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Edited by Fabian Dorsch and Dan-Eugen Ratiu

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The European Society for Aesthetics

Department of Philosophy

University of Fribourg

Avenue de l'Europe 20

1700 Fribourg

Switzerland

Internet: <http://www.eurosa.org>

Email: secretary@eurosa.org

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Table of Contents

Christian G. Allesch <i>An Early Concept of 'Psychological Aesthetics' in the 'Age of Aesthetics'</i>	1-12
Martine Berenpas <i>The Monstrous Nature of Art — Levinas on Art, Time and Irresponsibility</i>	13-23
Alicia Bermejo Salar <i>Is Moderate Intentionalism Necessary?</i>	24-36
Nuno Crespo <i>Forgetting Architecture — Investigations into the Poetic Experience of Architecture</i>	37-51
Alexandre Declos <i>The Aesthetic and Cognitive Value of Surprise</i>	52-69
Thomas Dworschak <i>What We Do When We Ask What Music Is</i>	70-82
Clodagh Emoe <i>Inaesthetics — Re-configuring Aesthetics for Contemporary Art</i>	83-113
Noel Fitzpatrick <i>Symbolic Misery and Aesthetics — Bernard Stiegler</i>	114-128

Carlo Maria Fossaluzza & Ian Verstegen <i>An Ontological Turn in the Philosophy of Photography</i>	129-141
Philip Freytag <i>The Contamination of Content and the Question of the Frame</i>	142-157
Rob van Gerwen <i>Artists' Experiments and Our Issues with Them — Toward a Layered Definition of Art Practice</i>	158-180
Geert Gooskens <i>Immersion</i>	181-189
James R. Hamilton <i>The 'Uncanny Valley' and Spectating Animated Objects</i>	190-207
Iris Laner <i>Learning by Viewing — Towards a Phenomenological Understanding of the Practical Value of Aesthetic Experience</i>	208-228
Jerrold Levinson <i>Blagues Immorales</i>	229-244
Shelby L. J. Moser <i>Perceiving Digital Interactivity — Applying Kendall Walton's 'Categories of Art' to Computer Art</i>	245-257
Vítor Moura <i>Seeing-From — Imagined Viewing and the Role of Hideouts in Theatre</i>	258-275
Lynn Parrish <i>Tensions in Hegelian Architectural Analysis — A Re-Conception of the Spatial Notions of the Sacred and Profane</i>	276-285
Francesca Pérez Carreño <i>Sentimentality as an Ethical and Aesthetic Fault</i>	286-304
Christopher Poole <i>The Fall of Reason and the Rise of Aesthetics</i>	305-315
Mateusz Salwa <i>The Garden — Between Art and Ecology</i>	316-327

Lisa Katharin Schmalzried <i>Kant on Human Beauty</i>	328-343
Albert van der Schoot <i>Musical Sublimity and Infinite Sehnsucht — E.T.A. Hoffmann on the Way from Kant to Schopenhauer</i>	344-354
Pieter Shmugliakov <i>Transcendentality of Art in Kant's Third Critique</i>	355-366
Kristina Soldati <i>Meaningful Exemplification — On Yvonne Rainer's 'Trio A'</i>	367-378
Valerijs Vinogradovs <i>Kant's Multiplicity</i>	379-401
Ken Wilder <i>Las Meninas, Alois Riegl, and the 'Problem' of Group Portraiture</i>	402-421
Mark Windsor <i>Art and Magic, or, The Affective Power of Images</i>	422-435
Pavel Zahrádka <i>Does "Great" Art Exist? A Critique of the Axiological Foundations of the Artistic Canon</i>	436-456
Zsófia Zvolenszky <i>Artifactualism and Authorial Creation</i>	457-469

Kant's Multiplicity

Valerijs Vinogradovs*

La Trobe University

ABSTRACT. Because of the transcendental emphasis of his critical works, Immanuel Kant has been criticised for not being able to accommodate the notion of multiplicity. This paper outlines a complex argument designed as a means to the rescue of Kant from this repudiation. To this end, the paper proposes a new, strong reading of the doctrine of aesthetic ideas that unveils the idiosyncratic play of the mental powers, constituted of two separate acts, that equips one to intuit an unnameable mark that evades both empirical apprehension and logical comprehension. By analogy with the two types of cognition, stipulated in the *Stufenleiter* (and elsewhere), I shall suggest that the two distinct kinds of a feeling of pleasure, stirred up by the generation of an aesthetic idea, add an overlooked, aesthetic element that renders Kant a philosopher of multiplicity.

‘... philosophy consists precisely in knowing its bounds ...’
(Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 727/B 755)

i. Introduction

It would not be misleading to say that the vexing reality of the problem of multiplicity has its Ancient roots in the writings of Plato. Incidentally, the problematic, metaphysical hierarchy thereby postulated – that one between sensible objects, the intelligible Forms, the eidetic numbers, and, lastly, the two principles, the One and the indeterminate Dyad – has laid a foundation for the further, fruitful criticisms; including, most notably, an almost “immediate” attack in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* and, much later, Descartes’ developments, followed by radical Cartesian manoeuvres

* Email: V.Vinogradovs@latrobe.edu.au

in Spinoza's *Ethics*.¹ The characteristic, enduring (and substantially simplified) questions of this period are as follows: how can the two principles, the One (being) and the Dyad (non-being), account for the multiplicity of material objects as well as the Forms (Plato's genera)? How can the sole, Aristotelian principle "being has many senses" account for multiplicity of individual, independent substances and their corresponding attributes? Does Descartes warrant the multiple, independent substances to share one of the principal attributes, i.e. extension or thinking? Or perhaps there is only one substance – Spinoza's God – and attributes only allow for a difference between objects?

