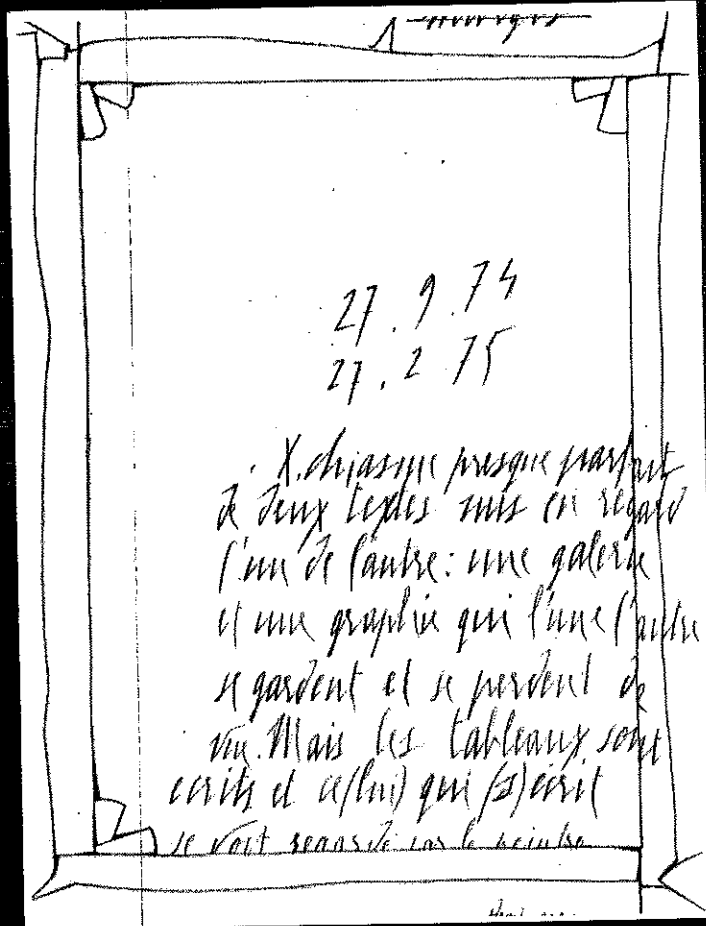


JACQUES DERRIDA

THE TRUTH
IN PAINTING



Translated by
Geoff Bennington and
Ian McLeod

PARERGON

I. Lemmata

to say: abyss and satire of the abyss

it's enough

begin and end with a "that's enough" which would have *nothing to do with* the sufficing or self-sufficing of sufficiency, *nothing to do with* satisfaction. Reconsider, further on, the whole syntax of these untranslatable locutions, the *with* of the *nothing to do* [*rien à voir avec, rien à faire avec*]. Write, if possible, finally, without *with*, not *without*¹ but without *with*, finally, *not even oneself*.

Opening with the *satis*, the *enough* (inside and outside, above and below, to left and right), satire, farce on the edge of excess

NOTE.—Unless followed by the author's initials, all notes to "Parergon" have been added by the translators. The longer passages from Kant are quoted from the English translation, *Kant's Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* by James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), and page references to this work are given in brackets in the text.

1. In English in the text.

Fragments detached (unframed) from the course of an exposition. Or in other words, of a seminar.

A first (shorter) version—very abridged in the protocols entitled "Lemmata"—appeared in *Diagraphé* 3 and 4 (1974). The fourth section, "The Colossal," is entirely unpublished.

The first version was not accompanied by any "illustrative" exhibition. Here it is different. But in this first chapter or quarter-book, the iconography has not the same purpose as in the three following it, where the writing seems to refer to the "picture." Here, a certain illustrative detachment, without reference, without title or legitimacy, comes as if to "illustrate," in place of ornament, the unstable *topos* of ornamentality. Or in other words, to "illustrate," if that is possible, the *parergon*.

displacement of the "pivot" [*cheville*, also "ankle"] ["avec," "cun," "arna," "simul," etc.] since "Ousia et grammé."² Seek as always the lock and the "little key." Lure of writing *with oneself*. "With resources which would lead into the interior of the system of painting, importing *into* the theory of painting all the questions and all the question-codes developed here, around the effects of the 'proper name' and the 'signature,' stealing, in the course of this break-in, all the rigorous criteria of a framing—between the inside and the outside—carrying off the frame [or rather its joints, its angles of assembly] no less than the inside or the outside, the painting or the thing [imagine the damage caused by a theft which robbed you only of your frames, or rather of their joints, and of any possibility of reframing your valuables or your art-objects]." [*Glas*]

And what if *paregion* were the title?

what is a title?

Here the false title is art. A seminar would treat of art. Of art and the fine arts. It would thus answer to a program and to one of its great questions. These questions are all taken from a determinate set. Determined according to history and system. The history would be that of philosophy within which the history of the philosophy of art would be marked off, insofar as it treats of art and of the history of art: its models, its concepts, its problems have not fallen from the skies, they have been constituted according to determinate modes at determinate moments. This set forms a system, a greater logic and an encyclopedia within which the fine arts would stand out as a particular region. The *Agrégation de philosophie* also forms a history and a system

2. "Ousia et grammé: note sur une note de *Sein und Zeit*," in *Marges: de la philosophie* (Paris: Minuit, 1972), 31–78; translated by Alan Bass as *Margins of Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 29–67.

how a question of this type—art—becomes inscribed in a program. We must not only turn to the history of philosophy, for example to the Greater Logic or the Encyclopedica of Hegel, to his *Lectures on Aesthetics* which sketch out, precisely, one part of the encyclopedia, system of training for teaching and cycle of knowledge. We must take account of certain specific relays, for example those of so-called philosophy teaching in France, in the institution of its programs, its forms of examinations and competitions, its scenes and its rhetoric. Whoever undertook such an inquiry—and I do no more here than point out its stakes and its necessity—would no doubt have to direct herself, via a very overdetermined political history, toward the network indicated by the proper name of Victor Cousin, that very French philosopher and politician who thought himself very Hegelian and never stopped wanting to *transplant* (that is just about his word for it) Hegel into France, after having insistently asked him, in writing at least, to impregnate him, Cousin, and through him French philosophy [letters quoted in *Glas*, pp. 207ff]. Strengthened, among other things, by this more or less hysterical pregnancy, he played a determinant role, or at least represented one, in the construction of the French University and its philosophical institution—all the teaching structures that we still inhabit. Here I do no more than name, with a proper name as one of the guiding threads, the necessity of a deconstruction. Following the consistency of its logic, it attacks not only the internal edifice, both semantic and formal, of philosophemes, but also what one would be wrong to assign to it as its external housing, its extrinsic conditions of practice: the historical forms of its pedagogy, the social, economic or political structures of this pedagogical institution. It is because deconstruction interferences with solid structures, "material" institutions, and not only with discourses or signifying representations, that it is always distinct from an analysis or a "critique." And in order to be pertinent, deconstruction works as strictly as possible in that place where the supposedly "internal" order of the philosophical is articulated by [internal and external] necessity with the institutional conditions and forms of teaching. To the point where the concept of institution itself would be sub-

jected to the same deconstructive treatment. But I am already leading into next year's seminar (1974-5)

to delimit

now a narrower entry into what I shall try to expound this year in the course. Traditionally, a course begins by the semantic analysis of its title, of the word or concept which entitles it and which can legitimate its discourse only by receiving its own legitimation from that discourse. Thus one would begin by asking oneself: What is *art*? Then: Where does it come from? What is the origin of *art*? This assumes that we reach agreement about what we understand by the word *art*. Hence: What is the origin of the meaning of "art"? For these questions, the *guiding thread* [but it is precisely toward the notion of the *thread* and the *interlacing* that I should like to lead you, from afar] will *always* have been the existence of "works," of "works of art." Hegel says so at the beginning of the *Lectures on Aesthetics*: we have before us but a single representation, namely, that there are works of art. This representation can furnish us with an appropriate point of departure. So the question then becomes: What is "the origin of the work of art"? And it is not without significance that this question gives its title to one of the last great discourses on art, that of Heidegger.

This protocol of the question installs us in a fundamental presupposition, and massively predetermines the system and combinatory possibilities of answers. What it begins by implying is that art—the word, the concept, the thing—has a unity and, what is more, an ordinary meaning, an *etymon*, a truth that is *one* and *naked* [*une vérité une et nue*], and that it would be sufficient to unveil it *through* history. It implies first of all that "art" can be reached following the three ways of word, concept, and thing, or again of signifier, signified, and referent, or even by some opposition between presence and representation.

Through history: the crossing can in this case just as well denote historicism, the determining character of the historicity of meaning, as it can denote ahistoricity, history crossed, trans-fixed in the direction of meaning, in the sense of a meaning [*le sens d'un sens*] in itself ahistorical. The syntagm "through his-

tory" could entitle all our questions without constraining them in advance. By presupposing the *etymon*—one and naked [*un et nu*]—a presupposition without which one would perhaps never open one's mouth, by beginning with a meditation on the apparent polysemy of *tekhne* in order to lay bare the simple kernel which supposedly lies hidden behind the multiplicity, one gives oneself to thinking that *art* has a meaning, one meaning. Better, that its history is *not* a history or that it is *one* history only in that it is governed by this one and naked meaning, under the regime of its internal meaning, as history of the meaning of art. If one were to consider the *physis/tekhne* opposition to be irreducible, if one were to accredit so hastily its translation as *nature/art* or *nature/technique*, one would easily commit oneself to thinking that art, being no longer nature, is history. The opposition nature/history would be the analogical relay of *physis/tekhne*. One can thus already say: as for history, we shall have to deal with the contradiction or the oscillation between two apparently incompatible motifs. They both ultimately come under one and the same logical formality: namely, that if the philosophy of art always has the greatest difficulty in dominating the history of art, a certain concept of the historicity of art, this is, paradoxically, because it too easily thinks of art as historical. What I am putting forward here obviously assumes the transformation of the concept of history, from one statement to the other. That will be the work of this seminar

If, there-

fore, one were to broach lessons on art or aesthetics by a question of this type ("What is art?") "What is the origin of art or of works of art?" "What is the meaning of art?" "What does art mean?" etc.), the form of the question would already provide an answer. Art would be predetermined or precomprehended in it. A conceptual opposition which has traditionally served to comprehend art would already, always, be at work there: for example the opposition between meaning, as inner content, and form. Under the apparent diversity of the historical forms of art, the concepts of art or the words which seem to translate "art" in Greek, Latin, the Germanic languages, etc. (but the closure of this list is already problematic), one would be seeking a one-and-naked meaning [*un*

seins un et nul] which would inform from the inside, like a content, while distinguishing itself from the forms which it informs. In order to think art in general, one thus accredits a series of positions (meaning/form, inside/outside, content/container, signified/signifier, represented/representer, etc.) which, precisely, structure the traditional interpretation of works of art. One makes of art in general an object in which one claims to distinguish an inner meaning, the invariant, and a multiplicity of external variations *through* which, as through so many veils, one would try to see or restore the true, full, originary meaning: one, naked. Or again, in an analogous gesture, by asking what art *means* (to say), one submits the mark "art" to a very determined regime of interpretation which has supervened in history: it consists, in its *tautology* without reserve, in interrogating the *vouloir-dire* of every work of so-called art, even if its form is not that of saying. In this way one wonders what a plastic or musical work means (to say), submitting all productions to the authority of speech and the "discursive" arts

_____ such that
by accelerating the rhythm a little one would go on to this col-
lusion: between the question ("What is art?") "What is the origin
of the work of art?" "What is the meaning of art or of the history
of art?") and the hierarchical classification of the arts. When a
philosopher repeats this question without transforming it, with-
out destroying it in its form, its question-form, its onto-
interrogative structure, he has already subjected the whole of
space to the discursive arts, to voice and the *logos*. This can be
verified: teleology and hierarchy are prescribed in the envelope
of the question

closes art in its circle but its discourse on art is at once, by the same token, caught in a circle.

Like the figure of the third term, the figure of the circle asserts itself at the beginning of the *Lectures on Aesthetics* and the *Origin of the Work of Art*. So very different in their aim, their procedure, their style, these two discourses have in common, as a common interest, that they exclude—(that) which then comes to form, close and bound them from inside and outside alike.

And if it were a frame

_____ one of them, Hegel's,
gives classical teleology its greatest deployment. He finishes off,
as people say a little too easily, onto-theology. The other, Hei-
degger's, attempts, by taking a step backwards, to go back behind
all the oppositions that have commanded the history of aesthetics.
For example, in passing, that of form and matter, with all its
derivatives. Two discourses, then, as different as could be, on
either side of a line whose tracing we imagine to be simple and
nondecomposable. Yet how can it be that they have in common
this: the subordination of all the arts to speech, and, if not to
poetry, at least to the poem, the said, language, speech, nomi-
nation (*Sage, Dichtung, Sprache, Nennen*)? [Reread here the third
and final part of the *Origin* . . . , "Truth and Art."]

_____ not go any further, for the moment, in the reading
of these two discourses. Keeping provisionally to their introduc-
tions, I notice the following: they both start out from a figure of
the circle. And they stay there. They stand in it even if their
residence in the circle apparently does not have the same status
in each case. For the moment I do not ask myself: What is a circle?
I leave to one side the figure of the circle, its place, its privilege
or its decadence in the history of art. Since the treatment of the
circle is part of the history of art and is delimited in it as much
as it delimits it, it is perhaps not a neutral gesture to apply to it

something that is also nothing other than one of its figures. It is still a circle, which redoubles, re-marks, and places *en abyme* the singularity of this figure. Circle of circles, circle in the encircled circle. How could a circle place itself *en abyme*?

The circle and the abyss, that would be the title. On the way we will no doubt encounter the question of the title. What happens when one entitles a "work of art"? What is the *topos* of the title? Does it take place (and where?) in relation to the work? On the edge? Over the edge? On the internal border? In an overboard that is re-marked and reapplied, by invagination, within, between the presumed center and the circumference? Or between that which is framed and that which is framing in the frame? Does the *topos* of the title, like that of a *cartouche*, command the "work" from the discursive and juridical instance of an *hors-d'oeuvre*, a place outside the work, from the exergue of a more or less directly definitional statement, and even if the definition operates in the manner of a performative? Or else does the title play *inside* the space of the "work," inscribing the legend, with its definitional pretension, in an ensemble that it no longer commands and which constitutes it—the title—as a localized effect? If I say for example that the circle and the abyss will be the title of the play that I am performing today, as an introduction, what am I doing and what is happening? Will the circle and the abyss be the object of my discourse and defined by it? Or else do they describe the form which constrains my discourse, its scene rather than its object, and moreover a scene stolen away by the abyss from present representation? As if a discourse on the circle also had to *describe* a circle, and perhaps the very one that it describes, describe a circular movement at the very moment that it describes a circular movement, describe it displacing itself in its meaning [sens]; or else as if a discourse on the abyss had to know the abyss, in the sense that one knows something that happens to or affects one, as in "to know failure" or "to know success" rather than to know an object. The circle and the abyss, then, the circle *en abyme*.

beginning of the *Lectures on Aesthetics*. From the first pages of the introduction, Hegel poses, as always, the question of the point of departure. How is one to begin a philosophical discourse on aesthetics? Hegel had already linked the essence of the beautiful to the essence of art. According to the determinate opposition of nature and mind, and *thus* of nature and art, he had already posited that a philosophical work devoted to aesthetics, the philosophy or science of the beautiful, must exclude natural beauty. It is in everyday life that one speaks of a beautiful sky. But there is no natural beauty. More precisely, artistic beauty is superior to natural beauty, as the mind that produces it is superior to nature. One must therefore say that absolute beauty, the *telos* or final essence of the beautiful, appears in art and not in nature as such. Now the problem of the introduction causes no difficulty in the case of the natural or mathematical sciences: their object is given or determined in advance, and with it the method that it requires. When, on the contrary, the sciences bear on the products of the mind, the "need for an introduction

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or preface makes itself felt." Since the object of such sciences is produced by the mind, by that which knows, the mind will have to have engaged in a self-knowledge, in the knowledge of what it produces, of the product of its own production. This autodetermination poses singular problems of priority. The mind must put itself into its own product, produce a discourse on what it produces, introduce itself of itself into itself. This circular duction, this intro-reduction to oneself, calls for what Hegel names a "presupposition" (*Voraussetzung*). In the science of the beautiful, the mind presupposes itself, anticipates itself, precipitates itself. *Head first*. Everything with which it commences is already a result, a work, an effect of a projection of the mind, a *resultare*. Every foundation, every justification (*Begründung*) will have been a result—this is, as you know, the mainspring of the speculative dialectic. Presuppositions must proceed from a "proven and demonstrated necessity," explains Hegel. "In philosophy, nothing must be accepted which does not possess the character of necessity," which means that everything in philosophy must have the value of a result."

We are, right from the introduction, encircled.

No doubt art figures one of those productions of mind thanks to which the latter returns to itself, comes back to consciousness and cognizance and comes to its proper place by *returning* to it, in a circle. What is called [*s'appelle*]: lit. "calls itself" mind is that which says to itself "come" only to hear itself already saying "come back." The mind is what it is, says what it means, only by *returning*. Retracing its steps, in a circle. But art forms only one of the circles in the great circle of the *Geist* or the revenant (this visitor can be called *Gast*, or *ghost*, *guest* or *Gespensst*). The end of art, and its truth, is religion, that other circle of which the end, the truth, will have been philosophy, and so on. And you know—we shall have to get the most out of this later on—the function of the ternary rhythm in this circulation. The fact remains that here art is studied from the point of view of its end. Its pastness is its truth. The philosophy of art is thus a circle in a circle of circles: a "ring," says Hegel, in the totality of philosophy. It turns upon itself and in annulling itself it links onto other rings. This annular concatenation forms the circle of circles of the philosophical encyclopedia. Art cuts out a circumscription or takes away a circumsolution from it. It encircles itself

the inscription of a circle in the circle does not necessarily give the abyss, onto the abyss, *en abyme*. In order to be abyssal, the smallest circle must inscribe in itself the figure of the largest. *Is there* any abyss in the Hegelian circulation? To the question posed in this form there is no decidable answer. What does the "there is" mean in these statements? Wherein does the "there is" differ from a "there exists," or "X is," "X presents itself," "X is present," etc.? Skirting round a necessary protocol here (it would proceed via the *gift* or the giving of the abyss, onto the abyss, *en abyme*, via the problematic of the *es gibt*, *il y a*, *it gives* [*ca donne*], and of the *es gibt Sein*, opened by Heidegger), I note only this: the answer arrests the abyss, unless it be already dragged down into it in advance. And can be in it without knowing it, at the very moment that a proposition of the type "this is an abyss or a *mise en abyme*" appears to destroy the instability of the relations of whole to part, the indecision of the structures of inclusion which throws *en abyme*. The statement itself can form part of the whole

meta-
phor of the circle of circles, of training (*Bildung*) as philosophical encyclopedia. Organic metaphor, finalized as a whole whose parts conspire. Biological metaphor too. But it is also a metaphor, if it is a metaphor, for art and for the work of art. The totality of philosophy, the encyclopedic corpus is described as a living organism or as a work of art. It is represented on the model of one of its parts which thus becomes greater than the whole of which it forms part, which it makes into a part. As always, and Kant formalized this in an essential way, the communication between the problem of aesthetic judgment and that of organic finality is internal. At the moment of describing *lemmatic* precipitation, the need to treat the concept of *philosophy of art* in an anticipatory

way. Hegel has to have recourse, certainly, to the metaphor of the circle and of the circle of circles which he says, moreover, is only a representation. But also to the metaphor of the organic whole. Only philosophy in its entirety (*gesamte Philosophie*) gives us knowledge of the universe as a unique organic totality in itself, which develops "from its own concept." Without losing anything of what makes it a whole "which returns to itself," this "sole world of truth" is contained, retained, and gathered together in itself. In the "circle" of this scientific necessity, each part represents a "circle returning into itself" and keeping a tie of solidarity with the others, a necessary and simultaneous interlacing. It is animated by a "backward movement" (*ein Rückwärts*) and by a "forward movement" (*Vorwärts*) by which it develops and reproduces itself in another in a fecund way (*fruchtbar*). Thus it is that, for us, the concept of the beautiful and of art is "a presupposition given by the system of philosophy." Philosophy alone can pose the question "What is the beautiful?" and answer it: the beautiful is a production of art, i.e., of the mind. The idea of beauty is given to us by art, that circle inside the circle of the mind and of the philosophical encyclopedia, etc.

Before beginning to speak of the beautiful and of the fine arts, one ought therefore, by right, to develop the whole of the *Encyclopedia* and the *Greater Logic*. But since it is necessary, in fact, to begin "lemmatically," so to speak" (*sozusagen lemmatisch*) by anticipation or precipitation of the circle, Hegel recognizes that his point of departure is vulgar, and its philosophical justification insufficient. He will have begun by the "representation" (*Vorstellung*) of art and of the beautiful for the "common consciousness" (*im gewöhnlichen Bewusstsein*). The price to be paid may seem very heavy: it will be said for example that the whole aesthetic develops, explicates, and lays out the representations of naive consciousness. But does not this negative cancel itself at once? On the immediately following page, Hegel explains that on a circle of circles, one is justified in starting from any point.

"There is no absolute beginning in science."
The chosen point of departure, in everyday representation: *there are* works of art, we have them *in front of us* in representation (*Vorstellung*). But how are they to be recognized? This is not an abstract and juridical question. At each step, at each example, in the absence of enormous theoretical, juridical, political, etc. protocols, there is a trembling of the limit between the "there is" and the "there is not" "Work of art," between a "thing" and

a "work," a "work" in general and a "work of art." Let's leave it. What does "leave" [*laisser*] *voir* [allow to see (or be seen)], [*laisser faire* [allow to do (or be done)], *voir faire, faire voir, faire faire* [cause (something) to be done], leave as a remainder, leave in one's will], what does "leave" do? etc.

certainly not insignificant that more than a century later, a meditation on art begins

by turning in an analogous circle while pretending to take a step beyond or back behind the whole of metaphysics or western ontology. *The Origin of the Work of Art* will have taken a running start for an incommensurable leap. Certainly, and here are some dry indications of it, pending a more patient reading.

1. All the oppositions which support the metaphysics of art find themselves questioned, in particular that of form and matter, with all its derivatives. This is done in the course of a questioning on the being-work of the work and the being-thing of a thing in all the determinations of the thing that more or less implicitly support any philosophy of art (*hypokeymenon, aistheton, hylē*).

2. As the *Postface* indicates, it is from the possibility of its death that art can here be interrogated. It is possible that art is in its death throes, but "it will take a good few centuries" until it dies and is mourned (Heidegger does not mention mourning). The *Origin* is situated in the zone of resonance of Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics* in as much as they think of art as a "past": "In the most comprehensive (*umfassendsten*) meditation which the West possesses on the essence of art—comprehensive because thought out from metaphysics—in Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics*, stands the following proposition: 'But we no longer have an absolute need to bring a content to presentation [*zur Darstellung*] in the form of art. Art, from the aspect of its highest destination, is for us something past (*ein Vergangenes*).'" After recalling that it would be laughable to elude this proposition under the pretext that works have survived this verdict—a possibility which, one can be sure, did not escape its author—Heidegger continues: "But the question remains: is art still, or is it no longer, an essential and necessary mode [*Weise*] according to which the decisive [deciding] truth

happens (*geschieht*) for our historical (*geschichtliches*) Dasein; But if it is no longer that, then the question remains: why? The decision about Hegel's proposition has not yet been reached." So Heidegger interrogates art and more precisely the work of art as the advent or as the history of truth, but of a truth which he proposes to think beyond or behind metaphysics, beyond or behind Hegel. Let's leave it for the moment.

3. Third indication, again recalled in the *Postface*: the beautiful is not relative to pleasure or the "pleasing" (*Gefallen*) as one would, according to Heidegger, always have presupposed, notably with Kant. Let us not be too hasty about translating this as: the beautiful beyond the pleasure principle. Some meditations will be necessary, but they will not be lacking.

4. The beautiful beyond pleasure, certainly, but also art beyond the beautiful, beyond aesthetics as beyond callistics [Hegel says he prefers the "common word" aesthetics to this word]. Like Hegel, who saw in it the destination of universal art, Heidegger places Western art at the center of his meditation. But he does so in order to repeat otherwise the history of its essence in relation to the transformation of an essence of truth: the history of the essence of Western art "is just as little to be conceived on the basis of beauty taken for itself as on the basis of lived experience (*Erlebnis*)." Even supposing, concludes Heidegger, that it could ever be a question of a "metaphysical concept" acceding to this essence. Thus nothing rules out the possibility that this concept is even constructed so as not to accede to it, so as not to get around to what happens [*advient*] under the name of art. And which Heidegger already calls "truth," even if it means seeking that truth *beneath* or *behind* the metaphysical determination of truth. For the moment I leave this "beneath" or this "behind" hanging vertically.

Keeping to these preliminary indications, one receives Heidegger's text as the nonidentical, staggered, discrepant "repetition" of the Hegelian "repetition" in the *Lectures on Aesthetics*. It works to untie what still keeps Hegel's aesthetics on the unperceived ground of metaphysics. And yet, what if this "repetition" did no more than make explicit, by repeating it more profoundly, the Hegelian "repetition"? [I am merely defining a risk, I am not yet saying that Heidegger runs it, simply, nor above all that one must in no circumstances run it: in wanting to avoid it at all costs, one can also be rushing toward the false exit, empirical chit-chat, spring-green impulses, *à la* avant-gardism. And who said it

was necessary to avoid all these risks? And risk in general?] And yet, what if Heidegger, too, once again under the lemmatic constraint, went no further than the "common representation" [*représentation courante*] of art, accepting it as the guiding thread [saying for example also "works of art are before us," this one, that one, the well-known shoes of Van Gogh, etc.] of his powerful meditation

deposits here the "famous painting by Van Gogh who often painted such shoes." I leave them. They are, moreover, abandoned, unlaced, take them or leave them. Much later, interlacing this discourse with another, I shall return to them, as to everything I leave here, in so apparently disconnected a way. And I shall come back to what comes down to leaving, lacing, interlacing. For example more than one shoe. And further on still, much later, to what Heidegger says of the trait of the "interlacing" (*Geflecht*), of the "tie which unties" (or trees, delivers) [*entbindende Band*] and of the "road" in *Der Weg zur Sprache*. Accept here, concerning the truth in painting or in *effigy*, that interlacing causes a lace to disappear periodically: over under, inside outside, left right, etc. Effigy and fiction

and in this discrepant repetition, it is less astonishing to see this meditation, closed upon a reference to Hegel, open up by a circular revolution whose rhetoric, at least, greatly resembles that which we followed in the introduction to the *Lectures on Aesthetics*.

Why a circle? Here is the schema of the argument: to look for the origin of a thing is to look for that from which it starts out and whereby it is what it is, it is to look for its essential provenance, which is not its empirical origin. The work of art stems from the artist, so they say. But what is an artist? The one who produces works of art. The origin of the artist is the

work of art, the origin of the work of art is the artist, "neither is without the other." Given this, "artist and work are in themselves and in their reciprocity (*Wechselbezug*) by virtue of a third term (*durch ein Drittes*) which is indeed the first, namely that from which artist and work of art also get their name, art." What is art? As long as one refuses to give an answer in advance to this question, "art" is only a word. And if one wants to interrogate art, one is indeed obliged to give oneself the guiding thread of a representation. And this thread is the work, the fact that *there are* works of art. Repetition of the Hegelian gesture in the necessity of its lemma: there are works which common opinion [*l'opinion courante*] designates as works of art and they are what one must interrogate in order to decipher in them the essence of art. But by what does one recognize, commonly [*communément*], that these are works of art if one does not have in advance a sort of precomprehension of the essence of art? This hermeneutic circle has only the (logical, formal, derived) appearance of a vicious circle. It is not a question of escaping from it but on the contrary of engaging in it and going all round it: "We must therefore complete the circle (*den Kreisgang vollziehen*). It is neither a stopgap measure (*Nothelf*) nor a lack (*Mangel*). To engage upon such a road is the force of thought and to remain on it is the feast of thought, it being admitted that thinking is a craft (*Handwerk*)." Engaging on the circular path appeals on the one hand to an artisanal, almost a manual, value of the thinker's trade, on the other hand to an experience of the feast [*fête*] as experience of the limit, of closure, of resistance, of humility. The "it is necessary" [*il faut*] of this engagement is on its way toward what, in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, gathers together, between appropriation and disappropriation (*Ereignis/Enteignis*), the step [*pas*], the road to be opened up (*einen Weg bahnen, be-wegen*), the trait which opens (*Aufriss*), and language (speech-language: *Sprache*), etc. That which, later in the text, joins the whole play of the trait (*Riss, Grundriss, Umriss, Aufriss, Gezüge*) to that of the stela, of stature or installation (*theseis, Setzen, Besetzen, Gasetz, Einrichten, Gestalt, Gestell*), so many words I will not attempt to translate here) belongs to that law of the *pas* [not/step] which urges the circle to the lemmatic opening of the *Origin*: "it being admitted that thinking is a craft. Not only the chief step (*Hauptschritt*) of the work toward art, *qua* step of the work toward art, is a circle, but each

of the steps we attempt to take here circles in that circle (*Kreisist in diesem Kreisse*!)"

Feast of the whole body, from top to toe, engaged in this circling step [*pas de cercle*] (*Hauptschritt, Handwerk, Denken*). What you want to do—going against the feast—is not to mix genres but to extend metaphors. You can always try: question of style.

not break the circle violently (it would avenge itself), assume it resolutely, authentically [*Entschlossenheit, Eigentlichkeit*]. The experience of the circular closure does not close anything, it suffers neither lack nor negativity. Affirmative experience without voluntarism, without a compulsion to transgression: not to transgress the law of circle and *pas de cercle* but *trust in them*. Of this trust would thought consist. The desire to accede, by this faithful repetition of the circle, to the not-yet-crossed, is not absent. The desire for a new step, albeit a backward one (*Schritt zurück*), *ties and unties* this procedure [*démarche*]. Tie without tie, get across [*franchir*] the circle without getting free [*s'affranchir*] of its law. *Pas sans pas* [step without step/step without not/ not without step/ not without not]

so I break off here, provisionally, the reading of *The Origin*.

The encirclement of the circle was dragging us to the abyss. But like all *production*, that of the abyss came to saturate what it hollows out.

It's enough to say: abyss and satire of the abyss.

