This incipient ideality of matter, which appears no longer as spatial but as temporal ideality, is sound: the sensuous set down as negated with its abstract visibility changed into audibility, since sound releases the Ideal, as it were, from its entanglement in matter.¹

Now this earliest inwardness and ensouling of matter affords the material for the still indefinite inwardness and soul of the spirit, and in its tones makes the whole gamut of the heart's feelings and passions resound and die away. In this manner, just as sculpture stands as the centre between architecture and the arts of romantic subjectivity, so music forms the centre of the romantic arts and makes the point of transition between the abstract spatial sensuousness of painting and the abstract spirituality of poetry. Like architecture, music has in itself, as an antithesis to feeling and inwardness, a relation of quantity conformable to the mathematical intellect; it also has as its basis a fixed conformity to law on the part of the notes and their combination and succession.

(γ) Finally, as for the *third*, most spiritual presentation of romantic art, we must look for it in *poetry*. Its characteristic peculiarity lies in the power with which it subjects to spirit and its ideas the sensuous element from which music and painting began to make art free. For sound, the last external material which poetry keeps, is in poetry no longer the feeling of sonority itself, but a *sign*, by itself void of significance, a sign of the idea which has become concrete in itself, and not merely of indefinite feeling and its nuances and gradations. Sound in this way becomes a *word* as a voice inherently articulated, the meaning of which is to indicate ideas and thoughts. The inherently negative point to which music had moved forward now comes forth as the completely

¹ For this section on sound and music, see Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*, i.e. *Enc. of the Phil. Sciences* §§ 300-2. Eng. tr. by A. V. Miller (Oxford, 1970), pp. 136-47, by M. J. Petry (London, 1970), vol. 2, pp. 69-82. Also the whole section on music in part iii.

concrete point, as the point of the spirit, as the self-conscious individual who out of his own resources unites the infinite *space* of his ideas with the *time* of sound. Yet this sensuous element, which in music was still immediately one with inwardness, is here cut free from the content of consciousness, while spirit determines this content on its own account and in itself and makes it into ideas. To express these it uses sound indeed, but only as a sign in itself without value or content. The sound, therefore, may just as well be a mere letter, since the audible, like the visible, has sunk into being a mere indication of spirit. Therefore the proper element of poetical representation is the poetical *imagination* and the illustration of spirit itself, and since this element is common to all the art-forms, poetry runs through them all and develops itself independently in each of them. Poetry is the universal art of the spirit which has become free in itself and which is not tied down for its realization to external sensuous material; instead, it launches out exclusively in the inner space and the inner time of ideas and feelings. Yet, precisely, at this highest stage, art now transcends itself, in that it forsakes the element of a reconciled embodiment of the spirit in sensuous form and passes over from the poetry of the imagination to the prose of thought.

This we may take to be the articulated totality of the particular arts: the external art of architecture, the objective art of sculpture, and the subjective art of painting, music, and poetry. Of course many other classifications have been attempted, since the work of art presents such a wealth of aspects that, as has often happened, now this one and now that can be made the basis of classification. Consider, for example, the sensuous material. In that case architecture is the crystallization, sculpture the organic configuration, of matter in its sensuous and spatial totality; painting is the coloured surface and line; while, in music, space as such passes over into the inherently filled point of time; until, finally, in poetry the external material is altogether degraded as worthless. Alternatively, these differences have been considered in their totally abstract aspect of space and time. But such abstract characteristics of the work of art may of course, like its material, be consistently pursued in their special features, but they cannot be carried through as the final basis of classification, because any such aspect derives its origin from a higher principle and therefore has to be subordinate thereto.

As this higher principle we have found the art-forms of the symbolical, the classical, and the romantic, which are themselves the universal moments of the Idea of beauty.

The concrete form of their relation to the individual arts is of such a kind that the several arts constitute the real existence of the art-forms. *Symbolic art* attains its most appropriate actuality and greatest application in *architecture*, where it holds sway in accordance with its whole conception and is not yet degraded to be the inorganic nature, as it were, dealt with by another art. For the *classical form*, on the other hand, *sculpture* is its unqualified realization, while it takes architecture only as something surrounding it, and it cannot yet develop painting and music as absolute forms for its content. Finally, the *romantic* art-form masters painting and music, and poetic representation likewise, as modes of expression in a way that is substantive and unqualified. But poetry is adequate to all forms of the beautiful and extends over all of them, because its proper element is beautiful imagination, and imagination is indispensable for every beautiful production, no matter to what form of art it belongs.

Now, therefore, what the particular arts realize in individual works of art is, according to the Concept of art, only the universal forms of the self-unfolding Idea of beauty. It is as the external actualization of this Idea that the wide Pantheon of art is rising. Its architect and builder is the self-comprehending spirit of beauty, but to complete it will need the history of the world in its development through thousands of years.