These historical foundations aside, in the recent decades, the concept of multiplicity has become a widely debated topic in philosophical literature, in both traditions. As far as I can determine, this revived, surging interest, at least in the continental tradition, can be attributed to Deleuze's 'rediscovery' of Bergson and the subsequent appropriation of his prime concept, later picked up by Badiou. Hitherto the recent scholarship has diagnosed a variation of multiplicity in the works of some major thinkers, including, apart from the above, figures such as Husserl and Hegel, of course, but also, less expectedly, Sartre and Wittgenstein of the early 30's.² For purposes of this paper I only note that the classical, metaphysical and ontological questions pertaining to this matter have been lucratively appropriated and incarnated in considerably varying rationales, conditional on a particular, philosophical agenda. On closer inspection, insignificant thought it may seem, Kant occasionally figures in this debate, but, crucially, as a scapegoat.

The critiques of Kant, the ultimate origin of which can be tracked down to Maimon's *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*, have various colourings; yet it may be remarked with justice that a key accusation targets

¹* V.Vinogradovs@latrobe.edu.au

See Aristotle (1928), esp. book B. Among the contemporary pieces that discuss some striking connections between Plato's metaphysics and Aristotle's see: Reale (1990), esp. pp. 259-293; and Berti (2001), esp. pp. 201-07. For a lucid analysis of Spinoza's "the multiple" in *Ethics*, see Lord (2010), esp. pp. 17-27, 40, 60-62.

² Apart from the obvious texts by Deleuze, Bergson and Badiou, see: Haas (2000); Blank (2011); Elwin (2012); in the strictly analytical tradition see: Nolan (2006) and Strevens (2012).

the very grounds of his philosophy: the conditions of all human experience. Customarily, he is rebuked for subsuming nature's infinite multiplicity of appearances, to have an interconnected experience and, as a consequence, gain systematic knowledge, under his labyrinthine world of the mind, which inexorably splinters this multiplicity into manifolds of intuition, concepts that rest on the categories, transcendental apperception and, at bottom, on the principles of reason. To take a few examples: Bergson, pointing out Kant's alleged dismissal of the power of the sensible, writes in *Creative Evolution*: 'I mean that he [Kant] took for granted the idea of a science that is one, capable of bridging with the same force [the mind] all the parts of what is given, and coordinating them into one system ... There is, for him, only one experience, and the intellect covers its whole ground' (Bergson 1911, p. 359); or Deleuze, again highlighting the limits of Kant's inner world with respect to actual human experience, instantiates: 'But this broadening out [the human condition], or even this going beyond does not consist in going beyond experience toward concepts. For concepts only define, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience in general' (Deleuze 1991, p.28). Interestingly (and perhaps even lamentably), these attacks on Kant draw exclusively from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and, therefore, it is unsurprising that on account of the first *Critique* he is deemed a philosopher of the conditions of experience rather than a philosopher of experience, in all its multiplicity. To put this more perspicuously, Kant's transcendental emphasis, allegedly, negates the very possibility of accounting for multiplicity in his philosophy. Let me now add that Kant's critical works constitute a multifarious and intertwined architectonic, and, to salvage Kant from the said repudiation, I suggest a systematic reading of his *Critiques*, focusing here on the first and the third.

To this end, in the first part, I shall glimpse at the critical works to see if these contain any vestiges of the notion of multiplicity. Then, the second part will gloss over the two kinds of cognitions, intuitions and concepts, and their characteristics, so as to delineate the bounds that curtail multiplicity. In the third section, after reiterating some key characteristics of aesthetic ideas, I shall propose a new reading so as to suggest that these creatures of productive imagination can have an intimate bearing on cognition. As a corollary, in the fourth section, I shall unveil an idiosyncratic

play of the mental powers that transpires during the creation of aesthetic ideas; this will enable me to divulge the two distinct kinds of a feeling of pleasure pertaining to our interrogation of multiplicity. Finally, in the concluding section, I shall adduce an instance of a captured multiplicity and suggest, albeit only problematically (due the complexity of the task and the limits of this paper), a resolution that contests Kant's condemnation.

2. Manifold and Multiplicity (Mannigfaltigkeit and Vielheit)

In the first *Critique*, Kant uses the term Vielheit (Multiplicity, Plurality) on several occasions, the most potent of which is found in the list of the Categories of Quantity, that is, the logical requirements of our cognition: Unity – Plurality (Vielheit) – Totality (KrV, B 106, 110).³ This invocation of Vielheit is instrumental for the purposes of my paper, since Kant expounds therein 'the production of the entire concept' that serves for logical cognition (KrV, B 115). Specifically, the category of Vielheit, in forming a concept, denotes 'truth in respect of the consequences ... from a given concept' or, more specifically, an accuracy of the application of 'the marks that belong to a concept as a common ground' for a unity of a manifold (Mannigfaltigkeit), that is, determination of its parts, and explanation of thereby experienced phenomena (KrV, B 114-115).⁴ I shall return to this salient point at the end of this paper. To my knowledge, Rudolf Makkreel is the only scholar who has espied a subtle difference between Kant's use of terms Mannigfaltigkeit (Manifold) and Vielheit in the third *Critique* (Makkreel 1990, p.75). Vielheit makes another appearance, now in Kant's treatment of the mathematically sublime (KuD, § 24, 5: 248, §

³ All References Kant's first *Critique* (KrV) are to the section number and A and B pagination of the first and second editions (A/B): Immanuel Kant (1998), *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. All references to the third *Critique* (KuD) are from: Immanuel Kant (2002), *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. All references to the *Anthropology* are from the following edition: Immanuel Kant (2006), *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. Robert B. Louden, New York: Cambridge University Press. All references to his *Logic* are from: Immanuel Kant (1819), *Logic*, trans. John Richardson, London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall.

⁴ My italics.