The feast, the "feast of thought" (*Fest des Denkens*) which engages upon the *Kreisgang*, in the *pas de cercle*: what does it feed on [*de quoi j'ouir-elle?*] Opening and simultaneously filling the abyss. Accomplishing: *den Kreisgang vollziehen*.

Interrogate the comic effect of this. One never misses it if the abyss is never sufficient, if it must remain—undecided—between the bottom-less and the bottom of the bottom. The operation of the *mise en abyme* always occupies itself (activity, busy positing, mastery of the subject) with somewhere filling up, full of abyss, filling up the abyss

"a third party" (*ein Drittes*) ensures the circulation, regulates the encirclement. The *Mitte*, third, element and milieu, watches over the entrance to the hermeneutic circle or the circle of speculative dialectic. Art plays this role. Every time philosophy determines art, masters it and encloses it in the history of meaning or in the ontological encyclopedia, it assigns it a job as medium.

Now this is not ambiguous, it is more or less than ambiguous. Between two opposites, the third can participate, it can touch the two edges. But the ambiguity of participation does not exhaust it. The very thing that makes—the believers—believe in its mediacy can also give up to neither of the two terms, nor even to the structure of opposition, nor perhaps to dialectic insofar as it needs a mediation.

Index of a discrepancy: in relation to all the machinery of the pose (position/opposition, *Setzung/Entgegensetzung*). By giving it the philosophical name *art*, one has, it would seem, domesticated it in onto-encyclopedic economy and the history of truth

and the place which *The Origin of the Work of Art* accords to the *Lectures on Aesthetics* ("the

West's most comprehensive meditation on the essence of art") can only be determined, in a certain historical topography, on the basis of the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*. Heidegger does not name it here, but he defends it elsewhere against Nietzsche's reading. What holds of speculative dialectic in general is made rigorously clear in the *Lectures*: an essential affinity with the *Critique*, the only book—third book—which it can reflect and reappropriate almost at once. The first two critiques of pure (speculative and practical) reason had opened an apparently infinite gulf. The third could, should, should have, could have thought it: that is, filled it, fulfilled it in infinite reconciliation. "Already the Kantian philosophy not only felt the need for this junction-point (*Verknüpfungspunkt*) but recognized it with precision and furnished a representation of it." The third *Critique* had the merit of identifying in art (in general) one of the middle terms (*Mitten*) for resolving (*auflösen*) the "opposition" between mind and nature, internal and external phenomena, the inside and the outside, etc. But it still suffered, according to Hegel, from a lacuna, a "lack" (*Mangel*), it remained a theory of subjectivity and of judgment (an analogous reservation of principle is expressed in *The Origin*). Confined, unilateral, the reconciliation is not yet effective. The *Lectures* must supplement this lack, the structure of which has, as always, the form of a representative anticipation. The reconciliation is only announced, represented in the third *Critique* in the form of a duty, a *Sollen* projected to infinity.

And so it indeed appears.

On the one hand, Kant declares that he "neither wants nor is able" (§ 22) to examine whether "common sense" (here interpreted as a nondetermined, nonconceptual, and nonintellectual norm) exists as a constitutive principle of the possibility of aesthetic experience or else whether in a regulative capacity, reason commands us to produce it (*hervorbringen*) for more elevated purposes. This common sense is constantly presupposed by the *Critique*, which nevertheless holds back the analysis of it. It could be shown that this suspension ensures the complicity of a moral discourse and an empirical culturalism. This is a permanent necessity.

On the other hand, recalling the division of philosophy and all the irreducible oppositions which the first two *Critiques* had determined, Kant does indeed project the plan of a work which could reduce the "enigma" of aesthetic judgment and fill a crack, a cleavage, an abyss (*Kluft*): "If thus an abyss stretching out of

sight (*unübersehbare Kluft*) is established between the domain of the concept of nature, that is, the sensible, and the domain of the concept of freedom, that is, the suprasensible, such that no passage (*Übergang*) is possible from the one to the other (by means, therefore, of the theoretical use of reason), as between worlds so different that the first can have no influence (*Einfluss*) on the second, the second *must* yet (*soll doch*) have an influence on the former [...]. Consequently it *must* be (*muß es*) that there is a foundation of *unity* (*Grund der Einheit*). . . .³ Further on, we find related metaphors or analogies: it is again a question of the immense "abyss" which separates the two worlds and of the apparent impossibility of throwing a bridge (*Brücke*) from one shore to the other. To call this an *analogy* does not yet say anything. The bridge is not *an* analogy. The recourse to analogy, the concept and effect of analogy are or make *the bridge itself*—both in the *Critique* and in the whole powerful tradition to which it still belongs. The analogy of the abyss and of the bridge over the abyss is an analogy which says that there *must* surely be an analogy between two absolutely heterogeneous worlds, a third term to cross the abyss, to heal over the gaping wound and think the gap. In a word, a *symbol*. The bridge is a symbol, it passes from one bank to the other, and the symbol is a bridge.

The abyss calls for analogy—the active recourse of the whole *Critique*—but analogy plunges endlessly into the abyss as soon as a certain art is needed to describe analogically the play of analogy

II. The Parergon

the abyss: not only save oneself from falling into the bottomless depths by weaving and folding back the cloth to infinity, textual art of the reprise, multiplication of patches within patches, but also establish the laws of reappropriation, formalize the rules which constrain the logic of the abyss and which shuttle between the economic *and* the aneconomic, the raising [*la relève*]³ and the fall, the abyssal operation which can only work toward the *relève* and that in it which regularly reproduces collapse

what then is the object of the third *Critique*? The critique of pure theoretical reason assumes the exclusion (*Ausschliessung*) of all that is not theoretical knowledge: the affect (*Gefühl*) in its two principal values (pleasure/pleasure) and the power to desire (*Begehungsvermögen*). It cuts out its field only by cutting itself off from the interests of desire, by losing interest in desire. From the moment that understanding alone can give constitutive prin-

3. *Relève*, from the verb *reléver* (to stand up again, to raise, to re-
lieve), is also Derrida's translation of Hegel's *Aufhebung*.

ciples to knowledge, the exclusion bears simultaneously on reason which transgresses the limits of possible knowledge of nature. Now the *a priori* principles of reason, although regulative with regard to the faculty of knowing, are constitutive with regard to the faculty of desiring. The critique of pure theoretical reason thus excludes both reason *and* desire, desire's reason and reason's desire, the desire for reason.

What is it about, at bottom? The bottom. The understanding and reason are not two disconnected faculties; they are articulated in a certain task and a certain number of operations which involve, precisely articulation, i.e., discourse. For between the two faculties, an articulated member, a third faculty comes into play. This intermediary member which Kant names precisely *Mittelglied*, middle articulation, is judgment (*Urteil*). But what will be the nature of the *a priori* principles of the middle articulation? Will they be constitutive or regulative? Do they give *a priori* rules to pleasure and displeasure? What is at stake in this question can be measured by the fact that regulative principles would not allow the demarcation of a *proper domain* (*eigenes Gebiet*).

Since the *Mittelglied* also forms the articulation of the theoretical and the practical (in the Kantian sense), we are plunging into a place that is *neither* theoretical *nor* practical or else both, theoretical *and* practical. Art (in general), or rather the beautiful, if it takes place, is inscribed here. But this *here*, this place is announced as a place deprived of place. It runs the risk, in taking place, of not having its own proper domain. But this does not deprive it, for all that, of jurisdiction and foundation: what has no domain (*Gebiet*) or field (*Feld*) of its own, no "field of objects," no domain (*Gebiet*) or field (*Feld*) of its own, and a "ground" defining its "domain," can have a "territory" and a "ground" (*Boden*) possessing a "proper legality" (*Introduction*, III).

The *Mittelglied*, intermediary member, must in effect be treated as a separable part, a particular part (*als ein besonderer Teil*). But also as a nonparticular, nondetachable part, since it forms the articulation between two others; one can even say, anticipating Hegel, an ordinary part (*Urteil*). It is indeed a question of judgment. The same paragraph recalls that a critique of pure reason, i.e., of our faculty of judging according to *a priori* principles, would be "incomplete" (*unvollständig*) if a theory of judgment, of the *Mittelglied*, did not form a "particular part" of it. But immediately after, in the following sentence, that in a pure philosophy the principles of judgment would not form a *detached*

part, between the theoretical part and the practical part, but could be *attached*, *annexed* (*angeschlossen*) to each of the two. Kant thus seems to mean two contradictory things at the same time: that it is necessary to disengage the middle member as a detachable part, operate the partition of the part, but also that it is necessary to re-member the whole by re-forming the nexus, the connection, the reannexation of the part to the two major columns of the corpus. Let us not forget that it is here a question of judgment (*Urteil*), of the function of the copula: does it play a separable role, its own part, or does it work in the orchestra of reason, in the concert of the practical and the theoretical?

Let us look more closely at this paragraph in the preface to the third *Critique*. It does not involve any contradiction. The separation of the part is not prescribed and forbidden from the same point of view. Within a critique of pure reason, of our faculty of judging according to *a priori* principles, the part must be detached and examined separately. But in a pure philosophy, in a "system of pure philosophy," everything must be sewn back together. The critique detaches because it is itself only a moment and a part of the system. It is in the critique that, precisely, the critical suspension is produced, the *krinein*, the in-between, the question of knowing whether the theory of judgment is theoretical or practical, and whether it is then referred to a regulatory or constitutive instance. But the system of pure philosophy *will have had* to include the critical within itself, and construct a general discourse which will get the better of the detachable and account for it. This system of pure philosophy is what Kant calls *metaphysics*. It is not yet possible. Only the critique can have a program that is currently possible.

The question of desire, of pleasure and of displeasure is thus also the question of a *detachment* (neither the word nor the concept appears *as such* in the *Critique*) which will itself be specified, dismembered or re-membered: *detachment*—separation of a member—, *detachment*—delegation of a representative, sign or symbol on assignment (the beautiful as *symbol* of morality, problems of the hypotyposis, of the trace (*Spur*), of "cipher-script" (*Chiffreschrift*), of the intermittent sign (*Wirk*); see for example paragraphs 42 and 59), *detachment*—disinterested attitude as essence of aesthetic experience.

In order to express the relationship between the two possibles (the now-possible of the critique and the future-possible of metaphysics), Kant proposes another metaphor. He borrows it, already,

from art, which has not yet been discussed, from the technique of architecture, architectonics: the pure philosopher, the meta-physician, will have to operate *like* a good architect, like a good *tekhnitēs* of edification. He will be a sort of artist. Now what does a good architect do, according to Kant? He must first of all be certain of the ground, the foundation, the fundament. "A Critique of pure reason, i.e., of our faculty of judging on *a priori* principles, would be incomplete if the critical examination of judgment, which is a faculty of knowledge, and, as such, lays claim to independent principles, were not dealt with separately. Still, however, its principles cannot, in a system of pure philosophy, form a separate constituent part intermediate between the theoretical and practical divisions, but may when needful (*im Notfalle*) be annexed (*angeschlossen*) to one or other as occasion requires (*gelegentlich*). For if such a system is some day worked out (*zu Stande kommen*) under the general name of Metaphysic . . . , then the critical examination of the ground for this edifice must have been previously carried down to the very depths of the foundations (*Grundlage*) of the faculty of principles independent of experience, lest in some quarter (*an irgend einem Theile*) it might give way (collapse, *sinken*), and, sinking, inevitably bring with it the ruin (*Einstruz*) of all" (Meredith, 4-5).

The proper instance of the critique: the architect of reason searches, probes, prepares the ground. In search of the bedrock, the ultimate *Grund* on which to raise the whole of metaphysics. But also in search of roots, of the common root which then divides in the phenomenal light, and which never itself yields up to experience. Thus the critique as such attempts to descend to the *bythos*, to the *bottom* of the abyss, without knowing whether it exists.

It is still too early to interrogate the general functioning of metaphor and analogy in the third *Critique*. This functioning is perhaps not simply reflected by the theory which, in the book, both includes it and plunges into its abyss.

We have just encountered the first "metaphor": beginning of the preface (*Vorrede*). Now at the end of the introduction which follows (*Einkleitung*), and as if to frame the whole phenomenon, will be the metaphor of the artificial work securing the passage over the natural gulf, the bridge (*Brücke*) projected over the great abyss (*grosse Klüft*). Philosophy, which in this book has to think art through—art in general and fine art—as a part of its field or of its edifice, is here *representing itself* as

a part of its part: philosophy as an art of architecture. It represents itself: it *detaches itself*, detaches from itself a proxy, a part of itself beside itself in order to think the whole, to saturate or heal over the whole that suffers from detachment. The philosophy of art presupposes an art of philosophizing, a major art, but also a miner's art in its critical preliminaries, an architect's art in its edifying erection. And if, as will be said further on, fine art is always an art of genius, then the *Anthropology from the Pragmatic Point of View* would for preference delegate a German to the post of critique: the German genius shows itself best on the side of the root, the Italian on that of the crown of leaves, the French on that of the flower and the English on that of the fruit. Finally, if this pure philosophy or fundamental metaphysics here proposes to account for, among other things, desire, pleasure and unpleasure, it exposes itself and represents itself first of all in its own desire. The desire of reason would be a fundamental desire, a desire for the fundamental, a desire to go to the *bythos*. Not an empirical desire since it leads toward the unconditioned, and that which yields itself up in the currency of a determinate metaphor ought, as a metaphor of reason, to account for [*rende raison del*] all other metaphors. It would figure the being-desire of desire, the desire of/for reason as desire for a grounded structure. Edifying desire would be produced as an art of philosophizing, commanding all the others and accounting for [*rendant raison del*] all rhetoric.

"Great difficulties" arise. A theory of judgment as *Mittelglied* must be constructed. But there will be "great difficulties" [*grosse Schwierigkeiten*] in finding for judgment *a priori* principles which are proper to it and which would protect the theory from empiricism. One can find *a priori* concepts only in the understanding. The faculty of judgment uses them, it applies them, but it does not have at its disposal any concepts which belong to it or are specifically reserved for it. The only concept which it can produce is an empty concept, in a sense, and one which does not give anything to be known. By it, "nothing is properly known." It supplies a "rule" of usage which comprises no objectivity, no relation to the object, no knowledge. The rule is subjective, the faculty of judgment gives itself its own norms, and it must do so, failing which it would be necessary to call upon another faculty or arbitration, *ad infinitum*. And yet this *subjective* rule is applied to judgments, to statements which by their structure lay claim to universal objectivity.

Such would be the difficulty, the constraint, the confusion, the *Verlegenheit*. It seems to confirm a certain Hegelian and subsequently Heideggerian verdict: this discourse on the beautiful and on art, because it remains at the stage of a theory of judgment, gets tangled up in the—derived—opposition of subject and object.

Of the beautiful and of art it has not yet been question. Nothing, up to this point, suggested that it should be a question of these. And now here is Kant declaring that this "great difficulty" of principle (subjective or objective), "is found" (*findet sich*), that it is met with "principally" (*hauptsächlich*) in the judgments "which are called aesthetic." These could have constituted an example, however important, a major occurrence of the "difficulty." But in truth it is the principal example, the unique specimen which gives meaning and orients the multiplicity. The examination of this example, namely the aesthetic domain, forms the choice morsel, the "most important piece" (*das wichtigste Stück*) of the critique of the faculty of judgment. Although they bring nothing to knowledge, aesthetic judgments, insofar as they are judgments, come under the faculty of knowing alone, a faculty which they put in relation with pleasure or displeasure according to an *a priori* principle. This relationship of knowledge to pleasure reveals itself here in its purity since there is nothing to know, but such is precisely the enigma, the enigmatic (*das Rätselhafte*) at the heart of judgment. It is why a "special section" (*besondere Abteilung*), a particular division, a cut-out sector, a detached part, form the object of the third *Critique*.

One must not expect from it what in principle it does not, in its declared intention, promise. This critique of taste does not concern production; it has in view neither "education" nor "culture," which can very well do without it. And as the *Critique* will show that one cannot assign conceptual rules to the beautiful, it will not be a question of constituting an *aesthetic*, even a general one, but of analyzing the formal conditions of possibility of an aesthetic judgment in general, hence of an aesthetic objectivity in general.

With this transcendental aim, Kant demands to be read without indulgence. But for the rest, he admits the lacks, the lacunary character (*Mangelhaftigkeit*) of his work. This is the word Hegel uses too.

What does the lack depend on? What lack is it? And what if it were the frame. What if the lack formed the frame of the theory. Not its accident but its frame. More or less

still: what if the lack were not only the lack of a theory of the frame but the place of the lack in a theory of the frame.

Edge [*arête*]/Lack

The "lacunary character" of his work, according to Kant at least, hangs on the fact that nature has muddled up, complicated, tangled up (*verwickelt*) the problems. The author's excuses are limited to the first part of the work, to the critique of aesthetic judgment, and not to the critique of teleological judgment. It is only in the first part that the deduction will not have the clarity and distinctness (*Deutlichkeit*) which one would, however, be entitled to expect from a knowledge through concepts. After exploring that nature has mixed up the threads, at the moment when he is finishing his critical work (*Hiermit endige ich also mein ganzes kritisches Geschäft*), admitting the lacunae and projecting a bridge over the abyss of the other two critiques, Kant speaks of his age. He must gain time, not let the delay accumulate, hurry on toward the doctrine.

It's about pleasure. About thinking pure pleasure, the being-pleasure of pleasure. Starting out from pleasure, it was for pleasure that the third *Critique* was written, for pleasure that it should be read. A somewhat arid pleasure—without concept and without enjoyment—a somewhat strict pleasure, but one learns once more that there is no pleasure without stricture. In letting myself be guided by pleasure I recognize and simultaneously put astray an injunction. *I follow it* [*je le suis*]: the enigma of pleasure puts the whole book in movement. *I seduce it* [*je le séduis*]: in treating the third *Critique* as a work of art or a beautiful object, which it was not simply designed to be, I act as if the *existence* of the book were indifferent to me (which, as Kant explains, is a requirement of any aesthetic experience) and could be considered with an imperturbable detachment.

But what is the existence of a book?
1. *I follow it*. The possibility of pleasure is the question. Demonstration: the first two paragraphs of the "First moment of the

judgment of taste considered from the point of view of quality," book 1 ("Analytic of the Beautiful") of the first section ("Analytic of Aesthetic Judgment"). Why call a judgment of taste *aesthetic*? Because, in order to distinguish whether a thing can be called beautiful, I do not consult the relation of the representation to the *object*, with a view to knowledge (the judgment of taste does not give us any knowledge) but its relation to the *subject* and to its affect (pleasure or displeasure). The judgment of taste is not a judgment of knowledge, it is not "logical" but subjective and therefore aesthetic: relation to the affect (*aisthesis*). Any relation of representation can potentially be objective, even a relation of the senses; but pleasure and displeasure never can. Aesthetic representations can certainly give rise to logical judgments when they are related by the judgment to the object, but when the judgment itself relates to the subject, to the subjective affect—as is the case here—it is and can only be an aesthetic one.

What is generally translated by subjective satisfaction, the *Wohlfallen*, the *pleasing* which determines aesthetic judgment, must, we know, be disinterested. Interest (*Interesse*) always relates us to the existence of an object. I am interested by an object when its existence (*Existenz*) matters to me in one way or another. Now the question of knowing whether I can say of a thing that it is beautiful has, according to Kant, nothing to do with the interest that I do or do not have in its existence. And my pleasure (*Lust*), that species of *pleasing* which is called pleasure and which I feel when faced with that which I judge to be beautiful, requires an indifference or more rigorously an absolute lack of interest for the existence of the thing.

This pure and disinterested pleasure [but not indifferent: Heidegger here reproaches Nietzsche with not having understood the nondifferent structure of this letting-be], this pleasure which draws me toward a nonexistence or at least toward a thing [but what is a thing? Need here to graft on the Heideggerian question the existence of which is indifferent to me, such a pleasure determines the judgment of taste and the enigma of the bereaved [*endenüllt*] relation—labor of mourning broached in advance—to a beauty. Like a sort of transcendental reduction, the *epoché* of a thesis of existence the suspension of which liberates, in certain formal conditions, the pure feeling of pleasure.

The example is familiar. I am in front of a palace. I am asked if I find it beautiful, or rather if I can say "this is beautiful." It is

a question of judgment, of a judgment of universal validity and everything must therefore be able to be produced in the form of statements, questions, and answers. Although the aesthetic affect cannot be reduced, the instance of the judgment commands that I be able to say "this is beautiful" or "this is not beautiful."

Is the palace I'm speaking about beautiful? All kinds of answers can miss the point of the question. If I say, I don't like things made for idle gawpers, or else, like the Iroquois sachem, I prefer the pubs, or else, in the manner of Rousseau, what we have here is a sign of the vanity of the great who exploit the people in order to produce frivolous things, or else if I were on a desert island and if I had the means to do so, I would still not go to the trouble of having it imported, etc.; none of these answers constitutes an intrinsically aesthetic judgment. I have evaluated this palace in fact in terms of *extrinsic* motives, in terms of empirical psychology, of economic relations of production, of political structures, of technical causality, etc.

Now you have to know what you're talking about, what *intrinsically* concerns the value "beauty" and what remains external to your immanent sense of beauty. This permanent requirement—to distinguish between the internal or proper sense and the circumstance of the object being talked about—organizes all philosophical discourses on art, the meaning of art and meaning as such, from Plato to Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger. This requirement presupposes a discourse on the limit between the inside and outside of the art object, here a *discourse on the frame*. Where is it to be found?

What they want to know, according to Kant, when they ask me if I find this palace beautiful, is if I find that it is *beautiful*, in other words if the mere representation of the object—in itself, within itself—pleases me, if it produces in me a pleasure, however indifferent (*gleichgültig*) I may remain to the existence of that object. "It is quite plain that in order to say that the object is *beautiful*, and to show that I have taste, everything turns on the meaning which I can give to this representation, and not on any factor which makes me dependent on the real existence of the object. Every one must allow that a judgment on the beautiful which is tinged with the slightest interest, is very partial and not a pure judgment of taste. One must not be in the least prepossessed in favour of the real existence of the thing (*Existenz der Sache*), but must preserve complete indifference in this respect, in order to play the part of judge in matters of taste.

"This proposition, which is of the utmost importance, cannot be better explained than by contrasting the pure disinterested delight (*uninteressirten Wohlgefallen*) which appears in the judgment of taste with that allied (*verbunden*) to an interest—especially if we can also assure ourselves that there are no other kinds of interest beyond those presently to be mentioned." These other kinds are the interest for the existence of the *agreeable* and for the existence of the good (Meredith, 43–44).

a disinterested pleasure: the formula is too well known, too received, as is the refusal it has never ceased to provoke. Anger of Nietzsche and Artaud: disinterest or uninterestedness are supererogatory. Meditative murmur from Heidegger, at the end of *The Origin*: pleasure is superfluous or insufficient.

Don't be in too much of a hurry to conclude when it's a matter of pleasure. In this case, of a pleasure which would thus be pure and disinterested, which would in this way deliver itself up in the purity of its essence, without contamination from outside. It no longer depends on any phenomenal empiricity, of any determined *existence*, whether that of the object or that of the subject, my empiricity relating me precisely to the existence of the beautiful object, or to the existence of my sensory motivation. As such, and considered intrinsically (but how to delimit the intrinsic, that which runs along, *secus*, the internal limit the pleasure presupposes not the disappearance pure and simple, but the neutralization, not simply the putting to death but the *mise en crypte* [entombment/encrypting] of all that exists in as much as it exists. This pleasure is purely subjective: in the aesthetic judgment it does not designate [*bezeichnen*] anything about the object. But its subjectivity is not an existence, nor even a relation to existence. It is an in-existent or an-existent subjectivity arising on the crypt of the empirical subject and its whole world.

But a subjectivity which nevertheless enjoys. No, does not enjoy: Kant distinguishes pleasure (*Wohlgefallen*, *Lust*) from enjoyment (*Genuss*). Takes pleasure. No, for it *receives* it just as much. If the translation of *Wohlgefallen* by *pleasure* is not entirely rigorous, and that by *satisfaction* even less so, the *pleasing* risks leaning toward the agreeable and letting us think that

everything comes from the object which pleases. In truth, in the *Wohlgefallen* I *please myself*,⁴ but without complaisance, I do not interest myself, especially not in myself insofar as I exist: I-please-myself-in. Not in any thing that exists, not in doing something or other: I-please-myself-in *pleasing-myself-in*—that which is beautiful. Insofar as it does not exist.

As this affect of the *pleasing-oneseif-in* remains subjective through and through, one could here speak of an autoaffect. The role of imagination and hence of time in this whole discourse would confirm this. Nothing existent, as such, nothing in time or space can produce this affect which thus cathects itself with itself [*qui s'affecte donc lui-même de lui-même*]. And yet the *pleasing-oneseif-in*, the *in* of the *pleasing-oneseif* also indicates that this autoaffect immediately goes outside its inside: it is a pure heteroaffect. The purely subjective affect is provoked by what is called the beautiful, that which is said to be beautiful: *outside*, in the object and independently of its existence. Whence the critical and indispensable character of this recourse to judgment: the structure of autoaffect is such that it cathects itself with a pure objectivity of which one must say "it is beautiful" and "this statement has universal validity." Otherwise, there would be no problem—and no discourse on art. *The entirely-other cathects me with pure pleasure by depriving me both of concept and enjoyment*. Without this entirely-other, there would be no universality, no requirement of universality, but for the same reason, with respect to that entirely other, there is no enjoyment (singular, empirical, existent, interested) or determinant or knowledge concept. And nothing theoretical or practical yet. The most irreducible heteroaffect inhabits—intrinsically—the most closed autoaffect: that is the "*grosse Schwierigkeit*": it does not hang on the comfortable setting-up of a very derivative subject/object couple, in a supervening judicative space. Nor from some well-oiled mechanism of *mimēsis*, *homiois*, *adaequatio*. We know that Kant rejects the notion of imitation, at least initially. As for *homiois* or *adaequatio*, the matter becomes, to say the least, complicated as soon as one is dealing no longer with a determinant judgment but with a reflective judgment, and as soon as the *res* in question does not exist, or in any case is not considered in its existence as a thing. It is at the end of a quite different itinerary that we

4. "I please myself" here not in the sense "I do as I like."

shall verify the efficacy of these values (*mimēsis*, *homoiōsis*, *adaequatio*) in Kant's discourse⁵

almost nothing

remains [to me]: neither the thing, nor its existence, nor mine, neither the pure object nor the pure subject, no interest of anything that is in anything that is. And yet I like: no, that's still going too far, that's still taking an interest in existence, no doubt. I do not like, but I take pleasure in what does not interest me, in something of which it is at least a matter of indifference whether I like it or not. I do not take this pleasure that I take, I would seem rather that I return it, I return what I take, I receive what I return, I do not take what I receive. And yet I give it to myself. Can I say that I give it to myself? It is so universally objective—in the claim made by my judgment and by common sense—that it can only come from a pure outside. Unassimilable. At a pinch, I do not even feel this pleasure which I give myself or rather to which I give myself, by which I give myself, if to feel [*éprouver*] means to experience [*ressentir*]: phenomenally, empirically, in the space and time of my interested or interesting existence. Pleasure which it is impossible to experience. I never take it, never receive it, never return it, never give it, never give it to myself because I [me, existing subject] never have access to the beautiful as such. I never have access to pure pleasure inasmuch as I exist.

And yet *there is* pleasure, some still remains; *there is, es gibt, it gives*, the pleasure is what *it gives*; to nobody but some remains and it's the best, the purest. And it is this remainder which causes *talk*, since it is, once again, primarily a question of *discourse* on the beautiful, of *discursivity* in the structure of the beautiful and not only of a discourse supposed to happen accidentally to the beautiful.

5. "Econommimesis," in *Mimesis [des articulations]* (in collaboration with S. Agacinski, S. Kofman, Ph. Lacoue-Labarthe, J.-L. Nancy, B. Pautrat). In the collection "La Philosophie en effet" (Paris: Aubier-Flammarion, 1975) [pp. 55-93; English translation in *Diacritics* 11, no. 2 (1981):3-25].—J.D.

2. *I seduce it*: by treating the third critique as a work of art, I neutralize or encrypt its existence. But I will not be able to find out whether, in order to do this, I must find my authority in the *Critique*, so long as I don't know what the existence of a thing is, and consequently interest in the existence of a thing. What is it to exist, for Kant? To be present, according to space and time, as an individual thing: according to the conditions of the transcendental aesthetic. There is nothing less aesthetic in this sense than the beautiful object which must not interest us *qua aistheton*. But this aesthetic inexistence must affect me and that is why the retention of the word aesthetic is justified, from the start.

When the (beautiful) object is a book what exists and what no longer exists? The book is not to be confused with the sensory multiplicity of its existing copies. The object *book* thus presents itself as such, in its intrinsic structure, as independent of its *copies*. But what one would then call its ideality is not pure, a very discriminating analysis must distinguish it from ideality in general, from the ideality of other types of object, and in the area of art, from that of other classes of books (novel, poetry, etc.) or of nondiscursive or nonbook art objects (painting, sculpture, music, theater, etc.). In each case the structure of exemplarity (unique or multiple) is original and therefore prescribes a different affect. And in each case there remains to be found out what importance one gives to the case [*le cas qu'on fait du cas*], to know whether one drops it as an extrinsic excrement, or retains it as an intrinsic ideality.

Here is an example, but an example *en abyme*: the third *Critique*. How to treat this book. Is it a book. What would make a book of it. What is it to read this book. How to take it. Have I the right to say that it is beautiful. And first of all the right to ask myself that

for example the question of order. A spatial, so-called plastic, art object does not necessarily prescribe an order of reading. I can move around in front of it, start from the top or the bottom, sometimes walk round it. No

doubt this possibility has an ideal limit. Let us say for the moment that the structure of this limit allows a greater play than in the case of temporal art objects (whether discursive or not), unless a certain fragmentation, a spatial *mise en scène*, precisely (an effective or virtual partition)⁶ allows us to begin in various places, to vary direction or speed.