27, 5: 259).⁵ As observed by Makkreel, the relationship between plurality and unity in this case differs from logical comprehension, since we attempt to cognise an object that deters conceptualization, i.e. an absolutely great object, the marks (or corresponding features) of which cannot be expressed by a concept. To be sure, it hardly seems accidental that Kant remarks that this process involves 'the comprehension of multiplicity in the unity ... of intuition'. Note Kant replaces Mannigfaltigkeit (manifold) with Vielheit (multiplicity), a lapidary, conceptual artifice that unveils a divide between logical and aesthetic comprehension. We can sum up this gloss so far by the taking heed of the following Makkreel's observation (and here our goals branch off):

In logical or mathematical comprehension the content of sense is regarded as a manifold, i.e., a complex of temporally determined parts. In aesthetic comprehension, by contrast, the content of sense is regarded as a multiplicity of *indeterminate* parts of a whole (Guyer 1990, p.75).

As presented here, Kant's critical works do indeed contain a peculiar form of multiplicity that, at this point, can be expressed as an indeterminate content of perception that somehow evades conceptualization, but can be comprehended by means of aesthetic reflection. To arrive at a more perspicuous account, we shall take a careful look at Kant's two intermingled types of cognition from the first *Critique* and then at aesthetic ideas, from the third *Critique*, that, as I shall maintain, intimate another peculiar cognitive mode that I shall employ to back up Kant from the afore-mentioned attacks.

3. Manifold of Intuition, Limits of Concepts, Bounds of Multiplicity

In the famous *Stufenleiter* (KrV, A 320/B 376-77), Kant sets out to entangle intuitions and concepts:

⁵ Translated as 'multitude' in Guyer's translation.

... an objective perception is a cognition (*cognitio*). The latter is either an intuition or a concept (*intuitus vel conceptus*). The former is immediately related to the object and is singular; the latter is mediate, by means of a mark which can be common to several things.

Indeed, this relationship, particularly when aided with the dictum 'thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind' (KrV, A 51/B 75), is one of the most widely discussed Kantian paradoxes, recently revitalized by McDowell's conceptually laden intuitions. It would be foolish to try to deal with this knot within the limits of this paper, so we shall focus only on the basic characteristics of intuitions and concepts so as to make sense of a cognitive status of aesthetic ideas. On the surface, the *Stufenleiter* suggests: first, that both intuitions and concepts are cognitions, in fact the only cognitions available for humans (KrV, A 68/B 93); second, intuitions are singular representations and related to objects 'immediately' (or directly), known in the literature as the 'singularity' and 'immediacy' conditions, not comprehensively addressed by Kant; and, third, concepts are general representations and related to objects indirectly.

On a closer inspection, Kant suffuses his works with various remarks to illuminate (and nonetheless muddle) the contrast between the above characteristics of the two cognitions, which we shall look at to attempt to disambiguate this puzzling relationship. First and foremost, the origin of intuitions is sensibility, which accounts for the immediacy of their relation to objects; the origin of concepts is the mind (more specifically, the faculty of understanding), and thus the latter cognitions are mediate. The 'singularity' criterion denotes that only intuitions can fully determine single things or individuals. To be sure, Hintikka, in the first influential discussion of this divide, observed that intuitions are particular rather than general representations (concepts) in that they relate to the object in virtue of a mark, encompassing the object's parts, which is not general, but unique (Hintikka 1969, p.42). A concept, on the other hand, contains features that a given object shares with others.⁶ Further, it must be noted that objects are given to us in virtue of intuitions that thus directly depend on an object's presence (KrV, A 19/B 33; A 54/B74) – this is the crux

⁶ Note herein lies a quarry for subsequent criticisms of Kant.

of the 'immediacy' criterion. To be sure, by means of intuitions, via sense perception, the reproductive imagination engages with the world around us, and without the aid of the intellect, we can engage with it immediately; Kant calls this mode of cognition apprehension. Incidentally, all empirical concepts 'have corresponding intuitions' (KrV, B 129); that is, they require intuitions to exemplify them, for otherwise concepts are empty cognitions, 'mere forms of thought without objective reality' (KrV, B 148; KuD, § 59, 5: 352). With that being the case, to become intelligible or distinct (i.e. not 'blind'), intuitions need to fall under concepts that, after the transcendental synthesis of the imagination is performed, unite the corresponding manifold of intuition, a mode of cognition Kant entitles comprehension, performed by the determining judgement.

It should already be clear that what constitutes generality (or universality) of concepts is their field applicability, and Kant talks extensively about their limits, the limits that – as Kant's critics postulate – curtail multiplicity. Since the highest, most general concept or genus, e.g. animal, contains marks within itself that are common to different things, it requires lower species (concepts) to be more determinate, but the latter likewise contain what is common to many things and thus no complete logical determination of an individual is ever possible (KrV, A 655-6/B 683-4; *Logic*, 7-9). As we shall see in a moment – and I would like to emphasise this – Kant is well aware of the bounds of conceptions: the following excerpt from the first *Critique* articulates the rationale for the logical horizon of concepts:

One can regard every concept as a point, which as the stand point of an observer, has its horizon, i.e., a multiplicity [Menge] of things that can be represented and surveyed, as it were, from it. Within this horizon a multiplicity [Menge] of points must be able to be given to infinity, each of which in turn has its narrower field of view; i.e., every species contains subspecies ... and the logical horizon consists only of small horizons (subspecies), but not of points that have no domain (individuals) (KrV, A 658/B 686).⁷

In other words, each given concept has a logical horizon that is potent to emanate further, endless discovery in spades (by altering or adding or re-

⁷ Here Kant uses the German 'Menge' that is normally translated as a large quantity.

moving a predicate or a mark); yet each, more refined logical horizon is still a domain that contains marks that unite a group of objects subsumed under the higher concept. By contrast, intuitions apprehend points (marks) of the individual object – one from the infinity – that has no domain; no logical horizon can be narrow enough to detect the individual object's unique marks. To anticipate: Kant here addresses the logical horizon of concepts, the domain he is at pains to eschew in the third *Critique*.

We could reiterate our analysis of intuitions and concepts so far by noting that: sensibility, affected by an object, gives rise to intuitions that are immediately related to one singular object, the unique marks of which thereby are apprehended by reproductive imagination, but in an unintelligible fashion, for we need the rules of the understanding, concepts, which are doomed to be universally applicable, to distinguish between this object and others, as Kant would say, 'through a detour' necessarily performed by the determining judgment (KrV, A 19/B 33). This is precisely what Kant has been reviled for: there is seemingly no room for a multiplicity of things because of the blindness of intuitions, on one hand, and the logical horizon of concepts, on the other, that, seeking to illuminate, i.e. unite a manifold of intuition, inescapably, impose bounds on it and thus on our perceptual experience.

This is indeed the picture we discover in the first *Critique*. Yet, in the third *Critique*, to cater for the aesthetic reflecting judgment, Kant in effect suspends one mode of cognition, namely comprehension – so concepts, and objectivity that accompanies them, are left out from the perceiver's engagement with the world of objects. Famously this enables the productive imagination to operate in free conformity with the faculty of understanding in general and, as a consequence, aesthetic judgments are founded not on concepts, as in the case with determining judgments, but on the subjective feeling of pleasure, the bewildering origin of which is adduced in the *Key* (§ 9) that has received a lot of attention in the literature. In my intended sense, the transition from the determining to the reflecting judgment performed by Kant in the third *Critique* (and ignored by Kant's critics), can bring us closer to the Kantian multiplicity, insofar as we take a further detour via aesthetic ideas. This is an audacious notion we shall flirt with in due course.

4. Aesthetic Ideas: A New Reading

Up to this point, we have suspended any invocation of aesthetic ideas, several insights about which Kant scatters around the last chapters of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*; it is now pertinent to take a look at this notion. An aesthetic idea is defined by Kant as ‘representation of the imagination that occasions much thinking though without it being possible for any determinate thought, i.e. concept, to be adequate to it ...’ (KuD, § 49, 5: 314). Upon closer inspection, an aesthetic idea is akin to an empirical intuition in that it is the imagination’s representation; but, while empirical intuitions, as the products of reproductive imagination, are contingent on the understanding to become intelligible, aesthetic ideas, as the creatures of productive imagination, render any conceptual attempt, that is, any act of comprehension, frustrated; ‘... the understanding ...’ Kant remarks ‘never attains to the complete inner intuition’ of productive imagination, i.e. an aesthetic idea (KdU, § 57, 5: 344) Therefore, it is not too outlandish to suppose there might be a connection between empirical intuitions and aesthetic ideas, blocked by the understanding’s concepts that are both inadequate to fully determine an object of empirical intuition and cocoon an aesthetic idea. I would like to call your attention to the striking fact that Kant never posits that no empirical intuition is adequate to aesthetic ideas; indeed, he contrasts ideas of reason with aesthetic ideas, calling them pendants, pointing out that only ideas of reason have no corresponding empirical intuitions (KuD, § 49, 5: 314; § 58, 5: 351).⁸ Aesthetic ideas, to be sure, are potent to express completeness that any object of experience fails to abide by – yet Kant never champions a view that no objects of experience can fall under aesthetic ideas. Thus, we shall pro-

⁸ As pointed out by Sassen ‘the peculiar conjunction of aesthetic and idea suggests that aesthetic ideas provide the intuitive counterpart and content of intellectual ideas. By calling such ideas “aesthetic,” Kant makes it quite clear that whatever else they are, they constitute an *intuited* manifold’ (Sassen 2003, p.173). This reading thus suggests a link between a manifold of intuition and an aesthetic idea, however, as other commentators, Sassen fails to pursue the implications of this link, conventionally noting that the function of aesthetic ideas is ‘to make supersensible ideas sensible, and ... [to] provide intuitive material for abstract ideas that similarly cannot be grasped by any one concept’. In fact, Sassen remarks that both rational and aesthetic ideas ‘fall outside the realm of ordinary experience’ (p.174).

visionally assume that aesthetic ideas can have adequate (which is not say perfectly matching) intuitions falling under them.⁹ Unbeknownst to me, this link, except for an acute analysis in a recent article¹⁰, is ignored in the literature on the topic, which only focuses on the relation between aesthetic ideas and the ideas of reason, perhaps enticed by Kant's further emphasis on aesthetic ideas' capacity to 'to approximate a presentation of concepts of reason' (KuD, § 49, 5: 314).¹¹ If I am right, however, aesthetic ideas, when linked with the objects of experience, by transgressing the bounds of concepts, can unveil a niche for the Kantian multiplicity.

How aesthetic ideas are linked with concepts? We know that an empirical concept is constituted of logical attributes or predicates that mark features of a corresponding object of perception, an act performed by the determining judgment. Let me now remark that for Kant aesthetic ideas likewise 'belong to the concept of the object', a salient characteristic – and I would like to stress this – that brings us back to the intuition of the object (KuD, § 49, 5: 314-15).¹² Yet, while a concept contains logical attributes,

⁹ We see a confirmation of this point in Kant's analysis of normal aesthetic ideas found in the section of the third *Critique* entitled *On the Ideal of Beauty* that precedes a thorough account of aesthetic ideas in his treatment of genius (KuD, § 49, 5: 314ff.). We can learn from this passage that productive imagination requires specific objects of experience to yield an aesthetic idea that serves to represent 'the universal standard for the aesthetic judging of every' specific organic being 'belonging to a particular species of an animal'. Crucially, a creation of an aesthetic idea necessarily involves 'a model image', a remark, which, at least on the face of it, alludes to the art of schematism. Kant elaborates on this procedure as follows: drawing from experiential cognition, productive imagination, by superimposing homogeneous instances (in the form of images), i.e. 'by means of a dynamic effect, which arises from the repeated apprehension of such figures on the organ of inner sense' arrives 'at a mean that can serve them all as a common measure', i.e. 'correctness in the presentation of the species', that no individual can embody. To put it slightly differently, an aesthetic idea expresses a totality never exhibited by an object of experience (KuD, § 49, 5: 314).