But a book. And a book of philosophy. If it is a book of metaphysics in the Kantian sense, hence a book of pure philosophy, one can in principle enter it from any point: it is a sort of architecture. In the third *Critique*, there is pure philosophy, there is talk of it and its plan is drawn. In terms of the analogy (but how to measure its terms) one ought to be able to begin anywhere and follow any order, although the quantity and the quality, the force of the reading may depend, as with a piece of architecture, on the point of view and on a certain relation to the ideal limit—which acts as a frame. There are only ever points of view: but the solidity, the existence, the structure of the edifice do not depend on them. Can one say the same, by analogy, of a book. One does not necessarily gain access to a piece of architecture by following the order of its production, starting at the foundations and arriving at the roof-ridge. And we must distinguish here between perception, analysis, penetration, utilization, even destruction. But does one read a book of pure philosophy if one does not begin with the foundations and follow the juridical order of its writing. What then is it to read philosophy and must one only read it. To be sure, the juridical order supported by the foundations does not coincide with the factual order: for example, Kant wrote his introduction after finishing the book and it is the most powerful effort to gather together the whole system of his philosophy, to give his whole discourse a *de jure* foundation, to articulate critique with philosophy. The introduction follows, the foundation comes after having come first. But even if it were established that in principle, in metaphysics in the Kantian sense, one must begin at the foundations, critique is not metaphysics: it is, first, in search of the foundations (and thus in fact comes afterwards), suspended like a crane or a dragline bucket above the pit, working to scrape, probe, clear, and open up a sure ground. In what order to read a critique. The *de facto* order or the *de jure* order. The *ordo inventiendi* or the *ordo exponendi*.

6. Partition here also has the meaning of "musical score."

All these questions differ/defer, each is subordinate to the others, and whatever their interminable breadth, they are valid in general for any critical text.

a supplementary complication constrains us to reconsider the way these questions fit together. The third *Critique* is not just one critique among others. Its specific object has the form of a certain type of judgment—the reflective judgment—which works (on) the example in a very singular way. The distinction between reflective and determinant judgment, a distinction that is both familiar and obscure, watches over all the internal divisions of the book. I recall it in its poorest generality. The faculty of judgment *in general* allows one to think the particular as contained under the general (rule, principle, law). When the generality is given first, the operation of judgment subsumes and *determines* the particular. It is determinant (*bestimmend*), it specifies, narrows down, comprehends, tightens. In the contrary hypothesis, the *reflective* judgment (*reflectierend*) has only the particular at its disposal and must climb back up to, return toward generality: the example (this is what matters to us here) is here given prior to the law and, in its very uniqueness as example, allows one to discover that law. Common scientific or logical discourse proceeds by determinant judgments, and the example follows in order to determine or, with a pedagogical intention, to illustrate. In art and in life, wherever one must, according to Kant, proceed to reflective judgments and assume [by analogy with art: we shall come to this rule further on] a finality⁷ the concept of which we do not have, the *exemple précédés*. There follows a singular historicity and (counting the simulacrum-time) a certain (regulated, relative) figure of the theoretical

7. "Finality" translates *finalité*, the received French translation of Kant's *Zweckmäßigkeit*, traditionally rendered into English as "purposiveness." See below, n. 11.

on the authority of
 this reflective hinge,⁸ I begin my reading of the third *Critique*
 with some examples.

Is this docility perverse. Nothing yet permits a decision.
 So I begin with some examples: not with the introduction,
 which gives the laws, nor with the beginning of the book (the
 analytic of the beautiful). Nor with the middle nor the end, but
 somewhere near the conclusion of the analytic of the beautiful,
 paragraph 14. It is entitled "Clarification by Examples" (*Erläu-
 terung durch Beispiele*).

Its most obvious intention is to clarify the structure of "the
 proper object of the pure judgment of taste" (*den eigentlichen
 Gegenstand des reinen Geschmacksurtheils*). I shall not even cite
 all the examples, but only some of them, and I shall provisionally
 leave to one side the very complicated theory of colors and sounds,
 of drawing and composition, which is unfolded between the two
 fragments I translate here. Unless it be broached at the same time.
 I shall in any case assume you have read it.

"Aesthetic, just like theoretical [logical] judgements, are divisi-
 ble into empirical and pure. The first are those by which agreeable-
 ness or disagreeableness, the second those by which beauty, is pred-
 icated of an object or its mode of representation. The former are
 judgements of sense [material aesthetic judgements], the latter [as
 formal] alone judgements of taste proper (*allein eigentliche
 Geschmacksurtheile*).

"A judgement of taste, therefore, is only pure so far as its deter-
 mining ground [*Bestimmungsgrund*] is tainted with no merely em-
 pirical delight [*Wohlgefallen*]. But such a taint is always present
 where charm (*Reiz*) or emotion [*Rührung*] have a share in the judge-
 ment [*einen Antheil an dem Urtheile haben*] by which something
 is to be described as beautiful. . . .

"All form of objects of sense (both of external and also, me-
 diately, of internal sense) is either *figure* (*Gestalt*) or *play* (*Spiel*). In
 the latter case it is either play of figures (in space: mimic and dance),
 or mere play of sensations (in time). The charm (*Reiz*) of colours, or
 of the agreeable tones of instruments, may be added [*hinzukom-*

8. "Hinge" translates *brisure*, which carries connotations of both
 breaking and joining; see *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Minuit, 1967), 96;
 translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak as (*Grammatology*) Baltimore:
 Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 65ff.

men): but the *design* [*Zeichnung*] in the former and the composition
 (*Composition*) in the latter constitute the proper object of the pure
 judgement of taste. To say that the purity alike of colours and of tones,
 or their variety and contrast, seem to contribute [*beizutragen*] to
 beauty, is by no means to imply that, because in themselves agree-
 able, they therefore yield an addition [*einen . . . Zusatz*] to the de-
 light in the form [*Wohlgefallen an der Form*] and one on a par with
 it [*gleichartigen*]. The real meaning rather is that they make this form
 more clearly, definitely, and completely [*nur genauer, bestimmter
 und vollständiger*] inimitable [*anschaulich machen*], and besides
 stimulate the representation by their charm, as they excite and sus-
 tain the attention directed to the object itself.

"Even what is called *ornamentation* [*Zierathen*: decoration,
 adornment, embellishment] [*Parerga*] i.e., what is only an adjunct,
 and not an intrinsic constituent in the complete representation of
 the object [*was nicht in die ganze Vorstellung des Gegenstandes als
 Bestandtheil innerlich, sondern nur äußerlich als Zuthat gehört*],
 in augmenting the delight of taste does so only by means of its form.
 Thus it is with the frames [*Einfassungen*] of pictures or the drapery
 on statues, or the colonnades of palaces. But if the ornamentation
 does not itself enter into the composition of the beautiful form—if
 it is introduced [*angebracht*: fixed on] like a gold frame [*goldene
 Rahmen*] merely to win approval for the picture by means of its
 charm—it is then called *finery* [*parure*] [*Schmuck*] and takes away
 from the genuine beauty" [*Meredith*, 65, 67–68].

a theory which would run along as if on wheels

the
 clothes on statues—for example—would thus be ornaments: *parerga*.

Kant explains himself elsewhere on the necessity of having recourse to dead or scholarly languages. The Greek here confers a quasi-conceptual dignity to the notion of this *hors-d'oeuvre* which however does not stand simply outside the work [*hors d'oeuvre*], also acting alongside, right up against the work [*hors d'oeuvre*], also acting alongside, right up against the work [*hors d'oeuvre*]. Dictionaries most often give "hors-d'oeuvre," which is the strictest translation, but also "accessory, foreign or secondary object," "supplement," "aside," "remainder." It is what the principal subject must not become, by being separated from itself: the education of children in legislation (*Laws* 766a) or the definition of science (*Theaetetus* 184a) must not be treated as *parerga*. In the search for the cause or the knowledge of principles, one must avoid letting the *parerga* get the upper hand over the essentials [*Nicomachean Ethics* 1098a 30]. Philosophical discourse will always have been against the *parergon*. But what about this against.

A *parergon* comes against, beside, and in addition to the *ergon*, the work done [*fait*], the fact [*le fait*], the work, but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simply outside nor simply inside. Like an accessory that one is obliged to welcome on the border, on board [*au bord*, *à bord*]. It is first of all the on (the) bo(a)rd(er) [*Il est d'àbord l'à-bord*].

If we wanted to play a little—for the sake of poetics—at etymology, the *à-bord* would refer us to the Middle High German *bort* (table, plank, deck of a vessel). "The *bord* is thus properly speaking a plank, and etymology allows us to grasp the way its meanings link together. The primary meaning is the deck of a vessel, i.e., a construction made of planks; then, by metonymy, that which borders, that which encloses, that which limits, that which is at the extremity." Says Litté.

But the *etymon* will always have had, for whoever knows how to read, its border-effects.

Boats are never far away when one is handling figures of rhetoric.⁹ Brothel [*bordel*] has the same etymology; it's an easy one, at first a little hut made of wood.

The *bord* is made of wood, and apparently indifferent like the frame of a painting. Along with stone, better than stone, wood of names matter [*hylé* means wood]. These questions of wood, of

9. Perhaps referring to hackneyed examples of rhetorical figures, such as "forty sails" for "forty ships" in Dumarsais, Fontanier, etc. But *bateau* used adjectivally also means "hackneyed."

matter, of the frame, of the limit between inside and outside, must, somewhere in the margins, be constituted together.

The *parergon*, this supplement outside the work, must, if it is to have the status of a philosophical quasi-concept, designate a formal and general predicative structure, which one can transport intact or deformed and reformed according to certain rules, into other fields, to submit new contents to it. Now Kant does use the word *parergon* elsewhere: the context is very different but the structure is analogous and just as problematical. It is to be found in a very long note added to the second edition of *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*. This place, the form of this place, is of great import.

To what is the "Note" appended? To a "General Remark" which closes the second part.

Now what is the *parergon*? It is the concept of the remark, of this "General Remark," insofar as it defines what comes to be added to *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* without being a part of it and yet without being absolutely extrinsic to it. Each part of the book comprises a "General Remark" [*Allgemeine Anmerkung*], a *parergon* concerning a *parergon*. As there are four parts to *Religion*, then the book is in a manner of speaking framed [*cadre*], but also squared up [*quadrillé*]¹⁰ by these four remarks on *parerga*, hors-d'oeuvres, "additives" which are neither inside nor outside.

The beginning of the note appended, in the second edition, to the first of the "General Remarks," defines the status of the remark as *parergon*: "This general Remark is the first of four which have been added [*angehängt*: appended, like appendixes] to each piece of this text [*jedem Stück dieser Schrift*] and which might have as titles: [1] Of the effects of grace; [2] Of miracles; [3] Of mysteries; [4] Of the means of grace. They are in some measure *parerga* of religion within the limits of pure reason, they are not integral parts of it [*sie gehören nicht innerhalb dieselben*] but they verge on it [*aber stossen doch an sie an*: they touch it, push it, press it, press against it, seek contact, exert a pressure at the frontier]. Reason, conscious of its impotence [*Unvermögens*] to satisfy its moral need [the only need which should ground or should have grounded religion within the limits of reason alone],

10. *Quadrillé* insists on the "squareness" implied in *cadre* (see also p. 77), but it also carries an important sense of coverage, control, surveillance.

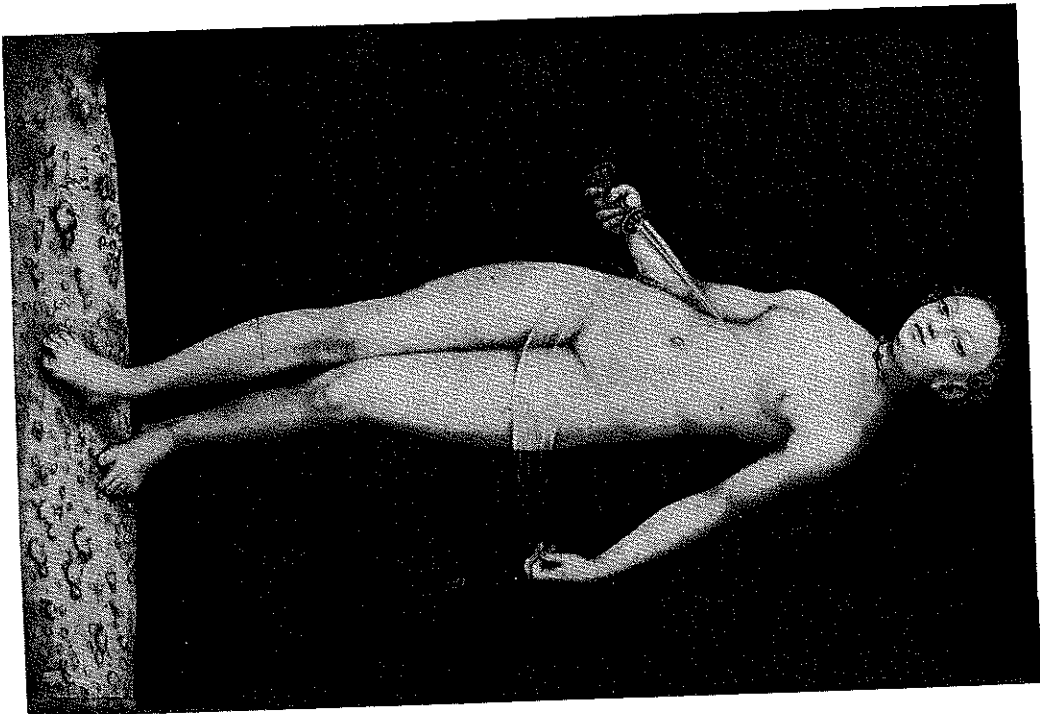
reaches as far as these transcendent ideas which are potentially able to make good the lack (*die jenen Mangel ergänzen*), without however appropriating them (*sich zuzueignen*) as extension of its domain (*Besitz*, possession). It contests neither the possibility nor the reality of the objects of these ideas but it cannot admit them into its maxims for thought and action. It even holds that if, in the unathomable field of the supernatural, there is something to more (*noch etwas mehr*) than what it can render intelligible to itself and which would however be necessary to supply (Cibelin's translation of *Ergänzung*) its moral insufficiency, this thing, even though unknown, will come to the aid (*zu starten kommen*) of its good will, thanks to a faith which one could call (as regards its possibility) *reflective* [*reflektierend*] because the dogmatic faith which declares that it *knows* seems to it presumptuous and not very sincere; for to remove difficulties with regard to what is in itself (in practical terms) well established is only a secondary task (*parergon*) when those difficulties concern transcendent questions."

What is translated as "secondary task" is *Nebengeschäfte*: incidental business or bustle, activity or operation which comes *beside or against*. The *parergon* inscribes something which comes as an extra, *exterior* to the proper field (here that of pure reason and of *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*) but whose transcendent exteriority comes to play, about onto, brush against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside only to the extent that the inside is lacking. It is lacking in something and it is lacking *from itself*. Because reason is "conscious of its impotence to satisfy its moral need," it has recourse to the *parergon*, to grace, to mystery, to miracles. It needs the supplementary work. This additive, to be sure, is threatening. Its use is critical. It involves a risk and exacts a price the theory of which is elaborated. To each *parergon* of *Religion* there is a corresponding damage, a detriment (*Nachteil*) and the four classes of dangers will correspond to the four types of *parergon*: (1) for the would-be internal experience (effects of grace), there is *fanaticism*, (2) for the would-be external experience (miracles), there is *superstition*, (3) for the would-be insight of the understanding into the supernatural order there is *illuminism*, (4) for the would-be actions on the supernatural (means of grace), there is *thaumaturgy*. These four aberrations or seductions of reason nevertheless also have in view a certain pleasing, pleasing-God [*gottgefälliger Absicht*].

So, as an example among examples, the clothing on statues (*Gewänder an Statuen*) would have the function of a *parergon* and an ornament. This means (*das heisst*), as Kant makes clear, that which is not internal or intrinsic (*innerlich*), as an integral part (*als Bestandteil*), to the total representation of the object (*in die ganze Vorstellung des Gegenstandes*) but which belongs to it only in an extrinsic way (*nur äußerlich*) as a surplus, an addition, an adjunct (*als Zuhat*), a supplement.

Hors-d'oeuvres, then, the clothes of statues, which both decorate and veil their nudity, Hors-d'oeuvres struck onto the edging of the work nonetheless, and to the edging of the represented body to the extent that—such is the argument—they supposedly do not belong to the whole of the representation. What is represented in the representation would be the naked and natural body, the representative essence of the statue would be related to this, and the only beautiful thing in the statue would be that representation, it alone would be essentially, purely, and intrinsically beautiful, "the proper object of a pure judgment of taste."

This delimitation of the center and the integrity of the representation, of its inside and its outside, might already seem strange. One wonders, too, where to have clothing commence. Where does a *parergon* begin and end. Would any garment be a *parergon*. G-strings and the like. What to do with absolutely transparent veils. And how to transpose the statement to painting. For example, Cranach's Lucretia holds only a light band of transparent veil in front of her sex: where is the *parergon*? Should one regard as a *parergon* the dagger which is not part of her naked and natural body and whose point she holds turned toward herself, touching her skin (in that case only the point of the *parergon* would touch her body in the middle of a triangle formed by her two breasts and her navel)? A *parergon*, the necklace that she wears around her neck? The question of the representative and objectivizing essence, of its outside and its inside, of the criteria engaged in this delimitation, of the value of naturalness which is presupposed in it, and, secondarily or primarily, of the place of the human body or of its privilege in this whole problematic. If any *parergon* is only added on by virtue of an internal lack in the system to which it is added (as was verified in *Religion*), what is it that is lacking in the representation of the body so that the garment should come



and supplement it? And what would art have to do with this? What would it give to be seen? Cause to be seen? Let us see! Let us cause to be seen? Or let itself be shown?

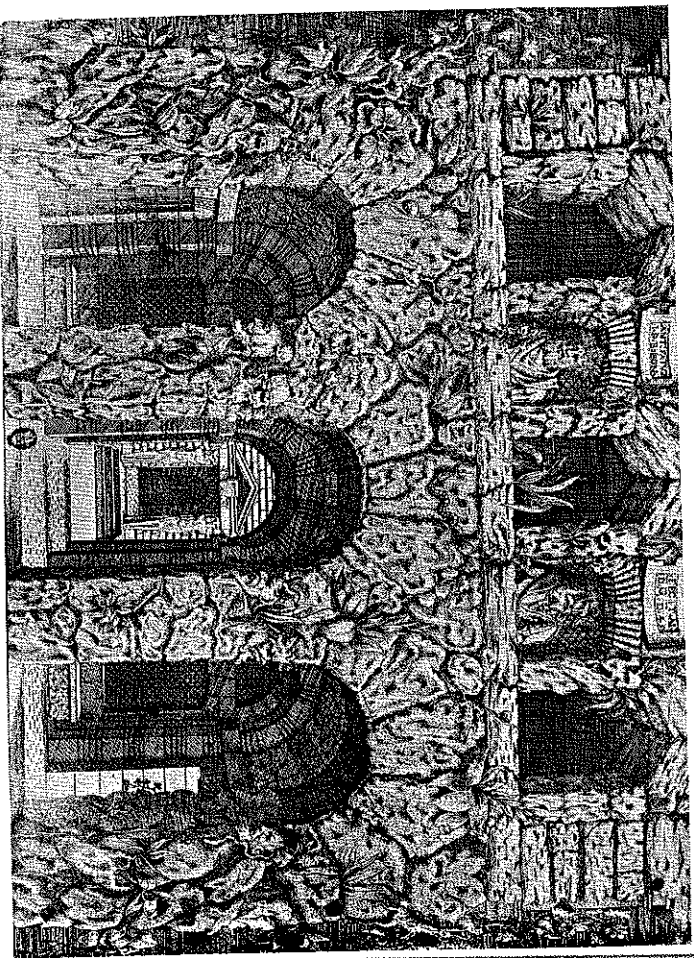
We are only at the beginning of our astonishment at this paragraph. (*Parergon* also means the exceptional, the strange, the extraordinary.) I have torn the "garment" a little too hastily from the middle of a series of three examples, of three *parerga* which are no less strange. Each in itself, first of all, and then in their

association. The example immediately following is that of the columns around sumptuous buildings (*Säulengänge um Prachtgebäude*). These columns are also, then, supplementary *parerga*. After the garment, the column? Why would the column be external to the building? Where does the criterion, the critical organ, the organum of discernment come from here? It is no less obscure than in the previous case. It even presents an extra difficulty: the *parergon* is added this time to a work which *does not represent anything* and which is itself already *added* to nature. We think we know what properly belongs or does not belong to the human body, what is detached or not detached from it—even though the *parergon* is precisely an ill-detachable detachment. But in a work of architecture, the *Vorstellung*, the representation is not structurally representational or else is so only through detours complicated enough, no doubt, to disconcert anyone who tried to discern, in a critical manner, the inside from the outside, the integral part and the detachable part. So as not to add to these complications, I shall leave to one side, provisionally, the case of columns in the form of the human body, those that support or represent the support of a window (and does a window form part of the inside of a building or not? And what about the window of a building in a painting?), and which can be naked or clothed, can represent a man or a woman, a distinction to which Kant makes no reference.

With this example of the columns is announced the whole problematic of inscription in a milieu, of the marking out of the work in a field of which it is always difficult to decide if it is natural or artificial and, in this latter case, if it is *parergon* or *ergon*. For not every milieu, even if it is contiguous with the work, constitutes a *parergon* in the Kantian sense. The natural site chosen for the erection of a temple is obviously not a *parergon*. Nor is an artificial site: neither the crossroads, nor the church, nor the museum, nor the other works around one or other. But the garment or the column is. Why? It is not because they are detached but on the contrary because they are more difficult to detach and above all because without them, without their quasi-detachment, the lack on the inside of the work would appear, or (which amounts to the same thing for a lack) would not appear. What constitutes them as *parerga* is not simply their exteriority as a surplus, it is the internal structural link which rivets them to the lack in the interior of the *ergon*. And this lack would be constitutive of the very unity of the *ergon*. Without this lack, the *ergon* would have

no need of a *parergon*. The *ergon*'s lack is the lack of a *parergon*, of the garment or the column which nevertheless remains exterior to it. How to give *energeia* its due?

Can one attach the third example to this series of examples, to the question that they pose? It is in fact the first of the examples, and I have proceeded in reverse. In appearance it is difficult to associate it with the other two. It is to do with the frames for paintings [*Einfassungen der Gemälde*]. The frame: a *parergon* like the others. The series might seem surprising. How can one assimilate the function of a frame to that of a garment on (in, around, or up against) a statue, and to that of columns around a building? And what about a frame framing a painting representing a building surrounded by columns in clothed human form? What is incomprehensible about the edge, about the *d-bord* appears not only at the internal limit, the one that passes between the frame and the painting, the clothing and the body, the column and the building, but also at the external limit. *Parerga* have a thickness,



a surface which separates them not only (as Kant would have it) from the integral inside, from the body proper of the *ergon*, but also from the outside, from the wall on which the painting is hung, from the space in which statue or column is erected, then, step by step, from the whole field of historical, economic, political inscription in which the drive to signature is produced (an analogous problem, as we shall see further on). No "theory," no "practical," no "theoretical practice" can intervene effectively in this field if it does not weigh up and bear on the frame, which is the decisive structure of what is at stake, at the invisible limit to (between) the interiority of meaning (put under shelter by the whole hermeneuticist, semioticist, phenomenologist, and formalist tradition) and (to) all the empiricisms of the extrinsic which, incapable of either seeing or reading, miss the question completely.

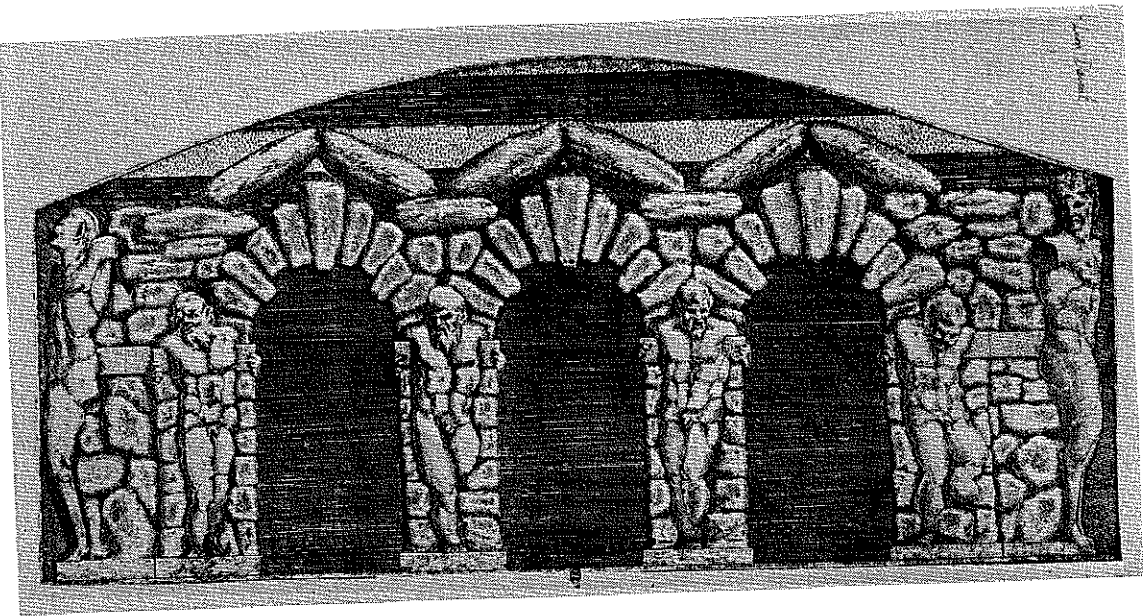
The *parergon* stands out [*se détache*] both from the *ergon* (the work) and from the milieu, it stands out first of all like a figure on a ground. But it does not stand out in the same way as the work. The latter also stands out against a ground. But the *parergon* frame stands out against two grounds [*fonds*], but with respect to each of those two grounds, it merges [*se fond*] into the other. With respect to the work which can serve as a ground for it, it merges into the wall, and then, gradually, into the general text. With respect to the background which the general text is, it merges into the work which stands out against the general background. There is always a form on a ground, but the *parergon* is a form which has as its traditional determination not that it stands out but that it disappears, buries itself, effaces itself, melts away at the moment it deploys its greatest energy. The frame is in no case a background in the way that the milieu or the work can be, but neither is its thickness as margin a figure. Or at least it is a figure which comes away of its own accord [*s'enlève d'elle-même*].

What would Kant have said about a frame framing a painting representing a building surrounded by columns (examples of this are numerous), columns in the form of clothed human bodies (the frescoes on the vault of the Sistine Chapel—what is its frame?—whose represented, painted object is a sculpted volume itself representing, for example to the right of Jonah, naked children forming a column which supports a ceiling, etc. Same implication around the Persian Sibyl or around Zachariah holding a book in his hand, or around Jeremiah, or the Libyan Sibyl; it is difficult

to say whether the children-columns are clothed or unclothed: they are *bearing* clothes), the whole frame being placed on the easel of a painter who is himself represented by another painting.

It may appear that I am taking unfair advantage by persisting with two or three possibly fortuitous examples from a secondary subchapter, and that it would be better to go to less marginal places in the work, nearer to the center and the heart of the matter [*le fond*]. To be sure. The objection presupposes that one already knows what is the center or the heart of the third *Critique*, that one has already located its frame and the limit of its field. But nothing seems more difficult to determine. The *Critique* presents itself as a work (*ergon*) with several sides, and as such it ought to allow itself to be centered and framed, to have its ground delimited by being marked out, with a frame, against a general background. But this frame is problematical. I do not know what is essential and what is accessory in a work. And above all I do not know what this thing is, that is neither essential nor accessory, neither proper nor improper, and that Kant calls *parergon*, for example the frame. Where does the frame take place. Does it take place. Where does it begin. Where does it end. What is its internal limit. Its external limit. And its surface between the two limits. I do not know whether the passage in the third *Critique* where the *parergon* is defined is itself a *parergon*. Before deciding what is parergonal in a text which poses the question of the *parergon*, one has to know what a *parergon* is—at least, if there is any such thing.

To the impatient objector, if s/he insists on seeing the thing itself at last: the whole analytic of aesthetic judgment forever assumes that one can distinguish rigorously between the intrinsic and the extrinsic. Aesthetic judgment *must* properly bear upon intrinsic beauty, not on finery and surrounds. Hence one must know—this is a fundamental presupposition, presupposing what is fundamental—how to determine the intrinsic—what is framed—and know what one is excluding as frame *and* outside-the-frame. We are thus *already* at the unlocatable center of the problem. And when Kant replies to our question “What is a frame?” by saying: it’s a *parergon*, a hybrid of outside and inside, but a hybrid which is not a mixture or a half-measure, an outside which is called to the inside of the inside in order to constitute it as an inside; and when he gives as examples of the *parergon*, alongside the frame, clothing and column, we ask to see, we say to ourselves that there



are "great difficulties" here, and that the choice of examples, and their association, is not self-evident.

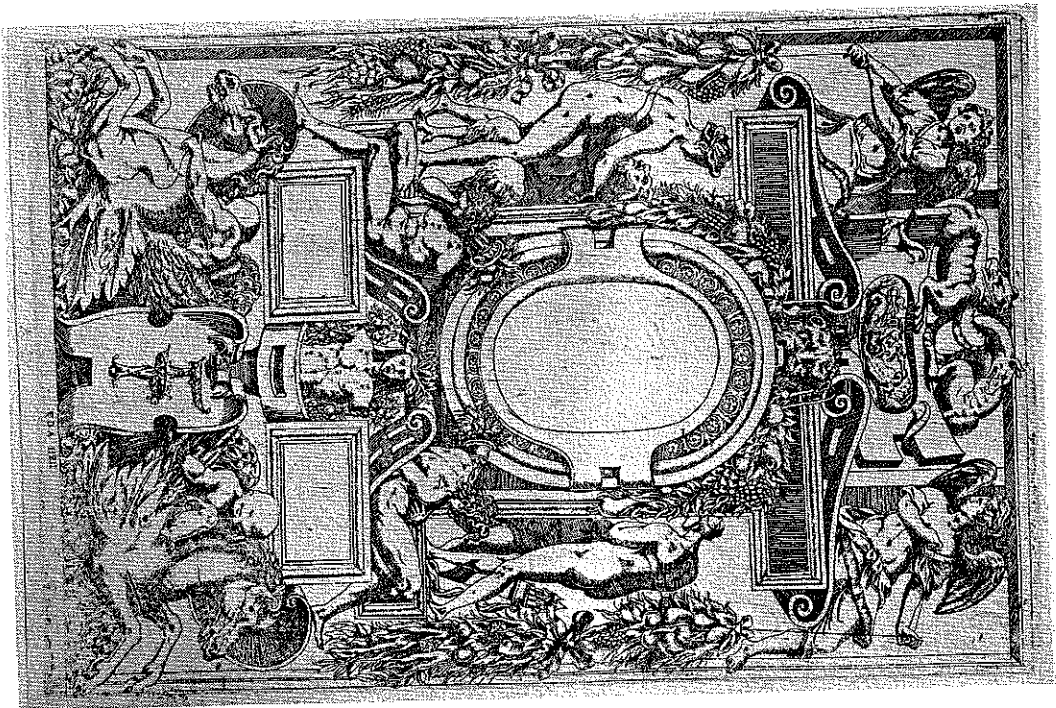
The more so because, according to the logic of the supplement, the *parergon* is divided in two. At the limit between work and absence of work, it divides in two. And this division gives rise to a sort of pathology of the *parergon*, the forms of which must be named and classified, just as *Religion* recognized four types of *parergon* misdeeds or detriments. Kant is in the process of determining "the proper object of the pure judgment of taste." But he does not simply exclude from it the *parergon* as such and in general. Only in certain conditions. The criterion of exclusion is here a formality.