¹⁰ See Samantha Matherne (2013). She contrasts purely rational aesthetic ideas, e.g. kingdom of the blessed with the 'experience category', e.g. death, love, she defends in the article. She notes that a discussion of a similar position is found in Rudolf Lütke (1984) and Anthony Savile (1987, pp. 169-71).

¹¹ Among others, Guyer, for example, argues that they can present only moral concepts (1997, p.359ff.). Allison (2001), Chignell (2007) and Rogerson (2008), however, argue that aesthetic ideas can present reason's concepts not limited to the moral arena.

¹² Another compelling textual proof of a link between aesthetic ideas and empirical

a creation of an aesthetic idea involves the act of combining of aesthetic attributes, 'which do not constitute the presentation of a given concept itself, but, as supplementary representations of the imagination, express only the implications connected with it and its affinity with others'; this creative process gives the productive imagination a 'cause to spread itself over a multitude of related representations' (KuD, § 49, 5: 315). In the course of combining aesthetic attributes, the imagination, as it were, traverses the aesthetic horizon of a given concept, 'an immeasurable field of related representations' that allows for 'the addition to a concept of much that is unnameable' (KuD, § 49, 5: 316). Correspondingly, the injection of aesthetic attributes enlarges 'the concept in an unbounded way' (KuD, § 49, 5: 315). Otherwise expressed, this is an act of unique, subjective creation that over and above animates the cognitive faculties in play and stimulates reason, since its goal, i.e. completeness, is emulated (KuD, § 49, 5: 314).¹³ On my interpretation then, an aesthetic idea belongs to the corresponding concept (that always fails to fully determine a manifold of intuition) in virtue expressing aesthetic attributes buried in the fabric of that concept. Equally important, this expression exceeds the logical capacity of a given concept, and, in the gap between the logical horizon and aesthetic horizon of the concept, we have found, using Kant's term, the 'unnameable'.

intuition is found at (KdU, § 49, 5: 317) 'genius ... presupposes a determinate concept of the product, as an end, hence understanding, but also a representation (even if indeterminate) of the material, i.e., of the intuition, for the presentation of this concept, hence a relation of the imagination to the understanding'. Matherne, in the above article, notes that the concept an aesthetic idea aims to present could be construed as an intention – 'an end', the production of an aesthetic idea is guided by. For Matherne, the examples of the concepts aesthetic ideas can present are 'modern love' or 'joy' (2013, pp. 24f.). I can only briefly note our views depart here: my construal of this end is more akin to the impulse toward relentless refinement of concepts, i.e. although the production is guided by a determinate concept and is drawn to it as the habitual mode of cognition, the free play occurring during the creation exposes the concept's limitations and, by analogy with judgements of taste, extends itself. Over and above, Matherne's article deals with the objects in arts, while I am concerned with the objects of science.

¹³ I cannot pursue this point here, but I would like to briefly note that the author's skill and talent, i.e. the understanding's 'archive' and the productive imagination's cultivated power, are manifest in the process of creation of aesthetic ideas. I believe this reading gives Kant's exclusive account of genius a more inclusive spin .

Next, Kant insists that the same cognitive powers are at play in both determining and aesthetic judgments: imagination and understanding. In their objective relation, 'the imagination is under the constraint of the understanding and is subject to the limitation of being adequate to its concept' (KuD, § 49, 5: 317). An aesthetic relation that takes place in the course of creation of an aesthetic idea, on the other hand, entails a spontaneous use of the imagination, since, as Kant notes, it is 'free to provide, *beyond that concord with the concept*, unsought extensive undeveloped material for the understanding, of which the latter took no regard in its concept' (KuD, § 49, 5: 317), i.e. the material that evades logical comprehension.¹⁴ On closer inspection, this implies that by uprooting aesthetic attributes of an object, buried in the concept, and uniting them in an aesthetic idea, the poet (or perhaps a poet-scientist) entertains the marks of the object that the faculty of the understanding cannot determine. If this is so, then we must inquire into an aesthetic idea's potency to affect cognition, and, if there is any, what are its characteristics? To assist us, Kant makes a fleeting and puzzling observation: the understanding employs aesthetic material 'not so much objectively, for cognition, as subjectively, for the animation of the cognitive powers, and thus also indirectly to cognitions' (KuD, § 49, 5: 317).¹⁵

¹⁴ My italics.

¹⁵ The following accounts have addressed this possibility. Lüthe argues that aesthetic ideas can help us expand the sensible associations we make with concepts related to the objects of experience (1984, pp.72–4). Savile, who makes a suggestive, but not fully developed claim that many aesthetic ideas provide us 'with a deeper and more extensive comprehension (intellectual and surely affective too) of the (rational) ideas which [the artist] takes as his theme' (1987, p. 171). And the most developed version is found in Matherne's paper (2013): 'Kant thinks that this free exercise [of the productive imagination yielding aesthetic ideas] results in an enlarged, more developed imagination, which can subsequently be useful in cognition. To be sure, this does not mean that the aesthetic use of the imagination can ground any particular theoretical cognition; rather, it means that if we develop our imaginative capacities in aesthetic experience, then they will become more effective in their cognitive use ...Thanks to the expansion of my imagination, I am perhaps able to apprehend more or draw finer distinctions in a single manifold, make more associations, form new or more thorough images, or develop new schemata for new concepts: all of which enhances my theoretical cognition of the world. It is here that we find the cognitive benefit of an enlarged imagination' (pp.35f.). This quote thus advocates that the production of aesthetic ideas develops productive imagination, its ca-

However, despite this promising appeal, Kant adds that an aesthetic idea as the representation related to the corresponding object 'can nevertheless never become a cognition of that object ... because it is an intuition (of the imagination) for which a concept can never be found adequate' (KuD, § 57, 5: 342). My message is that if we understand what Kant implies by indicating that aesthetic ideas are indirectly linked to cognitions and that their application is 'not so much' objective, but rather subjective, we will decode an aesthetic idea's capacity to aid the elucidation of the corresponding object. To put all these loose pieces together, we shall look at the free play of the faculties taking place in the course of the creation of an aesthetic idea.