What must we understand by formality?

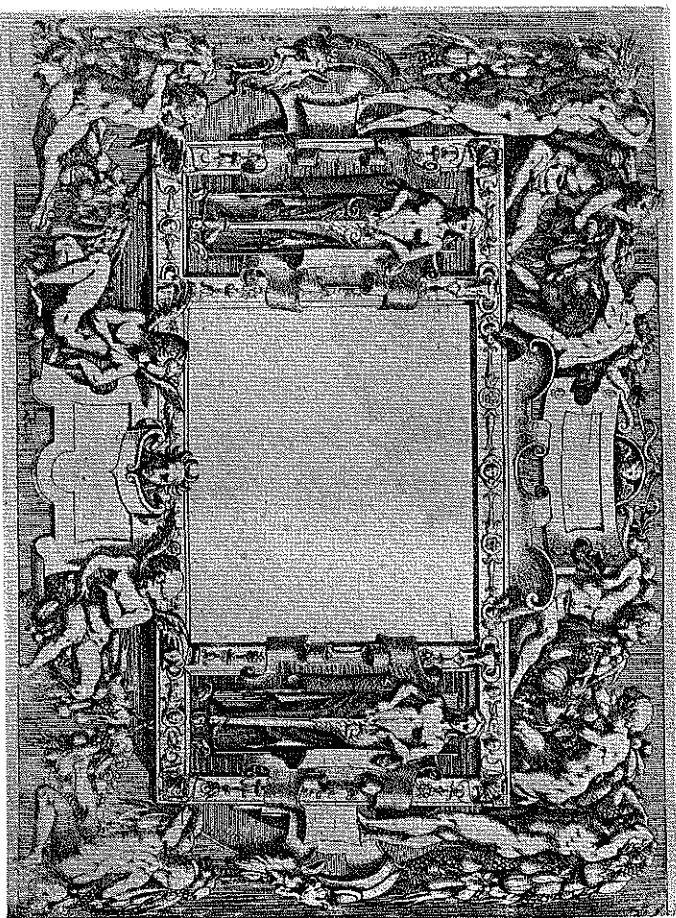
The *parergon* (frame, garment, column) can augment the pleasure of taste (*Wohlgefallen des Geschmacks*), contribute to the proper and intrinsically aesthetic representation if it intervenes by its form (*durch seine Form*) and only by its form. If it has a "beautiful form," it forms part of the judgment of taste properly speaking or in any case intervenes directly in it. This is, if you like, the normal *parergon*. But if on the other hand it is not beautiful, purely beautiful, i.e., of a formal beauty, it lapses into *adorn-ment* (*Schmuck*) and harms the beauty of the work, it does it wrong and causes it detriment (*Abbruch*). This is analogous to the detriment or damage (*Nachteil*) of *Religion*.

Now the example of this degradation of the simple *parergon* into a seductive adornment is again a frame, this time the gilded frame (*goldene Rahmen*), the gilding of the frame done in order to recommend the painting to our attention by its attraction (*Reiz*). What is bad, external to the pure object of taste, is thus what seduces by an attraction; and the example of what leads astray by its force of attraction is a color, the gilding, in as much as it is nonform, content, or sensory matter. The deterioration of the *parergon*, the perversion, the adornment, is the attraction of sensory matter. As design, organization of lines, forming of angles, the frame is not at all an adornment and one cannot do without it. But in its purity, it ought to remain colorless, deprived of all empirical sensory materiality.

This opposition form/matter governs, as we know, the whole *Critique* and inscribes it within a powerful tradition. According to *The Origin of the Work of Art*, it is one of the three determinations (*hypokeimenon/symbekos; aistheton/noeton, zidos-morphē/hylē*) which fall violently upon the thing. It procures a



"conceptual schema" (*Begriffsschema*) for any theory of art. It suffices to associate the rational with the formal, the irrational with matter, the irrational with the illogical, the rational with the logical, to couple the whole lot to the subject/object pair, in order to have at one's disposal a *Begriffsmechanik* that nothing can resist. But from what region does this determination of the thing as formed matter come? Its wholesale usage by aesthetics



allows us to conceive of it as a deportation from the domain of art. In any case, Christian creationism would, according to Heidegger, have brought with it a "particular incitement," a supplementary motivation for considering the form-matter complex as the structure of every entity, the *ens creatum* as the unity of *forma* and *materia*. Though faith has disappeared, the schemas of Christian philosophy remain effective. "Thus it is that the interpretation of the thing in terms of matter and form, whether it remains medieval or becomes transcendental in the Kantian sense, has become common and self-evident. But this does not make it any less than the other interpretations of the thingness of the thing a superimposition fallen onto (*Überfall*) the being-thing of the thing. This situation reveals itself already in the fact of naming things properly speaking (*eigentlichen Dingen*) things pure and simple [*bloß Dinge*: naked things]. This 'naked' [*bloß*] does however mean the stripping [*Entblössung*] of the character of usefulness (*Dienlichkeit*) and of being made. The naked thing [*bloße Ding*] is a sort of product [*Zeng*] but a product divested [*entkleidet*] of

its being-as-product. Being-thing then consists in what still remains [*was noch übrigbleibt*]. But this remainder (*Rest*) is not properly [*eigens*] determined in itself. . . ."

and what if the *Überfall* had the structure of the *paregon*? The violent superimposition which falls aggressively upon the thing, the "insult" as the French translator says for the *Überfall*, strangely but not without pertinence, which enslaves it and, literally, conjugates it, under matter/form—is this superimposition the contingency of a case, the fall of an accident, or a necessity which remains to be examined? And what if, like the *paregon*, it were neither the one nor the other? And what if the *remainder* could never, in its structure as remainder, be determined "properly" what if we must no longer even expect or question anything within that horizon

the word *paregon* intervenes, precisely (paragraphs 13 and 24) at the moment when Kant has just distinguished between *material* and *formal* judgments, the latter alone constituting judgments of taste in the proper sense. It is not, of course, a matter of a formalist aesthetic [we could show, from another point of view, that it is the contrary] but of formality as the space of aesthetics in general, of a "formalism" which, instead of representing a determinate system, merges with the history of art and with aesthetics itself. And the formality-effect is always tied to the possibility of a framing system that is both imposed and erased.

The question of the frame is already framed when it appears at a certain detour of the *Critique*.

Why framed?

The "Clarification by Examples" (paragraph 14) belongs to the "Analytic of the Beautiful," book I of the "Analytic of Aesthetic Judgment." This analytic of the beautiful comprises four parts, four sides, four moments. The judgment of taste is exam-

ined from four sides: (1) according to *quality*, (2) according to *quantity*, (3) according to the *relation of the ends* (the *parergon* finds its lodgings here), (4) according to *modality*. The definition of the beautiful according to quality is the object of a disinterested *Wohlgefallen*, according to quantity, what pleases universally without concept, according to the relation of ends, the form of finality without the representation of an end (finality without end¹¹), according to modality, that which is recognized without concept as the object of a necessary *Wohlgefallen*.

Such is the categorial frame of the analytic of the beautiful.

Now where does this frame come from? Who supplies it? Who constructs it? Where is it imported from?

From the analytic of concepts in the *Critique of Pure* [speculative] *Reason*. A brief reminder: this analytic of concepts is one of the two parts of the transcendental analytic (transcendental analytic and dialectic, a division reproduced in the third *Critique*: analytic comprises an analytic of concepts and an analytic of principles. The former breaks down the power of understanding in order to recognize in it the possibility of *a priori* concepts in their "country of birth," namely the understanding, where they lie dormant and in reserve. Since [receptive] intuition alone relates immediately to the object, the understanding does so by the intermediary, precisely, of judgments. Judgment is the mediate knowledge of an object. And we can "refer all the acts of the understanding back to judgments, in such a way that the understanding in general can be represented as a power to judge (*Urteilskraft*).¹² The power to think as power to judge. One will thus find the functions of the understanding by determining the functions of unity in judgment. Concepts relate, as predicates of possible judgments, to the representation of an object. Consequently, by considering the simple form of the understanding, by abstracting the content of judgments, one can establish the list of the forms of judgment under *four* headings and twelve moments (four times three: the four-times-three also constructs the table [*Tafel*])

11. We have preferred to translate Derrida's "finalité sans fin" literally as "finality without end," rather than revert to the standard "positiveness without purpose": this allows us to preserve a certain sense of Derrida's exploitation of different senses of the word *fin* ("end"), and to avoid certain traditional assumptions about Kant which Derrida's essay suspends at the very least. "Purpose" would be more suitable for *but*, but we have tended to translate this as "goal" to avoid confusion.

of the superior faculties at the end of the introduction to the third *Critique*. Kant replies, in a note, to those who object to his "trichotomy" (*dreiteilig*) divisions and to his taste for "trichotomy"; and the *three + one* informs the relationship of the faculties required by the fine arts—imagination, understanding, soul—with taste: "the first three faculties are united only thanks to the fourth," affirms the note to paragraph 50: *quantity* of the judgments (universal, particular, singular), *quality* (affirmative, negative, indeterminate), *relation* (categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive), *modality* (problematic, assertoric, apodictic). *Table of twelve*. Now there are as many pure concepts of the understanding, ordinary and nonderivable concepts, as there are logical functions in judgments. Whence the deduction of the table of categories (against the so-called grammatical empiricism of Aristotle) from the table of judgments.

Kant thus imports this table, this tableau (*Tafel*), this *board*¹² this *border* into the analytic of aesthetic judgment. This is a legitimate operation since it is a question of judgments. But it is a transportation which is not without its problems and artful violence: a *logical* frame is transposed and forced in to be imposed on a *nonlogical* structure, a structure which no longer essentially concerns a relation to the object as object of knowledge. The aesthetic judgment, as Kant insists, is not a knowledge-judgment.

The frame fits badly. The difficulty can be felt from the first paragraph of the book, from the "first moment of the judgment of taste considered from the point of view of quality."¹³ "The judgment of taste is aesthetic": in this single case, not foreseen by the analytic of concepts and judgments in the other *Critique*, the judgment is not a "knowledge-judgment." Hence it does not come under the transcendental logic whose *board* has been brought in.

The violence of the framing multiplies. It begins by enclosing the theory of the aesthetic in a theory of the beautiful, the latter in a theory of taste and the theory of taste in a theory of judgment. These are decisions which could be called external: the delimitation has enormous consequences, but a certain internal coherence can be saved at this cost. The same does not apply for another gesture of framing which, by introducing the *board*, does violence to the inside of the system and twists its proper articulations out of shape. This must therefore be the gesture of primary interest to us if we are seeking a rigorously effective grip.

12. In English in the text.

In the course of the final delimitation (theory of taste as theory of judgment), Kant *applies*, then, an analytic of logical judgments to an analytic of aesthetic judgments at the very moment that he is insisting on the irreducibility of the one kind to the other. He never justifies this framing, nor the constraint it artificially imposes on a discourse constantly threatened with overflowing (*débordement*). In the first note to the first page, Kant says that the logical functions of judgment served him as a guide (*Anleitung*). This note touches on a difficulty so decisive that one cannot see why it does not constitute the principal text of which it forms the ground bass, that is, the unwritten or underwritten space, the supposed range of the harmonics. Here it is: "The definition of taste which here serves as a foundation is the following: taste is the faculty of judging the beautiful. But what is then required in order to call an object beautiful must be discovered (*entdecken*) by the analysis of judgments of taste. I [intervention of the first person in a footnote] have looked for the moments (*Momente*) raised by this judgment in its reflection, taking as a guide the logical functions [for in judgments of taste there is still always (*immer noch*) a relation to the understanding. It is the moment of quality that I have examined first, because it is the one that the aesthetic judgment of the beautiful takes into consideration first"]

This note is to the title, "First Moment of the Judgment of Taste Considered from the Point of View of Quality." The note thus precedes, in a certain way, the text of the exposition, it is relatively detached from it. The same goes for the parenthesis it includes: "[for in judgments of taste there is still always (*immer noch*) a relation to the understanding]." This parenthesis (inserted in a note which is neither inside nor outside the exposition, neither inside nor outside its content) attempts to justify—and it is the only such attempt—the frame of the exposition, namely the analytic of judgment whose *bord* has been hastily imported at the opening of the exposition.

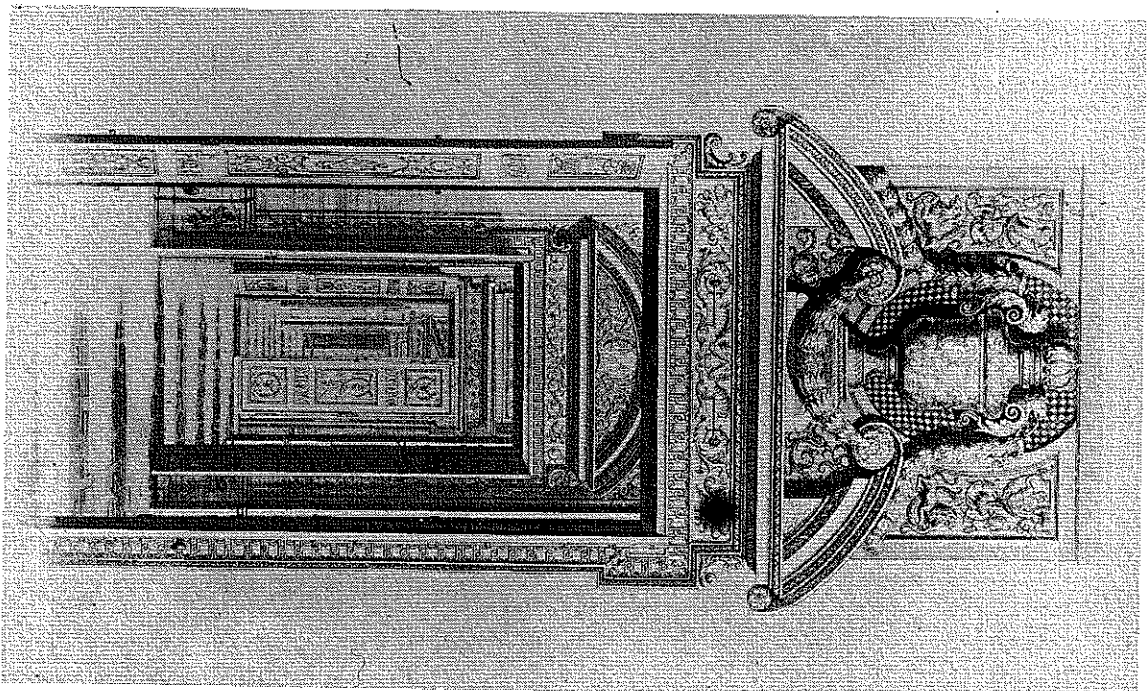
Before the note and its parenthesis (before, if one looks at the space of the page from bottom to top, but after if one keeps to the order of the exposition which places the note at the top of the page, at the place of its reference), another, briefer parenthesis forms a pocket in the supposedly "main" text and is *invaginated* in it, in a sense: "In order to distinguish whether or not a thing is beautiful, we do not relate the representation to the object by means of the understanding, with a view to knowledge, but to

the subject and to its feeling of pleasure or displeasure, by means of the imagination (united perhaps with the understanding, *vielleicht mit dem Verstande verbunden*)."

The two parentheses, *parerga* inside and outside the exposition, have the same object, the same finality: the justification (which is visibly very awkward) of the imported frame, of the analytic imposed—an ill-assured recourse, in order to get the table by and make the board fit—on a hypothetical "laison" with the understanding, to which the judgment of taste, although there is nothing logical about it, supposedly "always still" has a relation.

Like an old *laison* difficult to break off or a second-hand frame one is having trouble selling and that one wants to unload at any price.

The frame of this analytic of the beautiful, with its four moments, is thus furnished by the transcendental analytic, for the sole and bad reason that the imagination, the essential resource of the relation to beauty, is *perhaps* linked to the understanding, that there is perhaps and still (*vielleicht, noch*) some understanding in there. The relation to the understanding, which is neither certain nor essential, thus furnishes the frame of this whole discourse, and, within it, of the discourse on the frame. Without forcing things, but in any case in order to describe a certain forcing on Kant's part, we shall say that the whole frame of the analytic of the beautiful functions, with respect to that the content or internal structure of which is to be determined, like a *parergon*; it has all its characteristics: neither simply internal nor simply external, not falling to one side of the work as one could have said of an *exergue*, indispensable to *energeia* in order to liberate surplus value by enclosing labor (any market and first of all the picture market thus presupposes a process of framing; and an effective deconstructive labor cannot here do without a theory of the frame), it is called up and gathered together as a supplement from the lack—a certain "internal" indetermination—in the very thing that it comes to frame. This lack, which cannot be determined, localized, situated, *arrested* inside or outside *before the framing*, is simultaneously—still using concepts which belong, precisely, to the classical logic of the frame, here to Kant's discourse—both *product* and *production* of the frame. If one applies to it the rule defined in the "Clarification by Examples," and if it becomes in its turn an example of what it allows us to consider as an example (frame described in the frame), then one can act as though the content of the analytic of judgment were a work



of art, a picture whose frame, imported from the other *Critique*, would by virtue of its formal beauty play the role of *parergon*. And if it were simply an attractive, seductive, amusing exergue, not cooperating with what is proper to the work, a pure loss of value and waste of surplus value, then it would only be adornment. But it so happens that it is this analytic of judgment itself which, in its frame, allows us to define the requirement of formality, the opposition of the formal and the material, of the pure and the impure, of the proper and the improper, of the inside and the outside. It is the analytic which *determines* the frame as *parergon*, which both constitutes it and ruins it [*l'abîme*], makes it both hold (as that which causes to hold together, that which constitutes, mounts, inlays, sets, borders, gathers, trims—so many operations gathered together by the *Einfassung*) and collapse. A frame is essentially constructed and therefore fragile: such would be the essence or truth of the frame. If it had any. But this "truth" can no longer be a "truth," it no more defines the transcendental than it does the accidentality of the frame, merely its *parergonality*.

Philosophy wants to arraign it and can't manage. But what has produced and manipulated the frame puts everything to work in order to efface the frame effect, most often by naturalizing it to infinity, in the hands of God (one can verify this in Kant). Deconstruction must neither reframe nor dream of the pure and simple absence of the frame. These two apparently contradictory gestures are the very ones—and they are systematically indissociable—of *what* is here deconstructed.¹³

If the operations engaged and the criteria proposed by the analytic of the beautiful depend on this *parergonality*, if all the value oppositions which dominate the philosophy of art (before and since Kant) depend on it in their pertinence, their rigor, their purity, their propriety, then they are affected by this logic of the *parergon* which is more powerful than that of the analytic. One could follow in detail the consequences of this infectious affection. They cannot be local. The reflective operation which we have just allowed to make itself writing on the frame or have itself written on the frame (this is—writing/written on the frame):¹⁴ a general law which is no longer a mechanical or teleological law

13. "De ce qui se deconstruit": the French pronominal verb retains both passive and reflexive values.

14. "Ceci est—écrit sur le cadre": écrit can also be "a piece of writing."

of nature, of the accord or the harmony of the faculties (etc.), but a certain repeated dislocation, a regulated, irrepressible dislocation, which makes the frame in general crack, undoes it at the corners in its quoin and joints,¹⁵ turns its internal limit into an external limit, takes its thickness into account, makes us see the picture from the side of the canvas or the wood, etc.

To note only the first consequence of the initial forcing, see the end of the first note (another *parergon* which frames both the text and, within it as within itself, the parenthesis). Just as Kant cannot justify in all rigor the importation of the analytic of judgment, he cannot justify the order he follows in the application of the frame, of the four categories of the analytic of concepts. No more than with the transport of the table (*Tafel*), i.e., the frame, does the order of exposition here manage to rationalize its interest philosophically. Its motivation hides behind the arbitrariness of the philosophical decree. The exposition begins with the group of the two *mathematical* categories (*quantity and quality*). Why not begin with the two *dynamic* categories (*relation and modality*)? And why invert the order of the mathematical categories themselves, as it was followed in the original exposition (*quantity before quality*)? This latter reversal is explained, to be sure, by the fact that knowledge is neither the end nor the effect of the judgment of taste: quantity (here, universality) is not the *first* value of a judgment of taste. End of the note: "It is the moment of quality that I have examined first, because it is the one that the aesthetic judgment of the beautiful takes into consideration first." Why first (*zuerst*)? The priority is not prescribed by the table, by the order of judgment, by the logic proper to the frame. Nothing in the (logical) analytic as such can account for this priority. Now if a reversal of the logical order takes place here for reasons which are not logical, why should it not continue? What is the rule or critical limit here?

Quality (the disinterested character) is the very thing that determines the formality of the beautiful object: it must be pure of all attraction, of all seductive power, it must provoke no emotion, promise no enjoyment. The *opposition* between the formal and the material, design and color (at least insofar as it is non-formal), composition and sound (at least insofar as it is nonfor-

15. "L'abîme en coin dans ses angles et ses articulations": the translation loses a certain sense of slyness; cf. "un regard en coin," a sideways glance. Use of the idiom "on the side" would interfere too much with the insistence on corners.

mal), the formal *parergon* and the *parergon* for show or adornment, the opposition between the good and the bad *parergon* (which in itself is neither good nor bad) thus depends on the framing of this quality, of this frame effect called quality, value of value, and with which, violently, everything seems to begin. Position: opposition: frame.

Likewise, in the "Clarification," the discourse on sound and on color is held in the angle of the two mathematical categories (quality and quantity) even as the whole analytic of the beautiful is undoing, ceaselessly and as if without wanting to, the labor of the frame.

The frame labors [*travaille*] indeed. Place of labor, structurally bordered origin of surplus value, i.e., overflowed [*débordée*] on these two borders by what it overflows, it gives [*travaille*] indeed.¹⁶ Like wood. It cracks and cracks, breaks down and dislocates even as it cooperates in the production of the product, overflows it and is deduct(ed) from it. It never lets itself be simply exposed.

The analytic of the beautiful thus gives, ceaselessly undoes the labor of the frame to the extent that, while letting itself be squared up by the analytic of concepts and by the doctrine of judgment, it describes the absence of concept in the activity of taste. "The beautiful is what is represented without concept as object of a universal *Wohlgefallen*." This definition (second moment, category of quantity) derives from the qualitative definition (disinterestedness). The object of a disinterested pleasure does not depend on an empirical inclination, it therefore addresses itself to freedom and touches everyone—no matter who—where everyone can be touched. It is therefore universal. Now in explaining why this universality must be without concept, Kant exhibits in a sense the forcing—imposing an analytic of concepts on a process without concept—but he justifies his operation by an argument that one can consider to be the *constitution*, that which makes the whole edifice of the third *Critique* hold-together-and-stand-upright in the middle of its two great wings (the critique of aesthetic judgment and the critique of teleological judgment). This argument is *analogy*. It operates

16. This sense of the verb *travaille* (i.e., to give or warp, of wood or metal) communicates with an important sense of *jouer* (literally "to play" but also "to give" in the sense of there being "play" or "give" in a steering wheel, for example); see here p. 81.

everywhere in the book, and one can systematically verify its effect. At the place where we are in the exposition—its crossroads—it *gathers together* without-concept and concept, universality without concept and universality with concept, the without and the with, it thus legitimates the violence, the occupation of a nonconceptual field by the grid [*quadrillage*] of a conceptual force. Without and with at the same time [*and*]. By reason of its qualitative universality, the judgment of taste resembles the logical judgment which, nonetheless, it never is, in all rigor. The nonconceptual resembles the conceptual. A very strange resemblance, a singular proximity or affinity [*Ähnlichkeit*] which, somewhere (to be specified later!)¹⁷ draws out of *mimesis* an interpretation of the beautiful which firmly rejects imitation. There is no contradiction here which is not reappropriated by the economy of *physis* as *mimesis*.

He who takes a disinterested pleasure (without enjoyment and without concept) in the beautiful "will speak of the beautiful as if (*als ob*) beauty were a quality (*Beschaffenheit*) of the object and the judgment logical (forming a cognition of the Object by concepts of it); although it is only aesthetic, and contains merely a reference (*Beziehung*) of the representation of the object to the Subject—because it still bears this resemblance [*Ähnlichkeit*]: affinity, proximity, family tie] to the logical judgment, that it may be presupposed to be valid for all men. But this universality cannot spring from concepts. For from concepts there is no transition to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure (save in the case of pure practical laws, which, however, carry an interest with them; and such an interest does not attach to the pure judgment of taste)" [Meredith, 51].

The discourse on color and sound belongs to the "Clarification by Examples," in the course of the exposition of the third category: the dynamic category of finality. The judgment of taste relates to a purely formal finality, without concept and without end, without a conceptual and determinant representation of an end. The two mathematical categories are nonetheless indispensable: sound and color are excluded as *attractions* only to the extent of their nonformality, their materiality. As pure forms, sound and color can give rise to a universal appreciation, in conformity with the quantity of a judgment of taste; they can procure a disinterested

17. Cf. "Economimesis"—J.D.

pleasure, conforming to the quality of a judgment of taste. The sensations of sound and color can "quite rightly" be held beautiful to the extent that they are "pure": this determination of purity concerns only the form, which alone can be "universally communicable with certainty." According to Kant, there are two ways of acceding to formal purity: by a nonsensory, nonsensual reflection, and by the regular play of impressions, "if one assumes with Euler" that colors are vibrations of the ether [*pulsus*] at regular intervals, and if (formal analogy between sounds and colors) sounds consist in a regular rhythm in the vibrations of the disturbed ether. Kant had a great deal of difficulty coming to a conclusion on this point. But the fact remains that on this hypothesis one would be dealing not with material contents of received sensations but with formal determinations. That is why simple color is pure color and can therefore belong inside the beautiful, giving rise to universally communicable appreciations. Mixed colors cannot do this. The empiricist motif (that simple color does not give rise to a transmissible perception) seems to have been inverted, but it is here not a question of determinant perception but only of pleasure or displeasure.

This ambivalence of color (valorized as formal purity or as relation, devalorized as sensory matter, beauty on the one hand, attraction on the other, pure presence in both cases) is raised to the second power (squared) when it is a question of the color of the frame [*goldene Rahmen*, for example], when the parergonal equivocity of the color comes to intensify the parergonal equivocity of the frame. What would be the equivalent of this square for music

it will be said that not all frames are, or have been, or will be square, rectangular, or quadrangular figures, nor even simply angular. Tables and tableaux (*Tafel*) likewise not. This is true: a critical and systematic and typological history of framing

seems possible and necessary.¹⁸ But the angle in general, the quadrangular in particular will not be just one of its objects among others. Everything that is written here is valid for the logic of parergonal bordering in general, but the privilege of "cadre" [*frame*], though it seems more fortunate in the Latin than in the Germanic languages, is not fortuitous

Kantian question: the relation of the concept to the nonconcept (up/down, left/right), to the body, to the signature which is placed "on" the frame: in fact, sometimes, structurally, always. The prosthesis

which does not run along as though on wheels in the third *Critique* as soon as one looks a little more closely at the example, that example of an example which forms and is formed by the frame. If things run as though on wheels, this is perhaps because things aren't going so well, by reason of an internal infirmity in the thesis which demands to be supplemented by a prosthesis or only ensures the progress of the exposition with the aid of a wheelchair or a child's pushchair. Thus one pushes forward something which cannot stand up, does not erect itself by itself in its process. Framing

18. When "Parergon" was first published, I had not yet read Meyer Schapiro, "Sur quelques problèmes de sémiotique de l'art visuel: champ et véhicule dans les signes iconiques," translated into French by Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, *Critique* 315-16 [1973], 843-66, originally published in *Semiotica* 1, no. 3 (1969):223-42].

The reader will find more than one indication concerning the "history" of framing, its "late invention," the not very "natural" character of the "rectangular frame," as well as "the frame that bends and turns inward into the field of the picture to compress or entangle the figures (the truncate of Souillac, the Imago Homini in the Echemnach Gospels . . .)" (p. 228).