5. The Imagination's Swing

We are now in a position to roughly delineate an arena within which the creation of aesthetic ideas takes place. Here is a sketch of the general topography: empirical intuitions are apprehended by reproductive imagination and united by the understanding's concepts; then, the effect of the concept is suspended, while the productive imagination generates an aesthetic idea that animates the mind and stimulates reason, by simultaneously maintaining the understanding's lawfulness.¹⁶

What I shall elucidate in this section is a process of the imagination's oscillating between the lawfulness of the understanding and the bounds of reason. The discerning Kantian reader will take notice of some striking parallels between this act of creation and the notorious free play of the

capacity to indirectly amplify cognition in general. Matherne, however, has not considered the implications of this for thinking in science, and this is precisely my concern here. As a consequence of this divide, Matherne argues that aesthetic ideas cannot 'ground any particular theoretical judgement' (p.37).

¹⁶ See (KdU, § 49, 5: 315): 'the imagination ... sets the faculty of intellectual ideas (reason) in motion, that is, at the instigation of a representation it gives more to think about than can be grasped [by understanding] and made distinct in it (although it does, to be sure, belong to the concept of the object)'. It follows that productive imagination performs a swing between the understanding (in free conformity to a corresponding concept) and the bounds of reason. We remember that Kant locates the faculty of judgement between understanding and reason (KdU, Published Introduction, ix: 5: 198).

mental powers most elaborately stipulated by Kant in the *Key to the Critique of Taste*, to which multiple texts have been devoted.¹⁷ A traditional reading (henceforth: a common free play) looks at the consciousness of the free play of the faculties, imagination and understanding, in relation to an object and the feeling of pleasure originating within this process. The identification of these parallels would make a grandiose task, so I shall reserve this profitable enterprise for another occasion and, for brevity, outline what Kant has to say about the free play in creation of an aesthetic

¹⁷ A key knot is a relationship between the harmony and pleasure in a judgement of taste, i.e. whether it is causal or intentional. Paul Guyer singlehandedly defends the causal view in the seminal *Kant and Claims of Taste* and elsewhere (Guyer 1997, pp. 133-141). In a nutshell, he argues that there are two judgements taking place: first is a reflection upon an object which arouses a free play that entails a feeling of pleasure; second, a consciousness of the feeling of pleasure resulting from the free play, which allows for attribution of this state to all perceivers. The influence of this reading is manifest in a number of other readings of the *Key* that critique Guyer's account. First, Burgess (1989) argues that Guyer's error consists in treating both acts of reflection as proceeding successfully rather than simultaneously, which is a view defended in this article. Then, Allison argues that the causal view is too narrow and that the faculty of feeling is indeed active, i.e. 'the feeling of pleasure is not simply the effect of such a harmony (though it is that); it is also the very means through which one becomes aware of this harmony' (Allison 2001, p. 54). For Allison, Guyer's 'causal' reading, by treating the feeling as a 'mere receptivity', implies that one needs to infer from the feeling of pleasure – it is the evidence of – the harmony of the faculties, and, by attributing to the constituents of judgements of taste a causal relationship, Guyer contradicts the very aesthetic nature of the said judgements (pp. 69-70). Futher, Hannah Ginsborg suggests the 'self-inferential' reading of the act of reflective judgement in the free play in (Ginsborg, 1991 and 2003). The first paper offers a 'phenomenological reading' that advocates for an intentional reading of pleasure: "The pleasure, as Kant puts it, is 'consequent' on the universal validity of my mental state [which is a feeling of pleasure] in the sense that it is the consciousness or awareness of my mental state as universally valid ... when I make a judgement, I am in effect ... claiming universal validity for a feeling of pleasure ... [which is felt] in virtue of the very act of judgement through which it is taken to be universally valid' (Ginsborg 1991, p.74). The second paper is preoccupied with unmasking the tensions in Allison's account; Ginsborg argues that, while Allison is correct to attribute intentionality to pleasure, he is wrong to separate the feeling and the act of judgement (Ginsborg 2003, p. 169ff). Lastly, in a moderately recent and very elaborate paper, Linda Palmer has suggested another reading of the *Key*. She, glossing over the readings above and Kant's multiple passages addressing the salient ideas in question, focuses on the comparison between the apprehended form of an object and 'the entire representational power' to account for universality of judgements of taste (Palmer 2008, esp. pp. 27-30).

idea (henceforth: an idiosyncratic free play).

Since, as we remember, Kant argues that an aesthetic idea belongs to the corresponding concept by simultaneously being beyond the concord with it, it can be deduced that in this act the understanding exercises lawfulness analogous to that in pure judgements of taste in the original sense; otherwise put, the process of creation of the beautiful presentation of a concept is referred to cognition in general.¹⁸ ¹⁹ Now, I have identified two distinct acts in the idiosyncratic free play. The first act (which is not yet harmonious) between the understanding and the productive imagination commences with the latter's apprehension of a 'multitude of related representations' drawn from the affinities between the 'donor' concept and others. In the process of creation of an aesthetic idea, 'much that is unnameable' (henceforth: an unnameable property), in virtue of combining aesthetic attributes, is added to the concept of the understanding which is now, as we remember, indeterminate (KdU, § 49, 5: 316). This opens up for the mind 'an immeasurable field of related representations', and, through the feeling of pleasure based on the mind's awareness of the imagination's subjective purposiveness to intuit the unnameable (not yet expressed), the mind is animated, stimulating reason, as its goal has been emulated (KdU, § 49, 5: 315-16). Correspondingly, imagination by providing 'unsought extensive undeveloped material for the understanding' strengthens the latter as it is at pains to make sense of the activity (KdU § 49, 5: 316-17).²⁰ The second act proceeds as follows. The first act has left us with profound material that now must be united into an idea by 'apprehending the rapidly passing play of the imagination' so as to express 'what is unnameable in

¹⁸ Several commentators, e.g. Debord (2012) and Sassen (2003), have observed that, although reflective judgement proceeds without direct reference to a concept on which an aesthetic idea is based, while productive imagination orders representations, reflective judgement operates according to a normative rule, i.e. 'there ought to exist some concept under which the manifold can be comprehended' (Debord 2012, p.181). And it is the task of taste to allow for this 'internal coherence' (Sassen 2003, p.174).

¹⁹ This is buttressed by Kant when he notes at (KdU, § 49, 5: 313) that, in creation of aesthetic ideas, the powers are set 'into motion, i.e. into a play that is self-maintaining and even strengthens the powers to that end'. This account of the free play of the faculties runs parallel with a number of expositions of the common free play; for example (KdU, § 12, 5: 222).

²⁰ I have drawn inspiration on this aspect from Burgess (1989).

the mental state ... and to make it universally communicable' (KdU, § 49, 5: 317). Insofar as the agent can express the unnameable property in an aesthetic idea, 'the subjective disposition of the mind that is thereby produced, as an accompaniment of a concept, can be communicated to others' (KdU, § 49, 5: 317). As far as I can determine, by analogy with the readings of the common free play championing the intentionality of pleasure, what Kant means by 'the subjective disposition of the mind' here is the awareness of the pleasure that occasions a harmonious interplay between the mental powers; yet in the present case, the pleasure is occasioned by the expression of the aesthetic idea, a *beautiful* presentation of the concept.²¹ And this aesthetic idea, by prompting the harmony between the faculties, can likewise be universally approved.²²

What I would like emphasise here is that the first act involves both the original feeling of pleasure (henceforth: the first-order feeling) and the subsequent animation of the mind, while the second act another feeling of pleasure (henceforth: the second-order feeling), which stirs up the harmonious interplay of the faculties. In my eyes, the former can only be experienced by the author, while the latter both by the author and those who likewise employ this aesthetic idea. Accordingly, only the original author can experience the expression of the unnameable property in full, i.e. in both acts.^{23 24} My contention is that both acts constitute a judgement

²¹ This is confirmed by Rogerson (2008, p.23), who argues that expression of aesthetic ideas is pivotal for both free harmony and the very possibility of beauty.

²² To my judgement Kant, unlike in the *Key*, here, at (KdU, § 49, 5: 317) is more unequivocal about the origin of universal approval: it is the harmonious interplay of the faculties that allows for it to be universally communicated. The question (I shall leave unsettled), of course, persists: the status of pleasure in respect to the harmony and universal validity.

²³ This is indirectly supported by Kant when he outlines the creation of normal aesthetic ideas; he says that 'the greatest purposiveness in the construction of the figure ... lies merely in the idea of the one who does the judging' (KdU, § 17, 5: 233).

²⁴ Kant defines the feeling pleasure in many of his works (KdU, § 10, 5: 220; *Anthropology*, § 60, 7: 231), and, in general, it can be defined as the mind's awareness of a particular representation's causality to maintain itself in the given mental state. Pleasure, for Kant, preserves itself in the mental state for the amplification of the mental powers. This account can be applied to both feelings I have detected above. Nevertheless, as far as I have been able to determine, the literature on aesthetic ideas has not been able to demarcate between the two orders of feelings defended above. Only the second-order feeling has been taken notice of. This oversight is exemplified by Zuidervaart's obser-

of taste.²⁵

6. A Concluding Instance of Multiplicity

An example of the above reflections, that is, an instance of captured multiplicity would depend on one's goal. The trajectories are countless. Since I am concerned with the objects of nature in this paper, here is a merely satisfactory example (which, nevertheless, illustrates my message).

There have been several far-reaching developments in philosophy of science and biology that, in the light of the recent discoveries of the unobservable, causal powers (henceforth: the property of permeability) operating in nature, have disclosed that at bottom nature is very complex, even vague, since its joints are entangled in myriad ways. Boyd observes that natural objects, on account of constant change, are endowed with

vation that 'Through an inner sense the mind intuits its own state as this is affected by the mind's own operations. Inner sense is the same as "the faculty of feeling," the capacity for sensory but non-cognitive self-awareness of mental states. Felt self-awareness would seem to explain both the internal character and the conceptual indeterminacy of aesthetic ideas. As internal intuitions they are feelings of self-awareness ... Unlike any other representation generated by the human mind, an aesthetic idea has bound up with it a free but natural feeling of an inconceivable but communicable state of mental harmony' (2003, p. 203). This lucid and helpful exposition evidently conflates both feelings. According to my reading, the first-order feeling is aroused by the mind's awareness of the subjective purposiveness of imagination to intuit the unnameable. Whereas, the second-order feeling, which sets our mental powers in a harmonious interplay, is aroused by a generated aesthetic idea. Evidently, this demarcation is in need of further clarification I cannot pursue in this paper.

²⁵ I am aware that the judgement in question can turn out to be an impure judgement of taste or a judgement of adherent beauty, since the construction of an aesthetic idea presupposes an end. I can only remark here that this possibility will be interrogated in the light of the two feelings defended here. Intriguingly, it might turn out that the first-order feeling will divulge a pure judgement of taste, since the agent abstracts herself from the concept (§ 16, 5: 229-31), while the second as an impure, since she looks back 'to the end of the object'. Equally, I can impute, albeit provisionally two characteristics to the first-order feeling: a) it is founded on the recognition of subjective purposiveness of productive imagination; b) it cannot be universally communicated. The second-order feeling is akin to the feeling we witness in the common free play yet with one significant distinction: it is aroused by the beautiful presentation of a concept, an aesthetic idea. I will elaborate on this peculiar relationship in another paper.