I also refer, as goes without saying, to all of Lebensztejn's publications.—]D.

always supports and contains that which, by itself, collapses forthwith, etc

this is demonstrated by example, by the problem of the example and the reflective judgment. Now what does the *Critique of Pure Reason* tell us? That examples are the wheelchairs [*roulettes*] of judgment. The French translators sometimes say the "crutches" of judgment: but it really is wheelchairs (*Gängelwagen*), not skateboards [*planches-à-roulettes*] but the little wheeled cars in which children, the old, or the sick are pushed, those who have not enough judgment, enough good sense, that faculty of natural judgment, the best-shared thing (this is not the *sensus communis* of the third *Critique*) that is called—this is Kant's word—*Mutterwitz*. Those who do not have enough of this maternal Witz, the sick, imbeciles, need wheelchairs, examples. "Examples are thus the wheelchairs of the faculty of judging (*Gängelwagen der Urteilskraft*) and those who lack [*mangel*] this natural talent will not be able to do without them." The wheelchairs, however, do not replace judgment: nothing can replace the *Mutterwitz*, the lack of which cannot be supplied by any school (*dessen Mangel keine Schule ersetzen kann*). The exemplary wheelchairs are thus prostheses which replace nothing. But like all examples (*Beispielen*), as Hegel will have pointed out, they play, there is play in them, they give room to play. To the essence, beside the essence (*beihet*), Hegel goes on to make clear. Thus they can invert, unbalance, incline the natural movement into a parergonal movement, divert the energy of the *ergon*, introduce chance and the abyss into the necessity of the *Mutterwitz*: not a contrary order but an aleatory sidestep which can make one lose one's head suddenly, a Russian roulette if one puts into play pleasure without enjoyment, the death-drive and the mourning of labor in the experience of the beautiful

of the parergon—get one's mourning done. Like the entirely-other of hetero-affection, in the pleasure without enjoyment and without concept, it provokes and delimits the labor of mourning, labor in general as labor of

mourning

le travail à parer¹⁹

reserve, savings, parsimony, stock—the self-protection of the work (*ergon*), energy captured, hemmed (the “binding” [*Verbindung*] of energy, condition for the “mastery” [*Herrschaft*] of the pleasure principle: the result “is not simple”—to be continued)

the self-protection-of-the-work, of *energeia* which becomes *ergon* only as (from) *parergon*: not against free and full and pure and unfettered energy (pure act and total presence of *energeia*, the Aristotelian prime mover) but against what is *lacking* in it; not against the lack as a possible or opposable negative, a substantial emptiness, a determinable and bordered absence (still verifiable essence and presence) but against the impossibility of *arresting difference* in its contour, of arraigning the heterogeneous (*différance*) in a pose, of localizing, even in a meta-empirical way, what metaphysics calls, as we have just seen, *lack*, of making it come back, equal or similar to itself (*adaequatio-homiosis*), to its proper place, according to a proper trajectory, preferably circular (castration as truth). Although apparently opposed—or because opposed—these two *bordering* determinations of what the *parergon* is working against (the operation of free energy and of pure production) are in fact inseparable as it stands: depending on the sequence into which it was inserted, it could mean, “(the) work to adorn,” “(the) work to parry,” “(the) work to be adorned,” “(the) work to be parried,” etc.

tivity or the operation of the essential lack) are the same [metaphysical].²⁰

that which is outside the frame [putting-into-lethargy and absolute value of the frame]: naturalization of the frame. There is no natural frame. *There is* frame, but the frame *does not exist*.

The *parergon*—apoptose (decoration, show, parry) of the primary processes, of free energy, i.e., of the “theoretical fiction” (*Ein psychischer Apparat, der nur den Primärvorgang besäße, existiert zwar unseres Wissens nicht und ist insofern eine theoretische Fiktion*). So only a certain practice of theoretical fiction can work (against) the frame, (make or let it) play (it) (against) itself. Don’t forget, nonetheless, that the *content*, the *object* of this theoretical fiction (the free energy of the originary process, its pure productivity) is metaphysics, onto-theology itself. The practice of fiction always runs the risk of believing in it or having us believe in it. The *practice* of fiction: must therefore guard against having metaphysical truth palmed off on it once again under the label of fiction. There is fiction and fiction. Necessity here of the angle—diagonality—where things work and play and give, and of showing up the remnants of the angle in round frames (there are such things). Hegel: spirit linked to the appearance of the round form

19. This syntagm is untranslatable as it stands: depending on the sequence into which it was inserted, it could mean, “(the) work to adorn,” “(the) work to parry,” “(the) work to be adorned,” “(the) work to be parried,” etc.

20. “*Le même* [metaphysique]”: also, “the [metaphysical] same,” “the same [metaphysics].”

everything will flower at the edge

of a deconsecrated tomb: the flower with free or vague beauty (*pulchritudo vaga*) and not adherent beauty (*pulchritudo adhaerens*). It will be, for [arbitrary] example, a colorless and scentless tulip (more surely than color, scent is lost to art and to the beautiful [paragraph 53]: just try to frange a perfume) which Kant doubtless did not pick in Holland but in the book of a certain Saussure whom he read frequently at the time. "But a flower, *zum Beispiel eine Tulpe*, is held to be beautiful because in perceiving it one encounters a finality which, judged as we judge it, does not relate to any end"

even

III. The Sans of the Pure Cut²¹

"La Façon de faner des tulipes

... Et je sais bien qu'il ne s'agit point ici d'une tête, mais seulement de la tête du noeud (ou comme d'une rétroversion de l'utérus), de la gourde séminale, et donc d'aucune autre intelligence que celle d'un gland (ou rétroversion de l'utérus).

Mais cela ne jette-t-il pas quelque jour, justement, sur l'intelligence des autres têtes? des soi-disant véritables têtes?

... lors donc de la fleur fanant ou fanée.

Et peut-être suffirait-il d'avoir attiré l'attention, fixé un moment les regards, porté le goût, fixé la mode sur ces moments-là pour avoir un peu modifié la morale, peut-être, peut-être la politique? L'opinion, du moins, de quelques personnes.

... Nous aussi en avons fini de la 'beauté', de la forme parfaite: celle d'une coupe, pour les tulipes à leur éclosion (classique).

... D'où la déformation et l'impropriété manifeste de nos mots, de nos phrases,

D'où la forme incongrue, baroque: ouverte enfin, — de nos textes."

PONGE, "L'opinion changée quant aux fleurs."²²

21. Literally, "The without of the pure cut" but the homophony with *sang* (blood) is important, as is the affinity with *sens* (sense[s], direction[s]).

22. "And I know full well that we are not here dealing with a head, but only the head of the prick [*noeud*: knot, node, as well as a vulgar

is picked at the end of a footnote. You recall: "But a flower, for example a tulip, is held to be beautiful because, in perceiving it, one encounters a finality which, judged as we judge it, does not relate to any end."

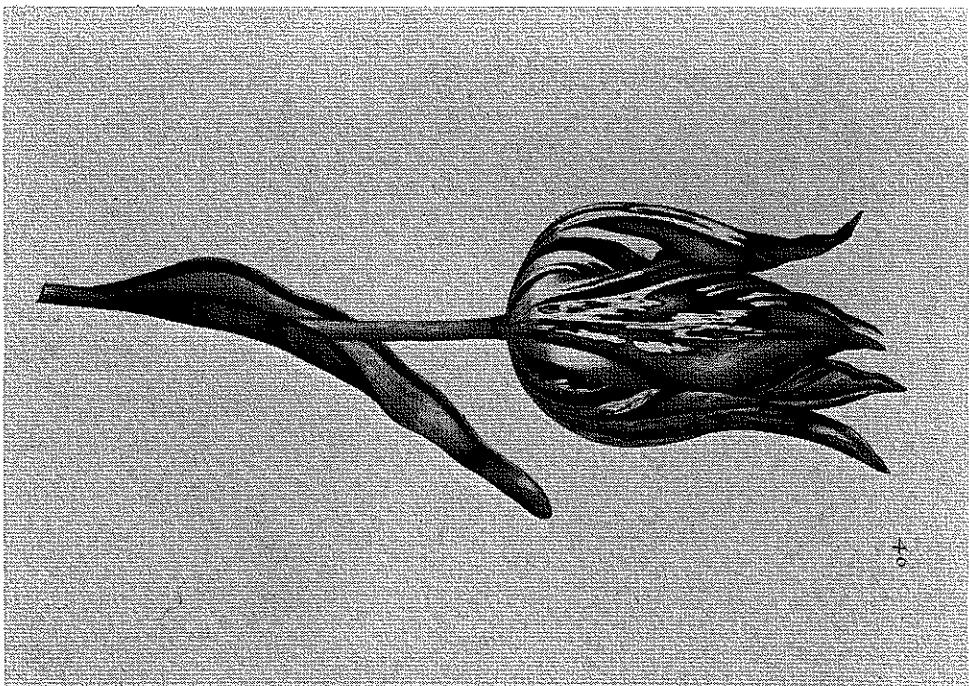
In the *Analytic of the Beautiful*, the note is appended to the definition of the beautiful concluded from the third moment: the judgment of taste examined as to the relation of finality. According to the framework of categories imported from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *Analytic* was constructed and bordered by the four categories: quality and quantity (mathematical categories), relation and modality (dynamic categories). The problem of the *parergon*, the general and abyssal question of the frame, had arisen in the course of the exposition of the category of relation (to finality). The example of the tulip is placed right at the very end of this exposition: the last word of the last footnote, itself appended to the last word of the main text. At the end of each exposition, Kant proposes a definition of the beautiful for the four categories: according to *quality* (the object of a disinterested *Wohlfallen*), according to *quantity* (that which pleases universally *without* concept), according to *relation* (the form of finality perceived *without* the representation of an end). Just when he has extracted this third definition of the beautiful ("Beauty is the form of the finality—*Form der Zweckmäßigkeit*—of an object inasmuch as it is perceived in that object without the representation of an end—*ohne Vorstellung eines Zwecks*—"), Kant adds a note to answer an objection.

Once again, for obvious reasons, I am going backwards, by a reflective route, from the example (if possible) toward the concept.
 term for the penis: cf., too, the colloquial insult 'vete de noeud' [or something like a retroversion of the uterus], with the seminal gourd, and hence with no other intelligence than that of a glans [*gländ*: also 'acorn' (or a retroversion of the uterus)]. / But does this not throw some light, precisely, on the intelligence of other heads? so-called real heads? . . . / at the time, then, of the flower faded or fading. / And perhaps it would suffice to have called attention, fixed people's eyes for a moment, directed taste, fixed fashion onto those moments, in order to have modified morally a little, perhaps, perhaps politics? The opinion, at least, of some people. / . . . We too have finished with 'beauty', with the perfect form, that of a cup, for tulips at their (classical) opening. / . . . Whence the deformation and the manifest impropriety of our words, our phrases, / Whence the incongruous, baroque—in a word, open—form of our texts" / Ponge, "Changed Opinion as to Flowers."

So it's to do with a flower. Not just any flower: not the rose, not the sunflower, nor the broomflower [*genêt*]—the tulip. But there is every reason for presuming that it does not come from nature. From another text, rather. The example seems arbitrary until we notice that a certain Saussure is often cited by Kant in the third *Critique*. Now this Monsieur de Saussure, "a man as witty as he is profound," says Kant in the great "General Remark concerning the Exposition of Reflexive Aesthetic Judgments," was the author of a *Journey in the Alps*. There we read something that Kant did not quote: "I found, in the woods above the hermitage, the wild tulip, which I had never seen before" (I: 431).

Though it is taken from a book or an anthology, it is extremely important that Kant's tulip should nevertheless be natural, absolutely wild. A paradigmatics of the flower orients the third *Critique*. Kant always seeks in it the index of a natural beauty, utterly wild, in which the *without-end* or the *without-concept* of finality is revealed. At the moment when, much further on (§ 42, on "The Intellectual Interest of the Beautiful"), he wants to argue that the immediate interest taken in the beauties of nature, prior to any judgment of taste, is the index of a good soul, he has recourse to the example of "the beautiful form of a wildflower." This interest must of course be directed to the beauty of the forms and not to the attractions which would use these forms for purposes of empirical seduction. Someone who admires a beautiful wildflower, to the point of regretting its potential absence from nature, is "immediately and intellectually interested in the beauty of nature," without the intervention of any sensual seduction. And it is quite "remarkable" that if one substitutes an artificial (*künstliche*) flower (and, adds Kant, it is possible to make them entirely similar to natural ones), and if the trick is discovered, the interest disappears at once. Even if it is replaced by a perverse interest: using this artificial beauty, for example, to decorate one's apartment.

The example of finality without end must thus be wild. *Zweckmäßigkeit ohne Zweck*—the phrase is just as faded as "disinterested pleasure," but remains none the less enigmatic for that. It seems to mean this: everything about the tulip, about its form, seems to be organized with a view to an end. Everything about it seems finalized, as if to correspond to a design (according to the analogical mode of the *as if* which governs this whole discourse on nature and on art), and yet there is something missing



from this aiming at a goal [*but*!—the end [*bout*]. The experience of this absolute lack of end comes, according to Kant, to provoke the feeling of the beautiful, its “disinterested pleasure.” I leave aside deliberately all the problems of etymology—of derivation or affinity—which can be raised by this resemblance of *but* and *bout*. Let us merely note that they have in common the sense of the end [*fin*], the term-with-a-view-to-which, the extremity of a line or an oriented movement, end of direction and sense of the end [*fin du sens et sens de la fin*]. The feeling of beauty, attraction

without anything attracting, fascination without desire have to do with this “experience”: of an oriented, finalized movement, harmoniously organized in view of an end which is never in view, seen, an end which is missing, or a *but en blanc*.²³ I divert this expression from the code of artillery: firing a *but en blanc* is to fire at a target [*blanc*] placed at such a distance that the bullet (or the shell) drops to intersect the prolongation of the line of sight. *But* refers here to the origin from which one fires *de but en blanc*: the gun barrel as origin of the drive. There must be finality, oriented movement, without which there would be no beauty, but the orient (the end which originates) must be lacking. Without finality, no beauty. But no more is there beauty if an end were to determine it.

The wild tulip is, then, seen as exemplary of this finality without end, of this useless organization, without goal, gratuitous, out of use. But we must insist on this: the being cut off from the goal only becomes beautiful if everything in it is straining toward the end [*bout*]. Only this absolute interruption, this cut which is pure because made with a single stroke, with a single *bout* [*bout* means blow: from *buter*, to bang or bump into something] produces the feeling of beauty. If this cut were not pure, if it could (at least virtually) be prolonged, completed, supplemented, there would be no beauty.

What justifies us perhaps in playing from *but* to *blanc*, in passing from *end* to *end* [*de bout en bout*] and from *but* to *bout*, is an association that appears strange at first approach. In Kant’s footnote, the tulip appears to be placed, deposited on a tomb. In reply, then, to an objection.

The objection: there are final forms without end which are nevertheless not beautiful, so not every finality without end produces the feeling of beauty. Kant ascribes a curious example to the anonymous objector: in the course of excavating ancient tombs, there are often finds of stone utensils with a hole, an opening, a cavity (*Lochel*), “as if for a handle [*Hefte*]”. Does not their form clearly indicate a finality, and a finality whose end remains undetermined? The objection continues: this finality without end

23. Usually used figuratively in the sense of “suddenly, point blank, just like that” (Collins-Robert): but here “point blank” would be misleading, as its colloquial sense corresponds to the French “à bout portant.” However, the *OED* defines “point-blank range” as “the distance the shot is carried before it drops appreciably below the horizontal plane of the bore.”

does not provoke any feeling of beauty. No one says that they are beautiful, these tools equipped with a hole without a handle, these tools (*outils*), these utensils, these finalized useful objects that have no visible goal or end, no end that is determinable in a concept.

To be sure, replies Kant, but it is enough to consider them as artifacts (*Kunstwerke*) in order to relate them to a determinable goal. So when we intuit them, we have no immediate *Wohlfallen*. This reply is somewhat obscure. On the one hand, it opposes the *immediate* experience of finality in the tulip to the experience of the utensil, which is an experience mediated by a judgment. In both cases there is, supposedly, experience of beauty because the finality is without end both in art and in nature. On the other hand, if *Kunstwerk* designates a work of artifice in general and not the object of the fine arts, the experience of beauty would be absent from it to the extent that the supposed intention (*Absicht*) implies a determinable end and use: there would be not merely finality but end, because the pure cut could be bandaged.²⁴ The finalized gadget is not absolutely cut off from its end, one can mediate it toward a goal, virtually supply it, replace the handle in its hole, rehandle the thing, give the finality its end back. If the gadget is not beautiful in this case, it is for want of being sufficiently cut off from its goal (*but*). It still adheres to it. There is an adherence—to be continued—between the detached end and the finalized organization of the organ, between the end and the form of finality. As long as there remains an adherence, even virtually or symbolically, as long as there is not a pure cut, there is no beauty. No pure beauty, at least.

As soon as he has closed the tomb again and covered over the place of the dig, Kant puts forward the example of the tulip: "But a flower, for example a tulip, is held to be beautiful because in perceiving it, one encounters a finality which, judged as we judge it, does not relate to any end."

The tulip is beautiful only on the edge of this cut without adherence. But in order for the cut to appear—and it can still do so only by its edging—the interrupted finality must show itself, both as finality and as interruption—as edging. Finality alone is not beautiful, nor is the absence of goal, which we will here distinguish from the absence of the goal. It is finality-without-end which is *said to be beautiful (said to be being here, as we*

24. "La coupe pure y serait pansable": the homophony with *pansable*, "thinkable," is important.

have seen, the essential thing). So it is the *without* that counts for beauty, neither the finality nor the end, neither the lacking goal nor the lack of a goal but the edging in *sans* of the pure cut [*la bordure en 'sans' de la coupe pure*], the *sans* of the finality-*sans-end*.

The tulip is exemplary of the *sans* of the pure cut

sans which is not a lack, science has nothing to say

on this

of the pure cut emerged in the disused utensil, defunct (*defunctum*), deprived of its functioning, in the hole without a handle of the gadget. Interrupting a finalized functioning but leaving a trace of it, death always has an essential relation to this cut, the hiatus of this abyss where beauty takes us by surprise. It announces it, but is not beautiful in itself. It gives rise to the beautiful only in the interruption where it lets the *sans* appear. The example of the unearthed ax was thus at once necessary, nonfortuitous, and inadequate. A suture holds back the *sans* precisely inasmuch as the determinant discourse of science forms its object in it: I begin by inference to make judgments about what completes the tool, about the intention of its author, about its use, about the purpose and the end [*du but et du bout*] of the gadget, I construct a technology, a sociology, a history, a psychology, a political economy, etc.

Whereas science has nothing to say about the *without* of the pure cut. It remains open-mouthed. "There is no science of the beautiful, only a critique of the beautiful" (§ 44, "On the Fine Arts"). Not that one must be ignorant to have a relation with beauty. But in the predication of beauty, a nonknowledge intervenes in a decisive, concise, incisive way, in a determinate place and at a determinate moment, precisely at the end, more precisely with regard to the end. For the nonknowledge with regard to the end does not intervene at the end, precisely, but somewhere in the middle, dividing the field whose finality lends itself to knowledge but whose end is hidden from it. This point of view of non-

knowledge organizes the field of beauty. Of so-called natural beauty, let us not forget it. This point of view puts us in view of the fact that an end is in view, that there is the form of finality, but we do not see with a view to what the whole, the organized totality, is in view. We do not see its end. Such a point of view, suddenly [*de but en blanc*], bends the totality to be lacking to itself. But this lack does not deprive it of a part of itself. This lack does not deprive it of anything. It is not a lack. The beautiful object, the tulip, is a whole, and it is the feeling of its harmonious completeness which delivers up its beauty to us. The *without* of the pure cut is without lack, without lack of anything. And yet in my experience of the accomplished tulip, of the plenitude of its system, my knowledge is lacking in something and this is necessary for me to find this totality beautiful. This something is not some thing, it is not a thing, still less part of the thing, a fragment of the tulip, a bit [bout] of the system. And yet it is the end of the system. The system is entire and yet it is visibly lacking its end [bout], a bit [bout] which is not a piece like any other, a bit which cannot be totalized along with the others, which does not escape from the system any more than it adds itself on to it, and which alone can in any case, by its mere absence or rather by the trace of its absence (the trace—itsself outside the thing and absent—of the absence of nothing), give me what one should hesitate to go on calling the *experience* of the beautiful. The mere absence of the goal would not give it to me, nor would its presence. But the trace of its absence (of nothing), inasmuch as it forms its *trait* in the totality in the guise of the *sans*, of the without-end, the trace of the *sans* which does not give itself to any perception and yet whose invisibility marks a full totality to which it does not belong and which has nothing to do with it as totality, the trace of the *sans* is the origin of beauty. It alone can be said to be beautiful on the basis of this trait. From this point of view beauty is never seen, neither in the totality nor outside it: the *sans* is not visible, sensible, perceptible, it does not exist. And yet *there is some of it* and it is beautiful. It gives [*ça donne*] the beautiful. Is this *sans* translatable? Can its body be torn away from its tongue without thereby losing a remainder of life? *Sine? Ohne? Without? Arzu!* ("Hematographic Music" of "The Tympanum"¹)²⁵ Beauty does not function without this *sans*, it functions only with this particular *sans*, it gives nothing to be seen,

25. "Tympan," in *Marges*, I-xxv, *Margins*, ix-xxix.

especially not itself, except with that *sans* and no other. And moreover it does not give [itself] to be seen with this *sans*, since it has nothing to do [*rien à voir*] with sight, as we have just said, or at least, in all rigor, with the visible. We have just written, a few lines up: "Beauty is never seen . . . the *sans* is not visible. . . ."

Of this trace of *sans* in the tulip, knowledge has nothing to say.

It does not have to know about it. Not that it breaks down in front of the tulip. One can know everything about the tulip, exhaustively, except for what it is beautiful. That for which it is beautiful is not something that might one day be known, such that progress in knowledge might later permit us to find it beautiful and to know why. Nonknowledge is the point of view whose irreducibility gives rise to the beautiful, to what is called the beautiful.

The beautiful of beauty pure and as such. It was necessary to insist on the *purity* in the trace of the *sans* of the pure cut [*Il fallait insister sur le 'pur' dans la trace du 'sans' de la coupe pure*]. I now return to it so as not to leave the willflower.

Why does science have nothing to say about the tulip inasmuch as it is beautiful?

If we go back from the appearance of the tulip (at the end of § 17, "Of the Ideal of Beauty," of which the tulip is thus the final example) to the preceding paragraph ("A judgment of taste by which an object is described as beautiful under the condition of a definite concept is not pure"), we already encounter the flower—first example—and the ruling out of account of the botanist as regards what the flower is beautiful for. "*Blumen sind freie Naturschönheiten*": flowers are free beauties of nature, beauties of nature that are free. Why free?

Two kinds of beauty: free beauty (*freie Schönheit*) and merely adherent beauty (*bloss anhängende Schönheit*), literally, "merely suspended beauty, hung-on-to, dependent on." Only free (independent) beauty gives rise to a pure aesthetic judgment, to a predication of pure beauty. That is the case with wildflowers. Kant gives the Latin equivalents of the expressions *free beauty* and *adherent beauty*. Free beauty, that of the tulip, is *pulchritudo vaga*, the other is *pulchritudo adhaerens*. Why these Latin words in brackets? Why this recourse to an erudite and dead language? It is a question that we must pose if we are to follow the labor of mourning in the discourse on beauty. In the first footnote to the following chapter, Kant analyzes the models of taste (para-

digm, paragon, pattern, *Muster des Geschmacks*). He prescribes that, in the "speaking arts" at least, the models should be written "in a dead and scholarly language." For two reasons, one lexical and the other grammatical. So that these models should be spared the transformations suffered by living languages and which have to do first with the vocabulary: vulgarization of noble terms, obsolescence of much-used terms, precariousness of new terms; then with the grammar: the language which fixes the model of taste must have a *Grammatik* which would not be subject to "the capricious changes of fashion" and which would be held in "unalterable rules."

Whether or not the third *Critique* proposes models of taste for the speaking arts, each time Kant has recourse to a scholarly and dead language, it is in order to maintain the norms in the state of utmost rigidity, to shelter them, in a hermetic vault, from yielding or breaking up. When, digging in Kant's text, one comes across these Latin words whose necessity one does not immediately (and sometimes not ever) understand, one has something of the impression of those defunct utensils, endowed with a hole but deprived of a handle, with the question remaining of whether they are beautiful or not, with free beauty or adherent beauty. Kant's answer is that their beauty in any case could not be vague or free from the moment it was possible to complete it with a knowledge, supplement it with a thesis or a hypothesis.

What does this opposition signify? Why the equivalence of *free* and *vagal*? Free means free of all adherent attachment, of all determination. Free means *detached*. It had been announced that this discourse dealt with detachment in all senses, the sense [sens] and the *sans* of detachment. *Free* means detached from all determination: not suspended from a concept determining the goal of the object. *Pulchritudo vaga* or free beauty does not presuppose any concept [setzt keinen Begriff], and for us the learned and dead language is German, which we wear out, which we make use of with all the plays on words and modes, with the grammatical caprices that grow most quickly wrinkled] of what the object must be [von dem voraus, was der Gegenstand sein soll]. Thus *free* means, in the concept which relates it to beauty, detached, free of all adherence to the concept determining the end of the object. We understand better the equivalence of *free* and *vague*. *Vaga* is the *indefinite* thing, without determination and without destination (*Bestimmung*), without end [fin], without *bout*, without limit. A piece of waste land [terrain vague] has no fixed limit.

Without edge, without any border marking property, without any nondecomposable frame that would not bear partition. *Vague* [i.e., "wanders, roams"—[TRANS.] is a movement without its goal, not a movement without goal but without its goal. Vague beauty, the only kind that gives rise to an attribution of pure beauty, is an indefinite errance, without limit, stretching toward its orient but cutting itself off from it rather than depriving itself of it, absolutely. It does not arrive itself at its destination.²⁶

Adherent beauty, on the contrary, is suspended by some attachment from the concept of what the object must be. It is there somewhere, however weak, tenuous, half-visible the ligament may be; it is hung, appended [pendue, appendue]. First consequence: cut off from the concept of its goal, vague beauty refers only to itself, to the singular existent which it qualifies and not to the concept under which it is comprehended. The tulip is not beautiful inasmuch as it belongs to a class, corresponding to such-and-such a concept of the veritable tulip, the perfect tulip. *This tulip here*, this one alone is beautiful ["a flower, for example a tulip"], it, the tulip of which I speak, of which I am saying here and now that it is beautiful, in front of me, unique, beautiful in any case in its singularity. Beauty is always beautiful *once*, even if judgment classifies it and drags that *once* into the series or into the objective generality of the concept. This is the paradox (the class which—immediately—sounds the death knell of uniqueness in beauty) of the third *Critique* and of any discourse on the beautiful: it must deal only with singularities which must give rise only to universalizable judgments. Whence the *paragon*, the importation of frames in general, those of the first *Critique* in particular.

Conversely, adherent beauty, from the moment it requires the determinant concept of an end, is not the unconditional beauty of a thing, but the hypothetical beauty of an object comprehended under the concept of a particular end. "The first [i.e., free beauty] presupposes no concept of what the object should be; the second does presuppose such a concept and, with it, an answering perfection (*Vollkommenheit*: the plenitude, the accomplishment) of the object. Those of the first kind are said to be [self-subsisting] (*für sich bestehende*, existing for themselves) beauties of this thing or that thing (*dieses oder jenes Dinges*); the other kind of beauty, being attached to a concept [*als einem Begriffe anhängend*,

26. "Elle ne s'arrive pas à sa destination": this pronominal form of the verb *arriver*, to arrive, to happen, is one of Derrida's neologisms.

appended to a concept|conditioned beauty), is ascribed to Objects (*Objekten*) which come under the concept of a particular end" (Merleau-Ponty, 72).

The beautiful *this* is thus beautiful for itself: it does without everything, it does without you (insofar as you exist), it does without its class. Envy, jealousy, mortification are at work within our affect, which would thus stem from this sort of quasi-narcissistic independence of the beautiful *this* (this rather than "object") which refers to nothing other than to itself, which signals toward nothing determinable, not even toward you who must renounce it, but like a voyeur, at the instant that the *this* gives itself, inasmuch as it gives itself, not signaling toward its end or rather, signing its end, cuts itself from it and removes itself from it absolutely. The tulip, if it is beautiful, this irreplaceable tulip of which I am speaking and which I replace in speaking but which remains irreplaceable insofar as it is beautiful, this tulip is beautiful because it is without end, complete because cut off, with a pure cut, from its end.

We must sharpen the points, the blades or the edges of a certain chiasmus. This tulip is beautiful because it is free or vague, that is, independent. It enjoys, of itself, a certain completeness. It lacks nothing. But it lacks nothing because it lacks an end (at least in the experience we have of it). It is independent, for itself, inasmuch as it is absolute, absolved, cut—absolutely cut from its end ('*forme parfaite: celle d'une coupe*'): absolutely incomplete, then. Conversely, the unearthed gadget, a concavity deprived of its handle, seems incomplete and yet one connects it to the concept of a perfection. Inasmuch as it is incomplete it can be apprehended under the concept of its perfection. Its beauty, if it has any, remains adherent. The cut is not pure in this case [*La coupe n'y est pas pure*]. So we are dealing with two structures of completeness-incompleteness. The pierced gadget is complete because incomplete, this tulip is incomplete because complete. But the gadget remains incomplete because a concept can fill it up. This tulip is complete from the first because the concept cannot fill it in. The cut leaves it no skin, no tissue of adherence. A beautiful flower is in this sense an absolutely *coupable* [guilty, cuttable] flower that is absolutely absolved, innocent. Without debt. Not without law, but of a law without concept. And a concept always furnishes a supplement of adherence. It comes at least to stitch back up again, it teaches how to sew. We have not finished counting the effects of this chiasmus.

Because of the cut, science has nothing to say about the *vague*. Immediately after the distinction between the two beauties: "Flowers are free beauties of nature. What this thing, a flower, must be, almost no one knows, apart from the botanist; and even he, recognizing in it the plant's organ of fecundation (*Befruchtungsgorgan*), takes no account of this natural end when he judges it according to taste."

As such, insofar as he inscribes his object in the cycle of natural finality, ascribes to it an objective function and end, the botanist cannot find the flower beautiful. At the very most he can conceive of an adherent beauty of the flower. If a botanist accedes to a vague beauty, it will not be insofar as he is a botanist. Scientific discourse will have become mute or impossible in him. He will no longer have at his disposal a supplementary concept, i.e., a concept, a concept as a saturating generality coming to drink up or efface the *sans* of the pure cut.

It is not insignificant—it is significance itself—that the discourse on the flower should become scientific, attach the flower to its end, efface the beauty of the *sans* by according the flower its place in the seminal cycle. The tulip is beautiful when cut off from fecundation. Not sterile: sterility is still determined from the end, or as the end of the end, the incompleteness of completeness, as imperfection. The tulip is in this regard potent and complete. It must be able to enter into the cycle of fecundation. But it is beautiful only by not entering it. The seed loses itself, but not—here the word loss is in danger at any moment of reconstructing adherence, as if a piece had been diverted from a circulation that must therefore be reconstituted—in order to be lost or to refinalize its loss by regulating the diversion according to turn or return, but otherwise. The seed wanders [*s'erre*]. What is beautiful is dissemination, the pure cut without negativity, *sans* without negativity and without signification. Negativity is significant, working in the service of sense. The negativity of the gadget with the hole in it is significant. It is a signifier. The *without-goal*, the *without-why* of the tulip is not significant, is not a signifier, not even a signifier of lack. At least insofar as the tulip is beautiful, *this* tulip. As such, a signifier, even a signifier without signified, can do anything except be beautiful. Starting from a signifier, one can account for everything except beauty, that is at least what *seems* to envelop the Kantian or Saussurean tulip.

As always, the examples put forward by Kant have far-reaching implications. I proceed from his examples, by what path is now clear, but I insist here on reflexive willness: we are approaching two paragraphs defining what Kant calls *exemplary* and *exemplary without concept*. The necessity "thought" in an aesthetic judgment can only be called "exemplary" (*exemplarisch*). It is the necessity of the adhesion of *all* to a judgment as example (*Beispiel*) of a universal rule that one cannot enunciate (*angeben*) (§§ 37 and 38, in the course of passing from the third to the fourth category, from the moment of relation to that of modality). Such would be the effect of openmoutheedness provoked by a unique exemplar whose beauty must be recognized in a judgment (mouth open), without conceptual discourse, without enunciation of rules [mouth mute, breath cut, *parole soufflée*].²⁷

Two orders of examples: *natural* free beauties, analogous to that of the flower (wild animals, birds, the parrot, the hummingbird, the bird of paradise), but also *artificial* free beauties, alien to nature. Great difficulties are foreseen. How could productions of art appear to us as finalities without end? As nonsignifying? Cut from their goal?

And yet it must be that there are such things if free, vague, wandering, pure beauty touches us in art also. But what are these examples? What are the examples of productions of art which are beautiful without signifying anything by and for themselves (*bedeuten* [...] *für sich nichts*) and without representing anything? Without theme and even without text, if text retains its old meaning of "signifying organization, organization of signification"? Should we be surprised to encounter among them the frame or at least certain framing inscriptions?

"Flowers are free beauties of nature. Hardly any one but a botanist knows the true nature of a flower, and even he, while recognizing in the flower the reproductive organ of the plant, pays no attention to this natural end when using his taste to judge of its beauty. Hence no perfection of any kind—no internal finality, as something to which the arrangement [*Zusammensetzung*] of the manifold is related—underlies this judgment. Many birds (the parrot, the hummingbird, the bird of

27. *Soufflée* has the sense of whispered, prompted, but also stolen, ripped off, blown, blown away: see "La Parole soufflée," in *Écriture et la différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1967), 253–92; translated by Alan Bass, in *Writing and Difference* (London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 169–95.

paradise), and a number of crustacea, are self-subsisting beauties which are not appurtenant to any object defined with respect to its end, but please (*gefallen*) freely and on their own account." Now here is the other series of examples: free beauties in art, cutting off all adherence to concept and end, to the concept of end, are no longer significations or representations, nor signifiers or representers. In the rhetoric of the paragon, this second type of example seems also to function as the insistent and metaphorical illustration of the first. The recourse to the example of art is made in order to make us better understand that of nature on a ground of analogy: "So designs *à la grecque* [straight-line designs in labyrinth form], foliage for framework [*Laubwerk zu Einfassungen*] or on wall-papers, &c., have no intrinsic meaning; they represent nothing [*sie stellen nichts vor*]—no Object under a definite concept—and are free beauties. We may also rank in the same class what in music are called fantasias [improvisation, free variation] [without a theme] (*ohne Thema*), and, indeed, all music that is not set to words (*die ganze Musik ohne Text*)" (Meredith, 72).

Hence, what is beautiful according to art and with a free or wandering beauty, thus giving rise to a judgment of pure taste, according to Kant, would be any finalized organization not signifying anything, not representing anything, deprived of theme and text (in the classical sense). These structures can also represent, show, signify, certainly, but they are freely wandering beauties only by not doing so: insofar as somewhere they apply themselves or bend themselves to not doing so. They apply themselves to this, for they must also be organizations of finalized form, otherwise they would not be beautiful. The without-theme and the without-text do indeed proceed from the *sans* of the pure cut. Not every nonsignifying thing is beautiful. The foliation on frames, for example, can represent leaves, but it deploys its beauty only without that representation. Its nonsignificance, its a-significance, rather, must have the form of finality, but without end.

One might be tempted, in exploiting this example (and nothing prohibits this by right), to conclude that contrary to what we were justified in thinking elsewhere, according to Kant the *paragon* constitutes the place and the structure of free beauty. Take away from a painting all representation, all signification, any theme and any text-as-meaning, removing from it also all the material (canvases, paint) which according to Kant

cannot be beautiful for itself, efface any design oriented by a determinable end, subtract the wall-background, its social, historical, economic, political supports, etc.; what is left? The frame, the framing, plays of forms and lines which are structurally homogeneous with the frame-structure. So it would be difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile what Kant said about the *parergon* two pages earlier and what he says here of the framing-foliation or the series of productions without theme and without text which are analogous to it. The difficulty allows us to sharpen up a cutting edge.

Like the framing-foliation, the framing *parergon* is a signifying and a-representative. Another common trait is that the framing can also, as *parergon* (an addition external to the representation), participate in and add to the satisfaction of pure taste, provided that it does so by its form and not by sensory attraction (color) which would transform it into finery. So there can be a certain beauty of the *parergon*, even if it is, precisely, supplementary beauty. Now what separates the *parergon* from the framing-foliation and from other products of the same type? The foliation is here considered in itself, as object and not as accessory. If it does without signification and representation, this is no longer at all like the frame. The frame does not signify anything, and that's that, Kant seems to think. One sees in it no presentation of any signification, nothing in it is finalized or finalizable. Whereas here the movement of signification and representation is broached: the foliation, pure musical improvisation, music without theme or without text seem to mean or to show something, they have the form of tending toward some end. But this tension, this vection, this rection is absolutely interrupted, with a clean blow. *It has to be* thus interrupted: by having to be, purely, absolutely, removing all adherence to what it cuts itself off from, it liberates beauty (free, wandering, and vague). By having to be interrupted, the *sans*-text and the *sans*-theme relate to the end in the mode of nonrelation. Absolute nonrelation. And by having to be so, this absolute nonrelation must also, if possible, be inscribed in the structure of the artifact. The *sans* of the *sans*-theme and the *sans*-text must be marked, without being either present or absent, in the thing to which it does not belong and which is no longer quite a thing, which one can no longer name, which is not, once charged with the mark, a material support or a form of what is to be found neither here nor there, and which one



might indicate, given a certain displacement, by the name of text or trace

cut-
 ting or cut it be, must not the apparently irreconcilable opposition between *pulchritudo vaga* and *pulchritudo adhaerens* find its limit somewhere? Absolute nonadherence should certainly have no contact, no common frontier, no exchange with adherence: no adherence is possible between adherence and nonadherence. And yet this break of contact, this very separation constitutes a limit, a blank, the thickness of a blank—a frame, if you like—which by suspending the relation, puts them in relation in the mode of nonrelation, reproducing here *at the same time* the freedom of vague beauty and the adherence of adherent beauty. *Pas* without relation from one to the other, once one keeps something of the other. This play of the limit is not an algebraic exercise. It appears very concretely in Kant's text. Primarily by the fact that the position of the errant and the adherent is a predicative opposition. *Errant* and *adherent* are predicates for the beautiful. So one can and must ask oneself what is beauty *in general* prior to being divided, plunged into its arborescent process, prior to being determined, from the basis of a common root, as adherent or as errant beauty. Must we not precomprehend what beauty is *itself*, the essence or the presence of the beautiful, in order to understand something of the distinction between errant and adherent? And in order that, despite the absolute heterogeneity which Kant recalls, we might still be able to speak of beauty in both cases? So there must well be an adherence somewhere between the two beauties.

One can imagine that the logic of Kant's discourse refuses in advance the form of this question: there is no "common root" to the two beauties. We do not precomprehend the essence of beauty in what is common to the two types, but above all on the basis of free beauty giving rise to a pure aesthetic judgment. It is the pureness which gives us the sense of beauty in general, the pure

telos of beauty (as non-*telos*). It is the most beautiful which gives us a conception of essential beauty, and not the least beautiful, which remains a hesitant approximation to it in view of errancy. Adherence would be in view of errancy. That which is conceived according to its end (its determined *telos*) would be in movement toward what does without a *telos*. The *telos* of the two beauties would be the *sans*: the nonrepresentation of the *telos*.

This is a first way of refusing the question of the common root. It seems very much in conformity with the logic of the discourse: the pure is worth more than the nonpure. And yet, from the moment that the contrary response seems just as pertinent and the dissymmetry can be inverted, the initial question of the common root (as adherence) forces us, by its irreducibility, to a reformulation. If errant beauty entertains a relation of nonrelation to its end, its horizon is the announcement—charged with impossibility—of the end, exerting pressure, exercising a constraint from its very impossibility, of an end of which only *pulchritudo adhaerens* gives us the example. Hence adherent beauty is perhaps less pure but more beautiful and more perfect than vague beauty. It tells us more about beauty. It tells us more about what must be the accord between the imagination and the understanding which produces the idea of beauty. Adherent beauty would be more beautiful than pure beauty. And it would give us the principle of the analogy between the two beauties.

Each of them thus tells us more and less than the other what the beautiful must be. Is there a maximum of adherence? A maximum of freedom

the three questions: 1. The question of analogy as the question of man, of the place of man in this critique. It takes at least three forms. (A) What about the beauty of man and woman, of which Kant declares that it could not be other than adherent? (B) What about the place of man as "alone, of all the objects of the world, capable of an ideal of beauty"? And what relation is there between the adherent beauty

of man and the fact that he is the sole bearer of the ideal of beauty? (C) Why are the system and the hierarchy of the fine arts constituted (§ 51) on the analogical model of human language, and of language in its relation to the human body, and this not without a certain embarrassment, once again indicated in a footnote, but not without a rigorous internal necessity in the *Critique*?

2. The question of productive imagination and human productivity. There is no experience of beauty without a "freedom of play of the imagination." Here one does not conceive imagination first of all and solely as the faculty of the being called man but on the basis of the *sans* of the pure cut (of vague beauty). Now at the moment (the fourth *Moment*) that Kant proposes a General Remark on the imagination, he distinguishes between a reproductive imagination (the place of imitation and of a certain *imitésis*) and a productive spontaneous imagination (*productiv und selbstthätig*), the one that is in play in the experience of vague beauty and in pure aesthetic judgment. What must we understand by this productivity and by this free play the value of which will construct the opposition between mercenary art and liberal art, the latter being the only one which is fine art inasmuch as it plays and is not exchanged against any salary? It will be necessary to put systematically in relation with *all* the preceding questions the question of productivity, of salary and the market.²⁸

3. Up until now, this whole discourse concerned the beautiful, which relates, in the mode of determinacy or indeterminacy, to an end and an accord, to a harmony, to an affinity of the imagination with nature or with art. The *sans* also cut out, in the mode of the nonrelation, the anticipation of a final harmony. Whence the pleasing, the positive pleasure in the experience of the beautiful. And the indeterminacy, the indefiniteness, were always those of the understanding faced with an essentially sensory experience. Reason was not yet on the stage. What is excluded from this discourse (and what is excluded from the inside forms that internal lack which always calls for the parergonal frame), is thus not the *sans* of the without-end but the *counter* of the counter-end. The question of counter-finality (*Zweckwidrigkeit*) making use of violence and producing what Kant calls not a beyond of pleasure or a pleasure of the beyond, but, in a formula which could figure in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, a "negative pleasure" (*negative Lust*), is the question of the sublime. Kant explains

28. Cf. "Economicminesis"—J. D.

that he must deal with it only in an appendix, a mere adherent appendix to the "Analytic of the Beautiful" (*einen blossen Anhang*). Whereas "the beautiful gives birth directly by itself to a feeling of intensification (*Beförderung*; also, acceleration) of life and can subsequently be united with the attractions and the play of the imagination [a more Nietzschean formulation than Nietzsche would have thought], the latter [the feeling of the sublime] is a pleasure which surges up (*entspringt*) only indirectly, i.e., in such a way that it is produced by the feeling of an instantaneous (*augenblicklich*) inhibition (*Hemmung*, an arrest, a retention) of the vital forces, followed at once by an outpouring (*Ergiessung*; unloading) of these same forces, an outpouring that is all the stronger for the inhibition."

What of this renewed force produced by a striction and a counter-striction? What relation does it entertain, in the appendix of the sublime, with the "negative pleasure"?

The scent of the tulip, of one that would be bright red, perhaps with shame, but still, it's not certain—

"The flower is one of the typical passions of the human spirit. One of the wheels of its contrivance. One of its routine metaphors.

One of the involutions, the characteristic obsessions of that spirit.

To liberate ourselves, let's liberate the flower. Let's change our minds about it.

Outside this involucre: The *concept* which it became, By some devolutive revolution, Let us return it, safe from all definition, to *what it is*.—But what, then?—Quite obviously: a *conceptacle*."

Changed Opinion as to Flowers

places man. His place is quite difficult to recognize in the third *Critique*. It appears mobile and multiple.

First we must explain why (1) man cannot be beautiful by errancy, the object of a pure judgment of taste; (2) the ideal of the beautiful can be found only in the human form. The linking of these two propositions is perhaps surprising: no free or vague beauty, no pure judgment of taste as to the human form, to which ideal beauty, reserved for that form alone, nonetheless belongs. Ideal beauty and the ideal of the beautiful are not, conceptually, the same thing, but man is the name of what ensures their exchange: their necessary and immediate equivalence.

The conceptual determination of the end limits the free play of the imagination. The *sans* opens play within beauty.

But the beauty of man cannot be free, errant, or vague like that of the tulip. So it cannot be opened to the unlimited play of productive imagination, which, however, belongs to man alone. Man therefore eludes a power of errancy which he alone holds.

The example of the beauty of man is inscribed first of all in a series. The common predicate is the relation to the concept of an end which determines what the object must be, namely, its perfection. The examples: man (in general: man, woman, child, says Kant), the horse, the building (*Gebäude*). Man, the horse, and the building presuppose a concept of the end and could not be apprehended as free beauties.

How can we explain why the beauty of a horse can only be adherent? Other animals (birds or crustaceans) had been classed among the free beauties of nature. Conversely, why could certain flowers not be determined according to the concept of their goal? No doubt they are, from the point of view of the botanist, but this point of view is not the point of view of beauty. One must choose between not seeing pure beauty and not seeing the end. But this possibility of varying the point of view, of abstracting or not abstracting from the end, of considering or not considering the fecundation (this was the criterion), is at our disposal in the case of the flower, the birds, or the crustaceans, but never in the case of the horse. Nor of man. We would have it at our disposal in the case of designs *à la grecque*, framing-foliation, wallpapers,

pieces of music without theme or text, but never in the case of those other artifacts which are buildings (the church, the palace, the arsenal, the summer house). Why?

This question is more obscure than it seems. Nothing seems capable of answering it in the immediate context of Kant's argumentation. We must therefore recenter this whole critique of aesthetic judgment, recognizing to what extent it anticipates teleologically the critique of teleological judgment, and in that critique the propositions concerning the place of man in nature. Only the second part of the *Critique* can indeed justify, in the internal systematics of the book, what is said here about the two beauties and in particular this choice of examples. One could certainly have expected it and it's not much to discover—a book like this must be read from the other end. But it is rare in a discourse magnetized by its end for the median propositions to remain as suspended, lacking in immediate justification, or even unintelligible, as they do in the case occurring us.

The horse, especially, is bothersome. If one pushes things, one might admit that it is difficult or even impossible to disregard an end in the representation of man or his buildings. But what difference is there, from this point of view, between the horse, a bird, and a crustacean?

Now to answer the question of the horse, one must take account of the place of man: no longer as a beautiful object (of adherent beauty) but as the subject of aesthetic and teleological judgments. If the subject operating these judgments is not recognized as an anthropological unity, if the play of his functions (sensitivity, imagination, understanding, reason) is not bound according to an organization finalized under the name of man occupying a privileged place in nature, nothing in all this is intelligible, and above all nothing in this opposition between the errant and the adherent. If on the other hand a determinate anthropology intervenes in this critique of aesthetic judgment, a whole theory of history, of society, and of culture makes the decision at what is the most formally critical moment. This theory weighs upon the frames with all its contents.

Kant had proposed two series of distinctions (§ 15). First between *objective finality* and *subjective finality*. The first relates an organization to its end, as this is determined by a concept, i.e., to its end as content and not simply as form. But the beautiful, judged in its formal finality, has no final content. Thus it has no

relation to what the object must be, to a perfection or to a good: formal and subjective finality.

Objective finality, determined in its content by a concept, can be—a second distinction—*internal* or *external*. External, it consists in utility (*Nützlichkeit*), for example that of a utensil with or without a handle. This utility is easy to determine from the point of view of man, so its anthropocentric determination is not surprising. But how can the human reference be introduced into internal finality, which Kant also calls perfection (*Vollkommenheit*)? Perfection has often been confused with beauty. Kant insists on breaking with that tradition. In no case does the judgment of taste bear on the perfection of the object, on its internal possibility of existence. To judge this latter, I must have at my disposal the concept of what, quantitatively and qualitatively, the object must be. If I do not have it at my disposal, I have only a formal representation of the object. This is even the definition of such a representation: the nonknowledge of what the object must be, of its objective finality, external or internal. There is of course a subjective finality of representations, "a certain ease of understanding a given form in the imagination," but without a concept of objective end. Errant beauty corresponds to subjective finality, without end, without content, without concept. On the one hand, subjective finality or finality without end, on the other, objective finality. The without-end of finality is contradictory only in the case of objective finality.

The three examples of adherent beauty (man, horse, buildings) presuppose not only the concept of an objective finality but that one cannot even disregard it in the experience of those objects. The *sans-fin* cannot be cut out in that experience, not even in a variation of point of view.

For despite their apparent diversity, these three examples are anthropological (the horse is also for man, for nature whose center is man) and man, subject of this critique, cannot think *himself* without (purpose or end), cannot be beautiful with a pure, vague, and free beauty or at least appear to himself as such.

Let us take up the examples again in the inverse order. The building is understood on the basis of the concept of its end, the church with a view to religious ceremony, the palace with a view to habitation, the arsenal with a view to storing arms or munitions. If closed down, they still keep the sense of the purpose to which they had been destined. This was not the case for the

framing-foiliation. The end of the building is determined by and for the subject "man."

But what about the horse? What is the finality which one cannot disregard, as in the case of the birds or crustaceans? And does this finality have an essential relation to man?

One ought to be able to disregard the internal finality of the horse and consider it—provided it is neither castrated nor sterile but abstracted in perfect shape from the process of reproduction—as a wild and errant beauty of nature. But it is its external finality that Kant does not disregard. And it is in its external finality that he identifies its internal finality: the horse is *for* man, in the service of man, and perceived by man only in its adherent beauty. Such is its internal destination: the external. For man, for a being who can himself only hang on to his adherence. Subjectivity is adherence.

To justify thus the choice of the example, one has to look at what the second part of the book (notably in § 83) tells us about man: man is, like all organized beings, an end of nature, but he is also, here on earth, the final end of nature. The whole system of ends is oriented by him and for him. This is in conformity with the principles of reason. For *reflexive judgment*, of course, and not for *determinant judgment*. Man is the final goal of nature. If we have to look for what end he must himself attain in his relation to nature, it must be an end made possible by the beneficence (*Wohltätigkeit*) of nature. Kant has named the maternal earth (§ 82), the maternal bosom of the sea (*Mutterboden* [*des Landes*] und *der Mutterschooss* [*des Meeres*]): we can, from the point of view of our understanding and our reason, conceive of beings only according to final causes, i.e., subjectively, the antinomic opposition between subjective finalism and objective mechanism having to be resolved in the suprasensible principle of nature ("outside us as it is in us"). The end which man must attain in nature is thus made possible by the beneficence of nature—and this would be *happiness*—or by the clever aptitude for all sorts of ends for which nature "internally and externally" would be used—and this would be the *culture* (*Cultur*) of man. Happiness and culture presuppose that man puts to work what nature puts at his disposal.

To understand the example of the horse, its functioning pertaining to the place where it occurs, we must bring in a theory of culture, more precisely a pragmatic anthropology, into the theory of the beautiful, into the formation of its founding concepts,

for example the opposition between the errant and the adherent. This is an irreducible architectonic necessity. The third *Critique* depends in an essential manner—these examples show it—on a pragmatic anthropology and on what would be called, in more than one sense, a reflexive humanism. This anthropologistic recourse, recognized in its juridical and formal agency, weighs massively, by its content, on this supposedly pure deduction of aesthetic judgment.

The example of the horse makes the thing clearer. For me to be unable to disregard the external finality of the horse at the moment when I ascribe to it a beauty of adherence, to be unable to disregard its objective finality which can only be external, the animal must first of all and solely be for man. This is confirmed later (§ 63, "Of Finality Relative to Nature, as Distinct from Internal Finality"), in the course of a very complex argumentation which it is not indispensable to reconstitute here: "This latter finality is called utility [for man], or also appropriateness [for any other creature], and it is merely relative whereas the first is an internal finality of the natural being. [. . .] Likewise if there was to be livestock in the world, cattle, sheep, horses, etc., it was necessary that grass grow on the earth, but also chenopods in the sand deserts so that camels might prosper. . . . And although among the examples cited the species of grass must be considered for themselves as organized products of nature, and thereby as effects of art [*Kunstreich*], they are regarded nevertheless as mere raw matter [*blasse rohe Materie*] in relation to the animals which feed on them. But after all, if man, by the freedom of his causality, finds that the things of nature suit his intentions, often enough bizarre ones [the many-colored feathers of birds as decoration for his clothes, colored earth or plant juices for makeup], but sometimes also reasonable ones, the horse for riding, the ox, and in Minorca even the ass and the pig for ploughing, one cannot admit here a relative end of nature [for this use]. For man's reason is able to give things a conformity with the arbitrary caprices of his invention, for which he was not himself predestined by nature. But if one admits that men had to live on earth, then at least the means without which they could not live as animals, even reasoning ones [on the lowest rung of the scale you like] had to be there, in this case the things of nature indispensable to this use had to be considered also as natural ends."

Hence the horse is for man and man for man. Neither the one nor the other can be beautiful with a free beauty, but their place

in the chain of examples is not the same. Neither suffers the *sans* of errancy. But the *sans* of the *sans* has different effects on the one and the other. The horse, just like the building moreover, is capable of adherent beauty. But no more. As well as the *sans*, man is capable, and is the only one capable, of an ideal of beauty. The adherence of human beauty is not separated from that capacity of which both the other adherent beauties and the errant beauties are deprived.

The bearer of an ideal of beauty, man is also endowed with ideal beauty.

What does *ideal* mean?

For all the reasons we now know, a rule of taste cannot be determined by concepts. And yet a universal communicability, an accord of the most perfect possible kind, conditions any evaluation. But by criteria that are necessarily empirical, as Kant concedes, and weak, scarcely sufficient to prop up the presumption of a common principle hidden deep in all men. In the absence of a general concept of rules, and given that universality remains a prerequisite, the value of the exemplary, of exemplary product of taste, becomes the sole or major reference. The exemplary [*exemplarisch*] is a singular product [*Produkt*]—since it is an example—which is immediately valid for all. Only certain exemplary products can have this effect of quasi-rules. Whence the historical, cultural, pragmatico-anthropological character of taste, which is constituted after the event [*après coup*], after the production, by means of example. The absence of concept thus liberates this horizon of historical productivity. But this historicity is that of an exemplar which gives itself as an example only to the extent that it signals, empirically, toward a structural and universal principle of accord, which is absolutely ahistorical.

Let us follow this schema of production. Not being conceptual, the exemplary cannot be imitated. One does not acquire taste by imitation. The judgment of taste, even if it refers to prototypical (exemplary) productions, must be autonomous and spontaneous. Hence the supreme model, the highest pattern (*das höchste Muster*), can be only an *idea*, a mere idea which everyone must produce [*hervorbringen*] in himself and according to which he must judge everything that is an object of taste. There must be a pattern but without imitation. Such is the logic of the exemplary, of the autoproduct of the exemplary, this metaphysical value of production having always the double effect of opening and closing historicity. Since everyone produces the idea of taste,

it is never pre-given by a concept: the production of the idea is historical, a series of inaugurations without prescription. But as this production is spontaneous, autonomous, free at the very moment when, by its freedom, it rejoins a universal fund, nothing is less historical.

The autoproduct of the *Muster* (pattern, paradigm, paragon) is the production of what Kant calls first an *idea*, a notion which he specifies at once by substituting for it that of *ideal*. The idea is a concept of reason, the ideal is the representation of a being or of a particular essence *adequate* to that idea. If we follow here this value of *adequation*, we find the dwelling place of *mimesis* in the very place from which imitation seems excluded. And at the same time, of truth as *adequation* in this theory of the beautiful.

The paradigm of the beautiful rests, then, on the idea of reason, on the absolutely indeterminate rational idea of a "maximum"—Kant's word—of accord between judgments. This maximum cannot be represented by concepts but only in a singular presentation (*in einzelner Darstellung vorgestellt*). The paradigm is not an idea but a singularity which we produce in ourselves in conformity with that idea: Kant proposes to call it *ideal*. But this *ideal*, to the extent that it is produced in the presentation of a singular thing—an exemplar—can form only an ideal of the imagination. Imagination is the faculty of presentation (*Darstellung*). This value of *presentation* supports the whole discourse. Just as one can (as we have seen) understand the faculty of imagination only on the basis of the *sans* and free play, one cannot accede to it without this value of presentation: free play of the *sans* in the putting into presence.

The *sans* is nevertheless strictly compressed and oriented by the economic instance of the *maximum*. The free play in the presentation submits of itself to its regulation, to the regulatory idea of a maximal consensus among men.

Only man would be capable of presentation, since only he is capable of production—of exemplarity, of ideal, etc.

Here Kant poses a question and introduces a cleavage of great consequence. He asks himself (1) whether one accedes *a priori* or empirically to this ideal; and (2) what kind of beauty gives rise to this ideal.

To the second question the answer is clear and prompt. Errant beauty cannot give rise to any ideal. The beauty whose ideal one seeks is necessarily "fixed" (*fixierte*) by the concept of an objective

finality. Consequently, contrary to what one might have thought, ideal beauty will never give rise to a pure judgment of taste but to a partly intellectualized judgment of taste, comprising an idea of reason which determines *a priori* the internal possibility of the object according to determinate concepts. So one cannot "think" an ideal of "beautiful flowers," nor of any "vague beauty." This is a first reply to the question: What is the beautiful in general, prior to the opposition between errancy and adherence? The oscillation is broken, the *pure* is opposed to the *ideal*. The ideal of beauty cannot give rise to a pure aesthetic judgment: the latter can concern only an errancy, whereas the ideal is of adherence. *Pure beauty and ideal beauty are incompatible*. So the *sans* of the pure cut here seems to interrupt the process of idealization. The yawning gap in the idealization would open onto errant beauty and to the event of a pure aesthetic judgment.

But where does this appear from? Whence does this opposition between the ideal (of the imagination) and the pure, between the *non-sans* and the *sans* appear?

From man. Man, equipped with a reason, an understanding, an imagination and a sensibility, is that X from which, with a view to which, the opposition is taken in view: the opposition of the pure and the ideal, the errant and the adherent, the *sans* and the *non-sans*, the without-end and the not-without-end, that is also the opposition of non-sense and sense. The subject of that opposition is man and he is the only subject of this *Critique* of judgment. Only he is capable of an ideal of beauty and, from this ideal, capable of letting the *sans* of the pure cut present itself. He is capable of this ideal of the imagination as to the things of nature because he is endowed with reason, which means, in Kantian language, able to fix his own ends. The only being in nature to give himself his own ends, to raise in himself the *sans*, to complete himself and think from his end, he is the only one to form an ideal of beauty, to apprehend the *sans* of others. He is not errant. He cannot conceive of himself without goal and that is why he is in the full center of this point of view, the full center of a field which is nonetheless decentered and dissymmetrical. Man is not between errancy and adherence as in a middle place from which he would see both of them. He is situated on one side only (adherence to self, to his own end) and from that side he puts errancy in perspective. "Only what has in itself the end of its real existence—only *man* that is able himself to determine his ends by reason, or, where he has to derive them from external perception,

can still compare them with essential and universal ends, and then further pronounce aesthetically upon their accord with such ends, only he, among all objects in the world, admits, therefore, of an ideal of *beauty*, just as humanity in his person, as intelligence, alone admits of the ideal of *perfection*" (§ 17, Meredith, 76-77).

A paradoxical but already obvious consequence: ideal beauty and the ideal of beauty no longer come under a pure judgment of taste. There is a cleavage between the beautiful and taste or, to be precise, between the ideally beautiful and pure taste, between a callistics and an aesthetics.

This comes from the fact that the subject of this discourse, in his humanity, withdraws from his own discourse. There is no place for an aesthetic of man, who escapes the pure judgment of taste to the very extent that he is the bearer of the ideal of the beautiful and himself represents, in his form, ideal beauty. He carries himself away from himself, from his own aesthetic; he prohibits a pure human aesthetic because, so that, insofar as the *sans* of the pure cut is effaced in him. This is also what is at stake in the "Copernican revolution."

How does man escape from a discourse on aesthetics of which he is the central origin?

What then is the beauty of man? For the *non-sans* of the pure cut to be possible, another division is necessary.

Kant distinguishes, with regard to the beauty of man, two ideas. Two pieces, he says elsewhere (*zwei Stücke*). He cuts the beauty of man into two pieces, effaces the cut of each in turn, without asking himself whether the beauty of man, that pure, errant, nonideal beauty, which he holds as it were in reserve and which does not appear to him, never becoming an object for him, does not stem from the possibility of this breakup without negativity.

Each piece is fixed. The two pieces have in common that they are fixed. There is first of all the aesthetic norm-idea (which is not pure): *die ästhetische Normidee*. Man is presented here as a finite, sensory being, belonging to an animal species. This idea corresponds to a particular intuition of the imagination borrowing its canons from experience. To see in nature what are the typical elements in the form of a certain species (man or horse), one refers to a certain "technique of nature" producing the general type. No individual is adequate to it but one can construct a concrete image of this type, precisely as an aesthetic idea and as an empirical

ideal. A product of the imagination, this type refers to a highly determinate concept. Here there is a parenthetical clause, which is very important for two reasons. Kant notes that the imagination, the faculty of signs, can sometimes lead us back to signs of ancient concepts, "even very ancient ones" (*selbst von langer Zeit*). On the one hand this is the first time signs are mentioned: yet a whole semiotics supports the third Critique. On the other hand the reference to something "very ancient" that is accessible only via signs communicates with a certain elliptical remark, hasarded as if in passing, in the introduction (VI): the pleasure (*Lust*) of knowing, which is no longer noticed now, "surely existed in its day."

And this pleasure is a pleasure of the same: it always stems from the mastery of the dissimilar, from the reduction of the heterogeneous. The agreement, conformity, coming together (*Zusammen treffen*) of perceptions and categories (general concepts of nature to which laws conform) apparently procure no pleasure. But the reduction of several "heterogeneous" empirical laws to one principle "causes a very remarkable pleasure." And although the intelligence of nature in its unity no longer necessarily procures for us such a pleasure, this pleasure "certainly existed in its day" (*aber sie ist gewiss zu ihrer Zeit gewesen*), otherwise "the commonest experience would not be possible." It's just that this pleasure gradually became confused with experience and was no longer noticed.

Thus, although the third *Critique* (the place of aesthetics) dissociates pleasure and knowledge, although it makes of this dissociation a rigorous juridical frontier between taste and knowledge, the aesthetic and the logical, it must be that the pleasure principle somewhere, in a time immemorial (a concept whose status remains highly uncertain in a *Critique*), governed knowledge, conditioned it and accompanied it everywhere that knowledge was possible, determined it as experience (in the Kantian sense), thus preceding the divergence between enjoying and knowing. How can one situate here the time of this arche-pleasure welding the imagination (aesthetic) to the understanding (logical)?

The aesthetic norm-idea—to which no individual is adequate—forms the empirical canon of human beauty: an average type analogous to the average height that would be derived from thousands of individual images in order to construct "the stature of a beautiful man." This type varies with empirical conditions, it differs for a "negro," a "white," or a "Chinese." The same applies

for the type of a 'beautiful horse' or a 'beautiful dog' of a determinate breed. This image which "floats" among the individuals of the species is an "archetype" (*Urbild*) regulating all the "productions" of nature for a given species. Not an archetype of beauty but the form and the condition of beauty for a species. In the case of the human face, this regulatory type, which is never beautiful in itself, ordinarily lacks expression and reveals a man of "mediocre inner value," if that is, adds Kant, one admits that nature carries the internal proportions to the outside. And he is quite ready to admit it. What is more, in this system he cannot but admit it. We shall verify this. For example, if caricature corresponds to an exaggeration of the norm-idea, an extreme *within* the type, the genius, marks, for his part, in the face itself and in its expression, a divergence which deports the type.

The ideal of beauty—this is the other piece—is distinguished from this norm-idea. It can be encountered only in the human form. Man is never beautiful with a pure beauty but ideal beauty is reserved for him. Here for the first time absolute interiority and absolute morality intervene as conditions of the ideal of beauty; that which absorbs or resorbs the *sans* of the pure cut. If the human form and it alone has the right to ideal beauty, it is because it expresses the inside and this inside is a relation of reason to a pure moral end. This engages the whole theory of the sign and the symbol whose position will appear later, precisely at the pivot, at the center or the hinge of the book, in the famous paragraph 59: the last paragraph of the first part (the end of the critique of aesthetic judgment), which deals with the question of philosophical metaphor and bearing the title "Of Beauty as the Symbol of Morality." As early as paragraph 17, "Of the Ideal of Beauty," this symbolics is defined as the expression of the inside on the outside, presentative union of the inside and the outside. The expressivist and symbolic order of beauty takes place in man and for man:

But the *ideal* of the beautiful is still something different from its *normal idea*. For reasons already stated it is only to be sought in the *human figure*. Here the ideal consists in the *expression of the moral* (in *dem Ausdruck des Sittlichen*), apart from which the object would not please at once universally and positively (not merely negatively in a presentation academically correct). The visible expression (*der sichtbare Ausdruck*) of moral ideas that govern men inwardly can, of course, only be drawn from experience;

but their combination (*Verbindung*) with all that our reason connects with the morally good in the idea of the highest finality—benevolence, purity, strength, or equanimity—may be made, as it were, visible in *bodily manifestation* (in *körperlicher Äusserung*) [as effect of what is internal] (*als Wirkung des Innern*), and this embodiment involves a union of pure ideas of reason and great imaginative power, in one who would even form an estimate of it, not to speak of being the author of its *presentation* (*vielmehr noch wer sie darstellen will*). The correctness of such an ideal of beauty is evidenced by its not permitting any sensuous charm (*Sinnenreiz*) to mingle with the delight (*Wohlgefallen*) in its Object, in which it still allows us to take a great interest. This fact in turn shows that an estimate formed according to such a standard can never be purely aesthetic, and that one formed according to an ideal of beauty cannot be a simple judgement of taste. (§ 17: my emphasis on *expression, bodily manifestation, presentation*—J. D.) (Meredith, 79--80)

this moral

semiotics which ties *presentation* to the expression of an inside, and the beauty of man to his morality, thus forms a system with a fundamental humanism. This humanism justifies, at least superficially, the intervention of pragmatic culture and anthropology in the deduction of judgments of taste. There we have the wherewithal to make sense of a sort of incoherence-effect, of an embarrassment or a suspended indecision in the functioning of the discourse. Two points of orientation:

1. In the fourth and last moment of the judgment of taste (modality), the value of exemplarity appeals to a common sense (*Gemeinsinn*). The rule of the exemplary judgment attracting universal adhesion must remain beyond all enunciation. So common sense does not have the common meaning [*sens*] of what we generally call common sense: it is not intellectual, not an understanding. What then is its status? Kant refuses to decide here, or even to examine ("we neither want nor are able to examine here") whether such a common sense exists (if "there is one") as a constitutive principle of the possibility of experience or else whether,

this time in a *regulatory* and not *constitutive* capacity, reason commands us to produce (*hervorbringen*) in ourselves a common sense for more elevated ends. What remains thus suspended is the question of whether the aesthetic principle of pure taste, inasmuch as it requires universal adhesion, has a specific place corresponding to a power of its own, or whether it is still an idea of (practical) reason, an idea of the unanimous universal community which orients its idealizing process. As always, so long as such an idea remains on the horizon, moral law allies itself with empirical culturalism to dominate the field.

2. The other significant indecision as to the principle concerns the division of the fine arts. This division comprises, as always, a hierarchy, going far into detail and also resting on an analogy: between art and human language. The three kinds of fine arts (talking art, figurative [*bildende*] art, the art of the play of sensations [*Spiel der Empfindungen*]) correspond to the forms of human expression referred to the body's means of expression (articulation, gesticulation, modulation: words, gestures, tones). This correspondence is analogical. But on two occasions, in footnotes, Kant shows that he does not absolutely hold to this principle of hierarchical classification and that he does not consider it to have an absolutely reliable theoretical value: "If then we wish to divide up the Fine Arts, we cannot, at least on a trial basis [*wenigstens zum Versuche*], choose a more convenient principle [*bequemeres Prinzip*] than the analogy of art with the kind of expression which men use in their language [*Sprechen*] in order to communicate to one another, as perfectly as possible, not only their concepts but also their sensations.*

"**The reader should not judge this sketch of a possible division of the fine arts as a theoretical project. It is but one of the many attempts that can and must still be tried" [Kant's footnote] (§ 51).

The redundancy of a second note, in the same paragraph, underlines the embarrassment: "The reader must in general consider this only as an attempt to tie together the fine arts under one principle, which this time must be that of the expression of aesthetic ideas [according to the analogy of a language [*nach der Analogie einer Sprache*]], and not a derivation held to be decisive."

Kant's scruple would only be the index of a critical vigilance if it bore upon a localizable, revisable, or detachable point of the system. But it is not clear how he would have been able to avoid,

without a complete recasting, such a classificatory and hierarchizing deduction, regulated according to the language and body of man, the body of man interpreted as a language dominated by speech and by the gaze. Humanism is implied by the whole functioning of the system and no other deduction of the fine arts was possible within it.

The principle of analogy is here indeed inseparable from an anthropocentric principle. The human center also stands *in the middle*, between nature (animate or inanimate) and God. It is only on this condition that we can understand the analogy between determinant judgments and reflexive judgments, an essential part of the machine. Incapable as we are of determining absolutely the particular empirical laws of nature (because the general laws of nature, prescribed in our understanding, leave them undetermined), we must act *as if* an understanding (not our own) *had been able* to give them a unity, "as if some understanding enclosed the foundation of the unity of the variety of empirical laws" [Introduction, IV]. From then on, natural finality, an *a priori* concept deriving from a reflexive judgment, is conceived by analogy with human art which gives itself a goal before operating. This analogy—giving oneself the goal of the operation, effacing *a priori* its *sans*—thus puts the art of man in relation with the art of the creator. The analogy with practical finality is its medium. "For one cannot attribute to the productions of nature any such thing as a relation of nature to ends, but one can use this concept only to reflect [*reflectiren*] on nature from the point of view of the linking of the phenomena in her, a linking given by empirical laws. This concept is, moreover, quite distinct from practical finality [of human art or even of mores], although it is thought by analogy with it."

The connection between anthropo-theologism and analogism indicates, among other things, a certain course, the course being steered.

This course seems to be *lacking* from *pulchritudo vaga*, wandering without a determinable end, in the *sans* of the *but en blanc*, without object-complement, without objective end. But the whole system which has its sights on that beauty supplies the course, determines the vagueness (as lack) and gives sense and direction back to errancy: its destiny and its destination. Analogism recapitulates or rereads it. It saturates the *hiatus* by repetition: the *mise en abyme* resists the abyss

of collapse, reconstitutes the economy of mimesis. This latter is the same (economimesis), the law of the same and of the proper which always re-forms itself.
Against imitation but by analogy

economimesis—

4. The Colossal

That which always forms itself anew—economimesis—only to close up again, nonetheless leaves an embouchure each time. The end of "Economimesis" opened onto water "put in the mouth."

Let us leave the embouchure open. It is still a question here of knowing what happens [*se passe*] with or without what one leaves. And what happens with (or: what does without) [*se passe de*] leave, whether it is followed by a noun or a verb,²⁹ when it carries us at a stroke [*coup*], with a step [*pas*], beyond passivity and activity alike. Let us let be [*laissons faire*] or let us allow to be seen [*laissons voir*] what does without [happens with] the open embouchure.

What I shall try to recognize in it, in its vicinity, and moving around it a little, would look like a certain *column*.

A colossus, rather, a certain *kolossos* which erects itself as measure [*en mesure*].³⁰

What is it to erect *en mesure*?

The column is not the same thing as the colossus. Unless they have in common only the fact that they are not things. In any case, if one wished to keep the word "word" and the word

29. *Laisser* + noun works more or less like English leave + noun; *laisser* + verb is roughly equivalent to English let + verb, with the important difference that some infinitives following *laisser* can have either active or passive value.

30. "S'érige en mesure": also, "rises up in time" (in the musical sense of "in time").

"thing," *colossus* and *column* are two indissociable words and two indissociable things which have nothing to do [*Tien à voir*] together and which together have nothing to see: they see nothing and let nothing be seen, show nothing and cause nothing to be seen, display none of what one thinks.

And yet, between the Greek *kolossos* and the *columna* or *column* of the Romans, a sort of semantic and formal affinity exerts an irresistible attraction. The trait of this double attraction is all the more interesting because it has to do with, precisely, the double, and the one, the *colossus*, as double.

Speaking only of the *kolossos*, Vernant declares: "Originally, the word has no implication of size [*taille*]."³¹ "Has no implication of size": this apparently, visibly, means that a *kolossos* is not necessarily big, gigantic, out of proportion. Although the context, and consequently Vernant's manifest intention, does not invite this in the least, the "implication of size" carries us somewhere else. Before referring to size, and above all that of the human body, for example foot size, which is also called *pointure* in French, *taille* marked the line of a cut, the cutting edge of a sword, all the incisions which come to broach a surface or a thickness and open up a track, delimit a contour, a form or a quantity (a cutting) of wood or cloth).³²

If "originally, the word [*kolossos*] has no implication of size," it will come to have this implication later, adds Vernant, only by *accident*. What about the accident, this one in particular, which brings *cise* to the *colossus*, not the incisive *cise* which gives measure, not the moderating [*modératrice*] *cise* but the disproportionate [*démesurante*] *cise*? This accident is not, apparently, part of the program of Vernant's rich study, he is content to brush the question aside in his first few lines: "Originally the word has no implication of size. It does not designate, as it will later for accidental reasons, effigies of gigantic, 'colossal' dimensions. In Greek statue-vocabulary, which as Monsieur E. Benveniste has shown is very diverse and fairly fluctuating, the term *kolossos*, of the

31. "Figuration de l'invisible et catégorie psychologique du double: le colossos," in *Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs* [Paris: Maspéro, 1965; reprint in 2 vols., 1982], 2:65-78; English translation [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983], 305-20[-]—J.D.

32. To render this second sense of the French *taille*, and to preserve the uncertainty between the two senses which is vital in some of what follows, we shall use the word "*cise*," an obsolete spelling of "*size*" (see *OED*) and suggestive of cutting (cf. incision).

animate genre and of pre-Hellenic origin, is attached to a root *kol-*, which can be connected to certain place names in Asia Minor [Kolossai, Kolophon, Kolourai] and which retains the idea of something erect, upright."

Through the *effigy*, precisely, and in the fictional space of representation, the erection of the *kol-* perhaps ensures what I have proposed elsewhere [*Glas*, + R], with regard precisely to the *colossal*, to call the *détail* or the *détaille*, the movement from *cise*, which is always small or measured, to the disproportion [*la démesure*] of the without-*cise*, the immense. The dimension of the *effigy*, the *effigy* itself would have the fictional effect of de-measuring. It would de-*cise*, would liberate the excess of *cise*. And the erection would indeed be, in its *effigy*, difference of *cise*. Then *kol-* would also ensure, more or less in the *effigy* of a phantasy, the passage between the *colossus* and the column, between the *kolossos*, the *columna* and the *columna*.

I will take my stand in this passage.

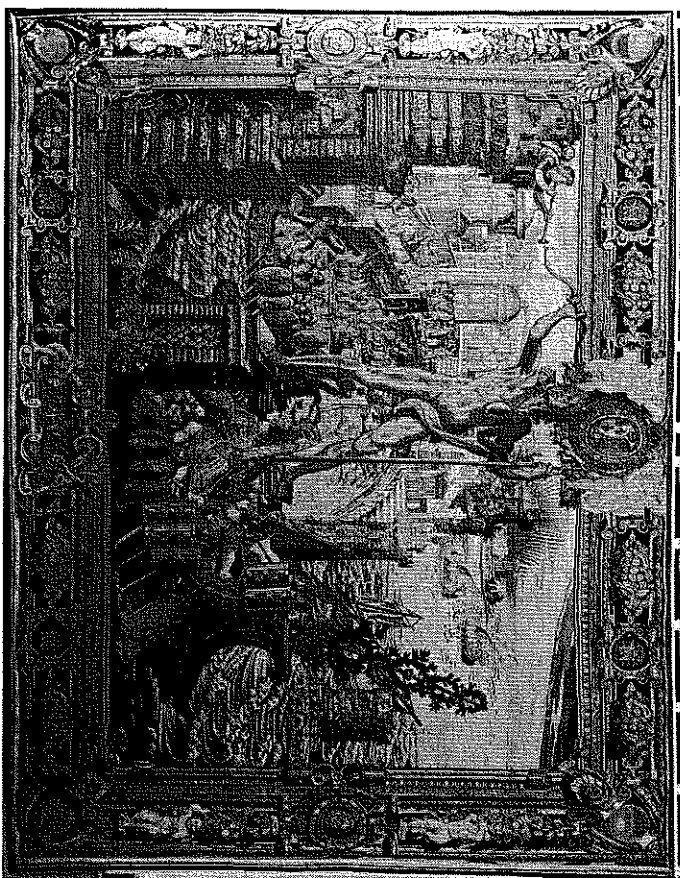
Unlike other analogous "idols" [*breias, xanoni*], the *kolossos* cannot be moved around. There is nothing portable about it. It is a stony, fixed immobility, a monument of impassivity which has been stood up on the earth, after having been embedded a little in it, and sometimes buried. Although philologists or archaeologists, Vernant for example, don't look in this direction, even at the very moment they are speaking of the Gorgon and of *Hithnos thánatos* [Pindar], one ought to link here the discourse on the *kol-* to the whole Freudian problematic of the Medusa [erection/castration/apotropaic] the reading of which I attempted to displace in the "Hors livre" of *Dissemination*, as well as the problematic of the *col* which ensures a great density of circulation in *Glas* ["And of the blink (—) between the two col (—)", p. 251]. I shall not do it here any more than I shall set off on the side of the Heideggerian *trait* [*Riss, Zug*, and the whole "family" of their crossings] or of the role played by broaching [*l'entame*] [*Aufriss*] in this corpus. I shall come to it elsewhere and later. I prefer to stay for the moment with the third *Critique*, which serves us as a guide in this preliminary trajectory.

It's worth the detour. You come across columns in it, and the *colossal* is not only encountered, it is a theme. But the column and the *colossal* do not occupy the same place here. We have already verified this: when it supports an edifice, the column was, for example if not by chance, a *parergon*: a supplement to the operation, neither work nor outside the work. One can find in

the *Analytic of the Sublime* a distinction and even an opposition between the column and the colossal. The column is of average, moderate, measurable, measured size. The measure of its erection can be taken. In this sense it would not be colossal, the column.

This opposition of the colossal and the column is not given to be immediately read as such in Kant's text. But it is none the less incontestable in the paragraph "Of the Evaluation of the Sizes of the Things of Nature, Necessary to the Idea of the Sublime" (§ 26). Here Kant is looking for an example of the sublime which would suit the critique of pure aesthetic judgment. It must therefore be distinct from teleological judgment insofar as this is rational judgment. So this example of the sublime will not be taken from the order of the "productions of art." For these are, one could say, on the scale of man, who determines their form and dimensions. The mastery of the human artist here operates with a view to an end, determining, defining, giving form. In deciding on contours, giving boundaries to the form and the cise, this mastery measures and dominates. But the sublime, if there is any sublime, exists only by overflowing: it exceeds cise and good measure, it is no longer proportioned according to man and his determinations. There is thus no good example, no "suitable" example of the sublime in the products of human art. But what examples present themselves to Kant as "bad" examples of the sublime? In what examples must one not seek the sublime, even if and especially if one is tempted to do so? Well, precisely (and in parentheses) in edifices and columns. ("z.B. Gebäuden, Säulen u.s.w.") Elsewhere an example of a *parergon*, half-work and half-outside-the-work, neither work nor outside-the-work and arising in order to supplement it because of the lack within the work, the column here becomes exemplary of the work that can be dominated and given form, according to the cise of the artist, and in this measure incapable of giving the idea of the sublime.

Of course the things of nature, when their concept already contains a determinate end, are equally incapable of opening us up to the sublime: for example the horse whose natural destination is well known to us. Endowed with a determinable end and a definite size, they cannot produce the feeling of the sublime, or let us say the *super-elevated*. *Erhaben*, the sublime, is not only high, elevated, nor even very elevated. Very high, absolutely high, higher than any comparable height, more than comparative, a size not measurable in height, the sublime is *super-elevation* beyond itself. In language, the *super-* is no longer sufficient for it. Its



super-elevation signifies beyond all elevation and not only a supplementary elevation. (It has to do with what in *Glas* is called the *étave*!).

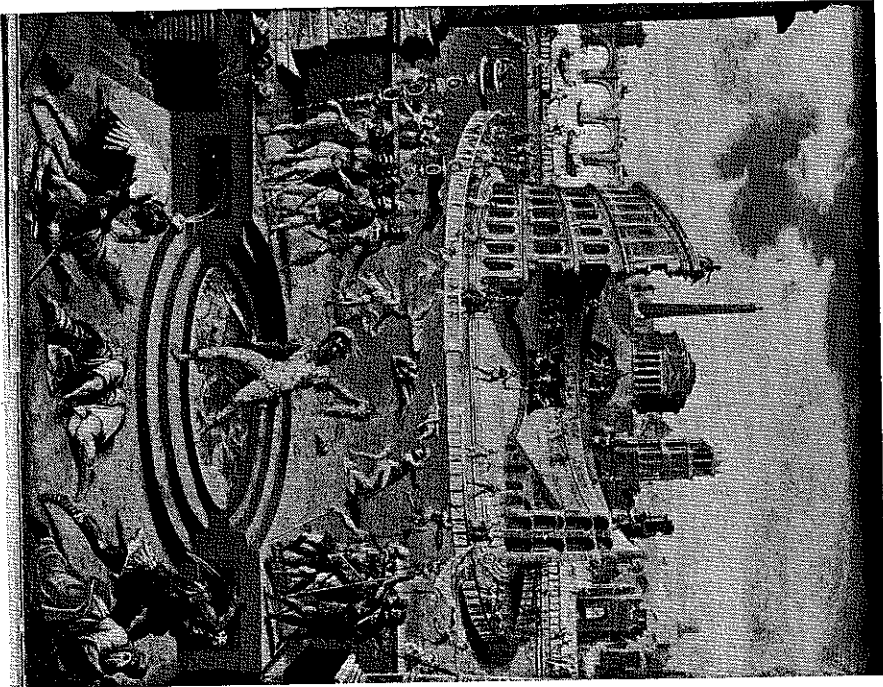
So neither the natural object with a determinable destination nor the art object (the column) can give an idea of sublime super-elevation. Super-elevation cannot be announced, it cannot provoke us to an idea of it, motivate us to it, or arouse that idea, except by the spectacle of a nature, to be sure, but a nature which has not been given form by the concept of any natural end. Super-elevation will be announced at the level of raw nature: *an der rohen Natur*, a nature which no final or formal contour can frame, which no limit can border, finish, or define in its cise. This raw nature on which sublime super-elevation would have to be "shown" is raw in that it will not offer any "attraction" (*Reiz*) and will not provoke any emotion of fear before a danger. But it will have to comprise "grandeurs," vastnesses which nevertheless defy all measure, exceed the domination of the hand or the gaze and do not lend themselves to any finite manipulation. This is not the

case of natural objects provided with an end (which is accessible to us, in the concept, as a whole which the imagination can also comprehend), nor of objects of art which by definition come from the hands of man, of whom they then keep the measure — and this is the case of the colossal.

Not of the colossal.

What is the colossal?

By opposition to works of art and to finite and finalized things of nature, "raw nature" can offer or present the "prodigious," the *Urgeheuer* (the enormous, the immense, the excessive, the astonishing, the unheard-of, sometimes the monstrous). "Prodigious" things become sublime objects only if they remain foreign



both to fear and to seduction, to "attraction." An object is "prodigious" when, by its size (*Grösse*), it annihilates and reduces to nothing (*vernichtet*) the end which constitutes its concept. The prodigious exceeds the final limit, and puts an end to it. It overflows its end and its concept. *Prodigious*, or monstrous—let us pay close attention to this—is the characteristic of an *object*, and of an object in its relation to its end and to its concept. The *colossal*, which is not the prodigious, nor the monstrous, qualifies the "mere presentation" (*blosse Darstellung*) of a concept. But not just any concept: the mere presentation of a concept which is "almost too large for any presentation" (*der für alle Darstellung beinahe zu gross ist*). A concept can be too big, *almost too big* for presentation.

Colossal (*Kolossalisch*) thus qualifies the presentation, the putting on stage or into presence, the catching-sight, rather, of some thing, but of something which is not a thing, since it is a concept. And the presentation of this concept inasmuch as it is not presentable. Nor simply unrepresentable: *almost unrepresentable*. And by reason of its size: it is "almost too large." This concept is announced and then eludes presentation on the stage. One would say, by reason of its almost excessive size, that it was obscene.

How can the category of the "almost too" be arrested? The pure and simple "too" would bring the colossal down: it would render presentation impossible. The "without too" or the "not too," the "enough" would have the same effect. How are we to think, in the presence of a presentation, the standing-there-upright (*Darstellen*) of an excess of size which remains merely *almost* excessive, at the *barely* crossed edge of a limiting line [*zrait*]? And which is incised, so to speak, in excess?

The *almost too* thus forms the singular originality, without edging or simple overspill, of the colossal. Although it has an essential relation to approximation, to the approaching movement of the approach (*beinahe zu gross*), although it names the indecision of the approach, the concept of the "almost-too," as a concept, has nothing of an empirical approximation about it. It did not slip from Kant's pen. (I shall risk here the definition of the *philosophos kolossos*, who is not the "great philosopher": he's the one who calculates almost too well the approaches to the "almost too" in his text.) The *almost too* retains a certain categorical fixity. It is repeated regularly, and each time associated with "big" Kant adds, in fact, immediately afterward, that the

presentation of a concept becomes difficult, in its "goal," when the intuition of the object is "almost too great" for our "power of apprehension" (*Auffassungsvermögen*). It "becomes difficult" (*erschwert wird*), progressively, by continuous approximation. But where, then, do we cut off? Where are we to delimit the trait of the *almost too*?

The "power of apprehension" seems to give the measure here. Let us not rush toward what would, by the slant of the metaphor, of [schematic or symbolic] hypotyposis, immediately put the *Auffassen* in our hands or under our noses. This problematic is necessary and would lead just as well to the famous paragraph 59 of the third *Critique* as to the Hegelian treatment of the "Fassen" as a dead metaphor. I shall provisionally skirt around it, using other trajectories ("White Mythology" in *Margins*, and "Economic" to authorize this avoidance).

The "almost-too-large" of the colossal [if we were in a hurry we'd translate this as: of the phallus which doubles the corpse; but never be in a hurry when it's a matter of erection, let the thing happen] is thus determined, if one can still say so, in its relative indetermination, as almost too large with regard, if one could still say so, to the grasp, to apprehension, to our power of apprehension. [I shall not abuse the word *apprehension*: at the limits of apprehension, the colossal is almost frightening, it worries by its relative indetermination: What's coming? What's going to happen? etc. But it must not cause fear, says Kant.]

The hold of apprehension is not that of comprehension. In this problematic, the question is always that of knowing if one can take hold of [apprehend or comprehend, which is not the same thing], how can we set about taking hold [comment s'y prendre *pour prendre*], and to what limits prehension can and must extend. How to deal with [s'y prendre avec] the colossal? Why is it almost too large for our *Auffassung*, for our apprehension, and decidedly too large for our *Zusammenfassung*, our comprehension? A little earlier [*Un peu plus haut*] in the same chapter, Kant had distinguished two powers of the imagination. When it relates intuitively to a *quantum* in order to use it as a measure or as a numerical unit of measure, it has at its disposal the *appréhensio* [*Auffassung*] or the *comprehensio aesthetica* [*Zusammenfassung*]. The former can go to infinity, the latter has difficulty following and becomes harder and harder according as the apprehension progresses. It quickly attains its maximum: the fundamental aesthetic measure for the evaluation of magnitudes.

So what about the prehend with respect to the colossal? Why does Kant call *colossal*, without apparent reference to the *colossus*, the presentation of a concept [of a *Begriff* whose *Begreifen* itself would not go without a taking hold and a taking sight of]? What is the presentation of a concept, if it may be sometimes colossal and, as such, unequal to the concept which, even while remaining too large for its own presentation, nonetheless never leaves off presenting itself, *colossally*? Finally, what would the sublime have to do with [*avoir à voir avec*] all these inadéquations?

I have just excised the fragment of text in which the word "colossal" rose up. The contextual tissue belongs to the "Analytic of the Sublime" [part I, section I, book 2, after the "Analytic of the Beautiful"]. The beautiful and the sublime present a number of traits in common: they please by themselves, they are independent of judgments of the senses and of determinant [logical] judgments, they also provide a pretension to universal validity, on the side of pleasure, to be sure, and not of knowledge. They both presuppose a reflexive judgment and appeal from their "pleasing" to concepts, but to indeterminate concepts, hence to "presentations," and to the faculty of presentation.

One can hardly speak of an *opposition* between the beautiful and the sublime. An opposition could only arise between two determinate objects, having their contours, their edges, their finitude. But if the difference between the beautiful and the sublime does not amount to an opposition, it is precisely because the presence of a limit is what gives form to the beautiful. The sublime is to be found, for its part, in an "object without form" and the "without-limit" is "represented" in it or on the occasion of it, and yet gives the totality of the without-limit to be thought. Thus the beautiful seems to present an indeterminate concept of the understanding, the sublime an indeterminate concept of reason.

From this definition—definition of the beautiful as definable in its contour and of the sublime defined as indefinable for the understanding—you already understand that the sublime is encountered in art less easily than the beautiful, and more easily in "raw nature." There can be sublime in art if it is submitted to the conditions of an "accord with nature." If art gives form by limiting, or even by framing, there can be a *parergon* of the beautiful, *parergon* of the column or *parergon* as column. But there cannot, it seems, be a *parergon* for the sublime.

The colossal excludes the *parergon*. First of all because it is not a work, an *ergon*, and then because the infinite is presented in it and the infinite cannot be bordered. The beautiful, on the contrary, in the finitude of its formal contours, requires the *parergon* edging all the more because its limitation is not only external: the *parergon*, you will remember, is called in by the hollowing of a certain lacunary quality within the work.

In *presenting* an indeterminate concept, in one case of the understanding, in the other of reason, the beautiful and the sublime produce a "Wohlfelien" which is often translated by "satisfaction," and which I have suggested transposing into "pleasing-onself-in" for reasons already given and also to avoid the saturation of the "enough" which does not fit. In the case of the beautiful, the "pleasing-onself-in" is "linked" to quality, in the case of the sublime, to quantity. Wherein one can already anticipate the question of the cise and the difference between the colossus and the column.

We had already recognized the other difference in another context: the pleasure (*Lust*) provoked by the sublime is negative. If we reread this sequence with a view to the *kolossos*, the logic of the cise, of the pure cut, of the without-cise, of the excess or of the almost-too-much-cise, imposes once more its necessity. In the experience of the beautiful, there is intensification and acceleration of life, feeling is easily united to the ludic force of the imagination and to its attractions (*Reizen*). In the feeling of the sublime, pleasure only "gushes indirectly." It comes after inhibition, arrest, suspension (*Hemmung*) which keep back the vital forces. This retention is followed by a brusque outpouring, an effusion (*Ergiessung*) that is all the more potent. The schema here is that of a dam. The sluice gate or floodgate interrupts a flow, the inhibition makes the waters swell, the accumulation presses on the limit. The maximum pressure lasts only an instant (*augenblicklich*), the time it takes to blink an eye, during which the passage is strictly closed and the structure absolute. Then the dam bursts and there's a flood. A violent experience in which it is no longer a question of joking, of playing, of taking (positive) pleasure, nor of stopping at the "attractions" of seduction. No more *play* (*Spiel*) but seriousness (*Ernst*) in the occupation of the imagination. Pleasure is joined with attraction (*Reiz*), because the mind is not merely attracted (*angezogen*) but, conversely, always also repulsed (*abgestossen*). The *traction* [trait] of the attraction (the two families of *Reissen* and *Ziehen* whose crossings in *The Origin*

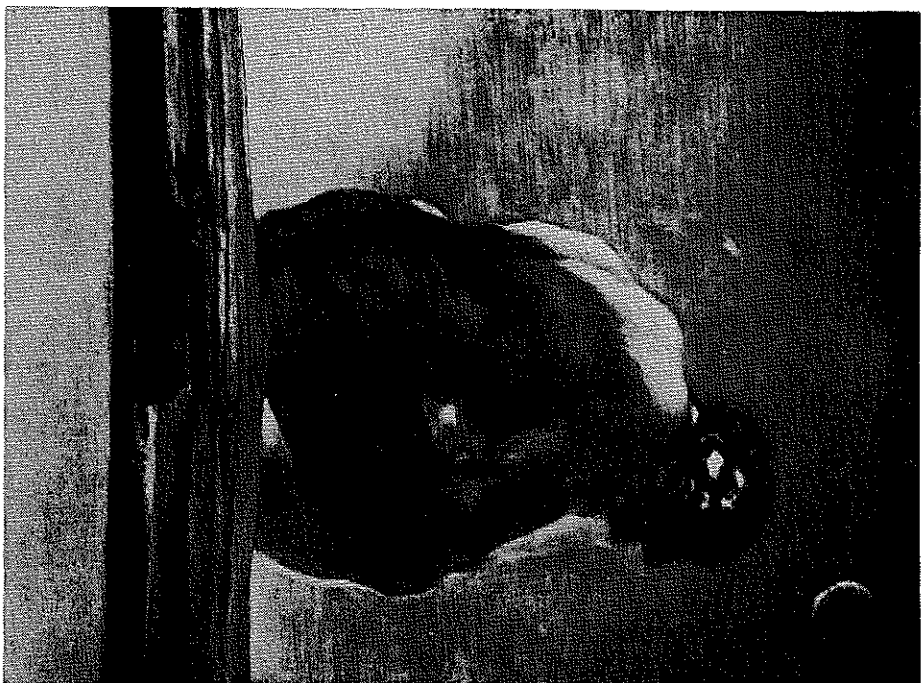
of the *Work of Art* and *Unterwegs zur Sprache* we must analyze elsewhere) is divided by the double meaning of traction, the "positive" and the "negative." What the "pleasing-onself-in" of the sublime "contains" is less a "positive pleasure" than respect or admiration. That's why it "deserves to be called negative pleasure."

This negativity of the sublime is not only distinguished from the positivity of the beautiful. It also remains alien to the negativity which we had also recognized to be at work, a certain labor of mourning, in the experience of the beautiful. Such negativity was already singular, a negativity without negativity [*sans sans*], sans of the pure cut, *sans fin* of finality. The singular negativity of the *sans* here gives way to the *counter*: opposition, conflict, disharmony, counterforce. In natural beauty, formal finality appears to predetermine the object with a view to an accord with our faculty of judging. The sublime in art rediscovers this concordance (*Übereinstimmung*). But in the view of the faculty of judging, the natural sublime, the one which remains privileged by this analysis of the *colossal*, seems to be formally contrary to an end (*Zweckwidrig*), inadequate and without suitability, inappropriate to our faculty of representation. It appears to do violence to the imagination. And to be all the more sublime for that. The measure of the sublime has the measure of this unmeasure, of this violent incommensurability. Still under the title of the *counter* and of contrary violence, paragraph 27 speaks of an emotion which, especially in its *beginning* [*début*], can be compared to a shock [*Erschütterung*], to a tremor or a shaking due to the rapid alteration or even to the simultaneity of an attraction and a repulsion [*Anziehen/Abstossen*]. Attraction/repulsion of the *same object*. Double bind.³³ There is an excess here, a surplus, a superabundance (*Überschwenglich*) which opens an abyss (*Abgrund*). The imagination is afraid of losing itself in this abyss, and we step back. The abyss—the concept of which, like that of the bridge, organized the architectonic considerations—would be the privileged presentation of the sublime. The example of the ocean does not come fortuitously in the last "General Remark on the Exposition of Reflective Aesthetic Judgment," not the ocean as the object of teleological judgments but the ocean of the poets, the spectacular ocean, limpid "mirror of water" limited by the sky when it is calm, "abyss threatening to swallow everything" when it unleashes itself. This spectacle is sublime. This same "Remark"

33. In English in the text.

distinguishes the "without-interest" (*ohne alles Interesse*) proper to the experience of the beautiful, from the "counterinterest" which opens up the experience of the sublime. "That is sublime which pleases immediately by its opposition [*Widerstand*] to the interest of the senses."

The "pleasing-onself-in" of the sublime is purely or merely negative (*nur negativ*) to the extent that it suspends play and elevates to seriousness. In that measure it constitutes an occasion related to the moral law. It has an essential relation to morality [*Sittlichkeit*], which presupposes also violence done to the senses. But the violence is here done by the imagination, not



by reason. The imagination turns this violence against itself, it mutilates itself, ties itself, binds itself, sacrifices itself and conceals itself, gashes itself [*s'entaille*] and robs itself. This is the place where the notion of sacrifice operates thematically inside the third *Critique*—and we've been constantly on its tracks. But this mutilating and sacrificial violence organizes the appropriation within a calculation, and the exchange which ensues is precisely the law of the sublime as much as the sublimity of the law. The imagination gains by what it loses. It gains by losing. The imagination organizes the theft [*Beraubung*] of its own freedom, it lets itself be commanded by a law other than that of the empirical use which determines it with a view to an end. But by this violent renunciation, it gains in extension [*Erweiterung*] and in power [*Macht*]. This potency is greater than what it sacrifices, and although the foundation remains hidden from it, the imagination has the feeling of sacrifice and theft at the same time as that of the cause [*Ursache*] to which it submits.

First consequence: if the sublime is announced in raw nature rather than in art, the counterfinality which constitutes it obliges us to say that the sublime cannot be merely a "natural object." One cannot say of a natural object, in its (beautiful or sublime) positive evaluation, that it is contrary to finality. All we can say is that the natural object in question can be proper, apt (*tauglich*) for the "presentation of a sublimity." Of a sublimity which, for its part, can be encountered as such only in the mind and on the side of the subject. The sublime cannot inhabit any sensible form. There are natural objects that are beautiful, but there cannot be a natural object that is sublime. The true sublime, the sublime proper and properly speaking (*das eigentliche Erhabene*) relates only to the ideas of reason. It therefore refuses all adequate presentation. But how can this unrepresentable thing present itself? How could the benefit of the violent calculation be *announced* in the finite? We must ask ourselves this: if the sublime is not contained in a finite natural or artificial object, no more is it the infinite idea itself. It inadequately presents the infinite in the finite and delimits it violently therein. Inadequation (*Unangemessenheit*), excessiveness, incommensurability are presented, let themselves be presented, be stood up, set upright in front of (*darstellen*) as that inadequation itself. Presentation is inadequate to the idea of reason but it is presented in its very inadequation, adequate to its inadequation. The inadequation of presentation is presented. As inadequation, it does not belong to the natural sen-

sible order, nor to nature in general, but to the mind, which contents itself with *using* nature to give us a feeling of a finality independent of nature. Unlike that of the beautiful, the principle of the sublime must therefore be sought in ourselves who *project* [*hineinbringen*] the sublime into nature, ourselves as rational beings.

There is an effect of the colossal only from the point of view of reason. Such is the *reason of the colossal*, and such is its reason that no presentation could get the better of it [*en avoir raison*]. The feeling of the colossal, effect of a subjective projection, is the experience of an inadequation of presentation to itself, or rather, since every presentation is adequate to itself, of an inadequation of the presenter to the presented of presentation. An inadequate presentation of the infinite presents its own inadequation, an inadequation is presented as such in its own yawning gap, it is determined in its contour, it cises and incises itself as incommensurable with the without-cise: that is a first *approach* to the colossal in erection.

Because the sublime is not in nature but only in ourselves, because the colossal which derives from it proceeds only from us, the analytic of the sublime is only an appendix (*etizen blossen Anhang*) to the aesthetic appreciation of natural finality. "This is a very necessary preliminary remark," notes Kant at the opening of the "Analytic of the Sublime," "which totally separates the ideas of the sublime from that of a finality of *nature* and makes of the theory of the sublime a mere appendix to the critical aesthetic evaluation (*Beurteilung*) of natural finality, for by that reason no particular form is represented [in nature]. . . ."

So, although the sublime is better presented by (raw) nature than by art, it is not in nature but in ourselves, projected by us because of the inadequation in us of several powers, of several faculties. The appendix will be the *place* of this inadequation. It will deal with it and will be affected by it. This place would be the *proper* place of the colossal were it not the inadequate emplacement of an inadequation.

It is this "subjective" determination of the sublime based on our faculties that Hegel will judge to be interesting and insufficient. He does this in the *Lectures on Aesthetics*, in the chapter "The Symbolism of the Sublime." In breaking with symbolism, the internal infinity becomes inaccessible and inexpressible. Its presentation can no longer be symbolic (in the Hegelian or Saussurean sense of the term, which implies participation or analogical

resemblance between the symbol and what it symbolizes). The content (the infinite idea, in the position of signified and no longer of symbolized) destroys the signifier or the representer. It expresses itself only by marking in its expression the annihilation of expression. It smashes to smithereens [*Il fait voler en éclats*: makes it fly (off) into pieces] the signifier which would presume to measure itself against its infinity. More precisely, form, the act of forming (*Gestalten*), is destroyed through what it expresses, explains, or interprets. Hence the exegetical interpretation (*Auslegung*) of the content is produced as sublation [*Aufhebung*] of the act of interpreting, of showing, of unfolding, of manifesting. That's the sublime: a sublation of the *Auslegen* in the *Auslegung* of the content. The content operates in it and commands the sublation of form. That's what Kant's "subjectivism" is supposed to have missed. If it is the content, infinity itself, what Hegel calls the one, substance, which itself operates this sublation of the form, if this is what renders the form inadequate, then one cannot explain this operation in terms of a finite subjectivity. We must on the contrary comprehend the sublime inasmuch as it is founded in the unique absolute substance, in the content to be presented (*als dem darzustellenden Inhalt*). In other words, starting from the presented of the presentation and not the presentation of the presented. If there is inadequation, we would say in a code that is scarcely different, between the signified and the signifier, this sublime inadequation must be *thought* on the basis of the more and not the less, the signified infinity and not the signifying finitude.

If—for example—a colossal presentation is without measure, what is without measure is the infinite idea, the presented which does not let itself be adequately presented. The form of the presentation, for its part, the *Darstellung*, has a measurable cise, however large. The cise of the colossal is not on the scale of what it presents, which is without cise. Hegel reproaches Kant with setting out from cise and not from without-cise. To which Kant replies in principle that in order to think the without-cise, it has to be presented, even if it is presented without presenting itself adequately, even if it is merely announced, and precisely in the *Aufhebung*. One must (one must and one cannot avoid it) set out from the colossal inasmuch as it cuts into itself [*s'entaille*], lifts its cise and cuts it out against the background of the without-cise: one must set out from the figure, and its cise.

Thus all this goes on around an infinite but truncated column, at the limit of the trunk, at the place of the truncation or the cutting edge, on the borderline, fine as a blade, which defines the cise. The question opens around knowing whether one must think a sublimity of the soul from one edge or the other, of the infinite or the finite, it being understood that the two are not opposed to each other but that each transcends itself toward the other, the one in the other. More precisely, the question opens of *knowing*, or rather of *thinking*, whether one must first think (as Hegel thinks) sublimity, set out from the thought of sublimity, or on the contrary (as Kant figures) from presentation, inadequate to this thought, of the sublime, etc.

Kant and Hegel nevertheless reflect the line of cut or rather the *pas* crossing this line between finite and infinite as the proper place of the sublime and the interruption of symbolic beauty; it is not then surprising that they both consider a certain Judaism as the historical figure of the sublime irruption, the one, Kant, from the point of view of religion and morals, in the ban on iconic representation (neither *Bildnis* nor *Gleichnis*), the other, Hegel, in Hebraic poetry considered as the highest negative form of the sublime. The affirmative form of the same sublime would be found, he says, in pantheist art.

Like that of the beautiful, the analytic of the sublime proceeds within the frame of the analytic of judgment imported from the *Critique* of pure theoretical reason (quantity, quality, relation, modality). We have already recognized the problems posed by this importation at the moment of situating the *parergon*. Here taking account of the nonformed character of the sublime object, Kant proposes to begin with quantity and not with quality as he had in the analytic of the beautiful. So he commences with the mathematical sublime and not with the dynamic sublime. Now it is in the space of the mathematical sublime that the column and the colossal rise up. And the problem of cise.

"We call *sublime* that which is *absolutely large* [*schlechthin gross*] (§ 25). The absolutely large is not a dimension,³⁴ in the quantitative sense. To be large and to be a dimension are two "totally different concepts [*magnitudo* and *quantitas*]:" The absolutely large does not belong to dimension, it is not and does not have a dimension. It does not lend itself to any example [*absolute, non comparative magnum, über alle Vergleichung*]. Not being equal or comparable to anything, this magnitude remains absolutely unequal, inadequate to anything measurable whatever. Absolute unmeasure [*Demersure absolue*] of this magnitude without dimension, the unequal can here only be, as unequal, equal to itself, can be equal only to itself. That is what we call sublime, "a dimension which is equal only to itself." From this it follows that the sublime is never encountered in the things of nature, only in ideas. Which ideas?, Kant then asks. It will be the object of a "deduction."

What is the question, then?

The question that Kant does not pose and yet which we can pose from inside his discourse. And if we can pose it from inside his discourse, this is because without being posed there, it is not without posing itself there. Questions can also be *parergonal*. Here it is.

Let us try to consider magnitude anew. This name translates the absolutely large, not absolute largeness (since this "large" is alien to and incommensurable with dimension), nor the large absolute (since one might be tempted to invert or permutate the two attributes and transform one or other into a substantive), but the absolutely large, an incorrect syntax to designate a value which is neither absolutely nominalizable (the largeness of the large) nor a mere modification of the noun (the large as largeness). It is because it is absolutely large that this large is no longer of the order or at the orders of largeness as dimension. It is larger than

34. "L'absolument grand n'est pas une grandeur", in the exposition that follows, we have translated "grandeur" as "dimension" or "largeness" depending on context.

largeness, neither large nor largeness, but absolutely large. So what is the question? Here it is.

Why can magnitude, which is not a quantity, and not a comparable quantity in the order of phenomena, let itself be represented under the category of quantity rather than some other category? What does it have in common or analogous with that category even when it is incomparable with it? In other words, why call magnitude or "absolutely large" that which is no longer a quantity? Why this reference, still, to a cise in space? Then, another question, still the same, if phenomenalization is to be admitted, why would the sublime be the absolutely large and not the absolutely small? Why would the absolute excess of dimension, or rather of quantity, be schematized on the side of largeness and not of smallness? Why this valorization of the large which thus still intervenes in a comparison between incomparables? To be sure, the absolutely large is not compared with anything, not with any phenomenal dimension in any case, but it is *preferred* to the absolutely small. In short, why is the sublime large and not small? Why is the large (absolutely) sublime and not the small (absolutely)? Kant posits the fact of this preference, of this pleasure taken in the larger or of the greater pleasure taken in the large, of this economy which quasi-tautologically makes the more worth more than the less and the absolutely large more than the absolutely small, since the schema of preference (the more) leads into it as an analytical consequence. If indeed one asks oneself, as I have just done, why preference should go to the largest, one forgets naïvely that the more and hence largeness are inscribed in the movement and in the very concept of preference. So we have to displace the question: *Why should there be a preference?* And more strictly, why, if in phenomenality the excess of quantity is to announce itself, and likewise the movement beyond comparison, why should it do so on the side of the large and not the small, the largest and not the smallest, the less large or the absolutely small?

Kant posits that the preference can only be subjective but the very tautology of the proposition dispenses him from questioning it. If no mathematics can as such justify a preference, an advance, a superiority, a privilege (*Vorzug*), it must be that an aesthetic judgment is implied in it, and a subjective measure coming to found reflective judgments. An object, even if it were to be indifferent to us in its existence, still pleases us by its mere largeness, even if one considers it as without form (*formlos*), and this

feeling is universally communicable. The relation to this largeness is not mathematical, nor is the "respect" which it inspires, and no more is the "contempt" aroused by "what we call simply small." Kant does not ask himself why this should go without saying, naturally toward the largest and the highest. The question is all the more inevitable because the nonphenomenal infinity of the idea must always be presented in intuition. Now everything that is "presented" in intuition and therefore "represented" aesthetically, every phenomenon is also a *quantum*. But what decides that, in this *quantum*, the more is worth more than the less, and the large more or better than the small? The agency of decision or "preference" can as such be neither phenomenal nor noumenal, neither sensible nor intelligible.

The question comes back to the origin of presentation. Why does the large absolute (the sublime), which is not a *quantum* since it exceeds all comparison, let itself be presented by a *quantum* which does not manage to present it? And why does this essentially inadequate *quantum* present it all the "better" for being larger? The more or less (large) should no longer have any meaning, any pertinence in the view of the large absolute, of magnitude. But it has a meaning, notes Kant (and he describes here what in fact happens) since positive evaluation moves toward the absolute high or large, and not toward the small or medium.

Kant has introduced comparison where he says it should have no place. He introduces it, he lets it introduce itself in an apparently very subtle manner. Not by re-implying magnitude in the comparable, but by comparing the comparable with the incomparable. The logic of the argument, it seems to me, and perhaps the thing itself, are not without relation to the proof of the existence of God according to Saint Anselm (*aliquid quo nihil majus cogitari potest*)

sublime that in comparison with which all the rest is small. Kant in this way lets a comparison be introduced, a *Vergleichung*, the site of all figures, analogies, metaphors, etc., between two orders that are absolutely irreducible to each other, absolutely heterogeneous and without likeness. He throws a bridge across the gulf, between the unrepresentable and presentation. In fact he claims not to throw it but to recognize it, to identify it: the bridge, like the symbol, throws itself. Hence it is the whole of nature, the totality of presences and dimensions which is and appears as small in the eyes of magnitude. And that is the sublime. There is nothing in nature, however large its phenomenon may be, which cannot be brought down to the infinitely small. The telescope makes this affirmation very close to us. Conversely, there is nothing that, for the imagination, cannot be extended to the dimensions of the world, in comparisons with still smaller scales of measurement, and this time it is the microscope which helps us. But as there is in our imagination a tendency to infinite progress, and in our reason a pretension to absolute totality as a real idea, the excessiveness (*Ühangemessenheit*) of our power of phenomenal evaluation of dimension, its inadequation to the infinite idea awakens in us the feeling of a suprasensible faculty. This awakening is properly sublime, and it makes us say: "that is sublime in comparison with which all the rest [all other, *alles andere*], is small"

we had left the colossal to wait, and it rises up again here. We are in arrest before a sort of first and fundamental measure. According to Kant, there is a fundamental evaluation (*erstes oder Grundmass*) of size, and two ways of taking it: apprehending and comprehending. How is this to be understood?

In the phenomenal order, one evaluation of size proceeds mathematically, by concepts of number or by their algebraic signs, the other proceeds aesthetically by mere intuition, by eye. Now if we wanted to trust ourselves only to mathematical evaluation, we should be deprived of any primary or fundamental measure. In the series of numbers going to infinity, each unit would call for another unit of measurement. The evaluation of fundamental size (*Grundmass*) must therefore consist in an immediate and intuitive capacity for grasping (*Fassen*): the presentation of concepts of number by the imagination. Another way of repeating that the evaluation of sizes, for natural objects, is in the last instance aesthetic: "subjective and not objective."

A power related to what can be taken by eye, taken in view, that is the fundamental thing where the evaluation of sizes is concerned. The colossal will perhaps be something, or rather the presentation of something which can be taken without being able to be taken, in hand or eye, the *Fassen* looking first of all like the operation of the hand. Being taken without being able to be taken, and which from then on crushes you, throws you down while elevating you at the same time, since you can take it in view without taking it in your hand, without comprehending it, and since you can see it without seeing it completely. But not without pleasure, with a sublime pleasing-onself-in-it.

Let us resume: the mathematical evaluation of size never reaches its maximum. The aesthetic evaluation, the primary and fundamental one, does reach it, and this *subjective* maximum constitutes the absolute reference which arouses the feeling of the sublime; no mathematical evaluation or comparativity is capable of this, unless—and this remark of Kant's dropped as if in passing, in brackets, is striking—the fundamental aesthetic mea-

sure remains alive, is kept alive [*lebendig erhalten wird*] in the imagination which presents the mathematical numbers. Which shows well that the fundamental evaluation of size in its maximum is subjective and living, however enigmatic this "life" remains, this vivacity or this aliveness [*vivance*] [*Lebendigkeit*].

This primary [subjective, sensory, immediate, living] measure proceeds from the body. And it takes the body as its primary object. We must now verify this. *It is the body which erects itself as a measure*. It provides the measuring and measured unit of measure: of the smallest and the largest possible, of the minimum and the maximum, and likewise of the passage from the one to the other.

The body, I was saying. The body of man, as is understood and goes without saying. It is *starting from* it that the erection of the largest is preferred.

Everything is measured here on the scale of [*à la taille de*] the body. Of man. It is to this fundamental measurer [*Grundmass*] that the colossal must be related, its excess of cise, its insufficient cise, the almost and the almost too much which holds it or raises or lowers it between two measures.

We have just glimpsed it: for the aesthetic evaluation to give rise to a mathematical measure, the intervention of the imagination is indispensable. The imagination takes hold of [*aufnimmt*] a sensory quantum in order to make an empirical estimation of it. Now the imagination, being intermediate between sensibility and understanding, is capable of *two operations*. And we rediscover here the two edges, the two faces of the trait, of the limit or of the cise. Imagination is the cise because it has two cises. The cise always has two cises: it de-limits. It has the cise of what it delimits and the cise of what it de-limits, of what it limits and of what is liberated in it of its limits. Two operations of the imagination, then, which are both *prehensions*. Apprehension [*ap-prehensio*, *Auffassung*] can go to the infinite *without difficulty*. The other operation, comprehension [*comprehensio*, *Zusammenfassung*] cannot follow, it is finite, subjected to the *irritus derivatus* and to the sensory. It arrives very quickly at a maximum, which is then set up as a fundamental measure. This maximum of comprehension is "the fundamental measure, aesthetically the largest, of the evaluation of size." And if apprehension extends beyond this maximum, it lets go in comprehension what it gains in apprehension. Whence this apparently paradoxical conclusion: the right place, the ideal *topos* for the experience of the sublime,



for the inadequation of presentation to the unrepresentable, will be a median place, an average place of the body which would provide an aesthetic maximum without losing itself in the mathematical infinite. Things must come to a relationship of body to body: the "sublime" body (the one that provokes the feeling of the sublime) must be far enough away for the maximum size to appear and remain sensible, but close enough to be seen and "comprehended," not to lose itself in the mathematical indefinite. Regulated, measured distance [*é-loignement*] between a too-close and a too-far.

In Kant's examples, this relationship of body to body is one of body to stone. Even before the colossal rises up, and you already sense that it will be of stone, stony, petrified or petrifying, the two examples are of stone.

First of all, once again, the pyramids. Kant refers to the *Letters from Egypt*. Savary explains: you have to be neither too close to nor too far from the pyramids in order to feel the

emotion proper to the thing. From far away, the apprehension of these stones gives rise only to an obscure representation without effect on the aesthetic judgment of the subject. From very close, it takes time to complete the visual apprehension from base to summit, the first perceptions "faint away" before the imagination reaches the last ones, and the "comprehension is never complete," accomplished. So one has to find a middle place, a correct distance for uniting the maximum of comprehension to the maximum of apprehension, to take sight of the maximum of what one cannot take and to imagine the maximum of what one cannot see. And when the imagination attains its maximum and experiences the feeling of its impotence, its inadequacy to present the idea of a whole, it falls back, it sinks, it founders into itself (*in sich selbst zurück sinkt*). And this abyssal fall-back does not leave it without a certain positive emotion: a certain transference gives it the wherewithal to feel pleased at this collapse which makes it come back to itself. There is a "pleasing-onself-in" in this movement of the impotent imagination (*in sich selbst zurück sinkt dadurch aber in ein höheres Wohlfühlen versetzt wird*). This is what happens (another place of stone in the name of the Rock, and it's the Church) when "the spectator enters for the first time into the Church of Saint Peter in Rome." He is "lost" or struck with "stupor." One would almost say turned to stone [*médusé*]: a moment ago outside, now inside the stony crypt.

This is at least what people say (*wie man erzählt*): Kant never went to have a closer look, neither to Rome nor to Egypt. And we must also reckon with the distance of a narrative, a written narrative in the case of Savary's *Letters*. But does not the distance required for the experience of the sublime open up perception to the space of narrative? Does not the divergence between apprehension and comprehension already appeal to a narrative voice? Does it not already call itself, with a narrative voice, the colossal?

We shall come back to it after having moved slowly round its site. In the previous paragraph, Kant has just named the pyramids and Saint Peter of Rome: "if the aesthetic judgment is to be pure (*unmixed with any teleological judgment* which, as such, belongs to reason), and if we are to give a suitable example of it for the Critique of aesthetic judgment, we must not point to the sublime in works of art, e.g. buildings, statues and the like, where a human end determines the form as well

as the magnitude, nor yet in things of nature, *that in their very concept import a definite end*, e.g. animals of a recognized natural order, but in rude nature merely as involving magnitude (and only in this so far as it does not convey any charm or any emotion arising from actual danger). For in a representation of this kind nature contains nothing monstrous (*ungeheuer*) (nor what is either magnificent or horrible)—the magnitude apprehended may be increased to any extent provided imagination is able to grasp it all in one whole. An object is *monstrous* where by its size it defeats the end that forms its concept. The *colossal* is the mere presentation of a concept which is almost too great for presentation, i.e. borders on the relatively monstrous, for the end to be attained by the presentation of a concept is made harder to realize by the intuition of the object being almost too great for our faculty of apprehension" (Mereditz, 100-101). Apprehension and not comprehension, even though apprehension is defined by the power of progressing to the infinite; it runs out of breath less quickly than comprehension. We had insisted on this earlier, but to sharpen up the distinction and the proximity of *kolossalisch* and *ungeheuer*, we must again recall the virtual connotation which marks this latter value: the *monstrous*. A. Philonenko privileges it by systematically replacing "prodigious" (Gibelin's translation) by "monstrous."

The colossal seems to belong to the presentation of raw, rough, crude nature. But we know that the sublime takes only its presentations from nature. The sublime quality of the colossal, although it does not derive from art or culture, nevertheless has nothing natural about it. The case of the colossus is neither culture nor nature, both culture and nature. It is perhaps, between the presentable and the un-presentable, the passage from the one to the other as much as the irreducibility of the one to the other. Cise, edging, cut edges, that which passes and happens, without passing, from one to the other.

pas-without-from-the-one-to-the-other [*pas-sans-de-
l'une-à-l'autre*: the pun suggests "passing from one to the
other"—[TRANS.]

Kant retouched his sentence several times, sharpening his quill on it. The "which" of the "which is almost too large" has as its antecedent, from one edition to another, the concept or the presentation. But does this not amount to the same thing? The presentation of something which is too large to be presented or the presentation, too large to be presented, of something—that always produces an inadequation of the presentation to itself. And this possible inequality of the present of presentation to itself is what opens the dimension of the colossal, of the colossal *Darstellen*, of the erection *there in front* [*là-devant*] of the colossus which cises itself.³⁵ It cises itself, rises up and rises up again in its immense cise, both limited since what is presented remains too large, almost too large for it, and unlimited by the very thing it presents or which presents *itself* in it. This double trait of a cise which limits and unlimits at one and the same time, the divided line upon which a colossus comes to cise itself, incise itself without cise, is the sublime. Kant also calls it "subjective": let us decipher in this the psychic ideality of what "is not in nature," the origin of the psyche as *Kolossos*, the relation to the double of the *ci-devant*³⁶ who comes to erect himself *là-devant*. To *su-perelevate* himself, supposedly, beyond height.

35. "Qui se taille", also, in colloquial French, to beat it, to clear off.

36. As an adjective, *ci-devant* means "formerly"; as a noun, it refers specifically to a noble stripped of his title during the French Revolution.

ci-devant. Colossal
 Fort: *Da*. What comes-in-front[*devant*]-of-it-to-erect-itself. Hav-
 ing to [*Devant*] erect itself in the excessive movement of its
 own disappearance, of its unrepresentable presentation. The ob-
 scenity of its abyss.

this double
 cise is compared only with itself. For the limit does not exist. Even if
there is some, the cise of this broaching does not exist, it never begins,
 anywhere. Neither ordinary nor derived, like the trace of each trait.
 That's what is presented without cise.

and if you consider the trunk of the present
 which makes itself present here, you see double, you see that it
 will have had to be double. The colossal is, in other words *su-
perelevates* itself, on both sides of its own cise, it is on both sides
 its own cise, it is of its own cise on both sides. *A priori* and from
 the start double colossus, if not double column. Whence its res-
 onance.

both potent and impotent, potent in its very impotence, all potential in its unequalness to itself. Everything here resounds and echoes in the dynamic sublime. The colossal was dealt with in the chapter on the mathematical sublime. It remains to be seen how the dynamic comes to the mathematical.

For aesthetic judgment, the *dynamic* sublime of nature is given in the difference between force and potency, when force (*Macht*) has not the force to exercise its potency or its violence (*Gewalt*): on us. And force becomes potency only by winning out over the resistance of another force

death knell [*glas*] and galactic of the *kolossos*. In the interval between the mathematical sublime and the dynamic sublime, a tree had been projected into the Milky Way. There was the bridge over the abyss which threatens to swallow everything, on the edge of which the analytic of the sublime is broached. Now this whirlpool which tears up the tree and throws it, immensely, into the milky dissemen [*la dissemence*]. The question is still, as we know now, the cipher writing [*Chiffreschrift*] on the surface of nature. And an example: "We get examples of the mathematically sublime of nature in mere intuition in all those instances where our imagination is afforded, not so much a greater numerical concept as a large unit as measure (for shortening the numerical series). A tree judged by the height of man gives, at all events, a standard for a mountain, and, sup-

posing this is, say, a mile high, it can serve as unit for the number expressing the earth's diameter, so as to make it intuitible, similarly the earth's diameter, for the known planetary system, this again for the system of the Milky Way, and the immeasurable host of such systems, which go by the name of nebulae, and most likely in turn themselves form such a system, holds out no prospect of a limit" (Meredith, 105).