'irremediable indeterminacy' (1993, pp.484, 510). That is, a living nature is a kingdom of natural kinds, i.e., genes, bacteria, viruses, and, as a main vehicle of the preceding, organisms, that causally interact with smaller and larger systems and that have been diagnosed with the multiple, fluid processes, e.g. niche construction, that suffuse them. This view has recently been advocated by the champion of a pluralist approach to science, John Dupré, who professes that multi-dimensional natural kinds, being interlocked with smaller and larger systems, pose a conceptual problem of 'inconceivable complexity' (2006, p.46). Therefore a conceptual abstraction always falls short of the specificity required for their determination, as we know from the characteristics Kant assigns to conceptions.

Kant's reflections on relentless refinement of concepts stem from his scientific concerns, since concepts are powerful and enduring inasmuch as they are true, that is, as remarked by Rothbard, insofar as they are effective in problem solving (1984, p.610). Aesthetic ideas, on this particular reading, are not designed to illuminate epistemological errors, but to capture the unnameable property (that of permeability) that evades conceptual aesthetics. An accurate, rather than true, aesthetic idea, by determining the unnameable property, shall instantiate Kant's multiplicity.

The following excerpt from Tomas Tranströmer's poem *Prelude* (2006, p. 3) obscurely illustrates what I have proposed so far:

Waking up is a parachute jump from dreams.
 Free of the suffocating turbulence the traveler
 sinks toward the green zone of morning.
 Things flare up. From the viewpoint of the quivering lark
 He is aware of the huge root-systems of the trees,
 their swaying underground lamps. But above ground
 there is greenery – a tropical flood of it – with
 lifted arms, listening to the beat of an invisible pump. And he
 sinks towards summer, is lowered in its dazzling crater, down
 through shafts of green damp ages
 trembling under the sun's turbine ...

However presumptuous this sounds: had Tranströmer, back in 1954, had my agenda, while yielding this piece, perhaps we would witness a more accurate account of multiplicity. At any rate, we skip the first act and the first-order feeling (and thus leave an investigation of them for another occasion), since we can only 're-apply' the piece. As far as the second act is concerned, although there is much to be said about the insights found below, the logical determination of the perceived tree(s) is transformed in virtue of infusing into a number of interconnected, visible and invisible parts causally connected with it – 'the huge root-systems', 'greenery', the limbs, the sun – some aesthetic attributes resulting in 'swaying underground lamps' of 'the huge root systems', 'a tropical flood' of 'greenery', 'the sun's turbine'. The logically determined manifold of intuition, i.e. the determinate parts of the whole, have thereby become 'the multiplicity of indeterminate parts' of the indeterminate concept (of the tree). Insofar as this has resulted in the communication of the unnameable property in question, i.e. that of permeability, the aesthetic idea, a beautiful presentation of the concept, arouses a feeling of pleasure, the awareness of which prompts the harmonious interplay between the mental powers – and this seals its universal approval. For brevity, what needs to be emphasised is that the feeling of pleasure divulges a mark (or a property) that cannot be otherwise captured, neither by empirical intuitions nor by concepts. It follows that, by analogy with the two types of cognitions specified above, aesthetic ideas are indeed potent to relate to objects in virtue of intuiting a mark by means of productive imagination's 'complete inner intuitions' originating in the inner sense.²⁶ And this indeed, following a specification of Vielheit at (KrV, B 114-115), peculiarly qualifies as a determination of a mark that aids to the elucidation of the object in question; the more accurate is an aesthetic idea, the more accurately is determined a multiplicity in question. We can now understand why Kant is reluctant to attribute

²⁶ I believe my claim indirectly finds support in Smit's interpretation of empirical intuitions and concepts: for him, an intuition of an object stands for the reproductive imagination's detection of intuitive (i.e. singular and direct) marks belonging to the said object of perception, while a corresponding concept contains discursive (i.e. general and indirect) marks belonging to this and other homogeneous objects (2000, p. 259). Insofar as an aesthetic idea is capable of intuiting an unnameable mark, it can be considered as a counterpart of these two cognitions, albeit a peculiar one.

to aesthetic ideas a cognitive function: a mark is captured in virtue of a mental feeling as opposed to an empirical intuition or a concept.

All the above taken together can be concisely summed up as follows: in virtue of an aesthetic idea, the object is apprehended by productive imagination, breaking away from the laws of understanding, not as a manifold, but as a multiplicity. Correspondingly, in the first place, I would like to suggest that aesthetic ideas are evidently indirect as far as their elusive cognitive impact is concerned; and, in the second place, I would like to suggest *merely as a problem* that aesthetic ideas can be both singular and general: to be sure, the author, insofar as she is directly affected by an object, yielding an aesthetic idea, by experiencing the first-order feeling in capturing a unique mark, intuits the object's singularity (of a peculiar nature), while the readers, experiencing the second-order feeling, have only a general access to the object *qua* multiplicity.

As presented in this paper, my interrogation of the relevant parts of the two *Critiques* has divulged two kinds of the thoroughly disguised mental feelings that, I submit, counterbalance Bergson's remark that Kant undermines the sensible and that, for him, there is only one – logical – experience. Equally, one can go far as to suggest that this is, inverting Deleuze's criticism, Kant's pioneering way of broadening out the human condition by 'going beyond experience', not toward concepts, but 'beyond the concord with the concept' – toward aesthetic ideas (KuD, § 49, 5: 317). Indeed, Kant almost obviates our discussion by noting that aesthetic ideas 'strive toward something lying beyond the bounds of experience' (KuD, § 49, 5: 314), that is to say, conceptual experience professed in the first *Critique*. To conclude, inasmuch as one gives credence to the vast terrain of the defended here aesthetic experience, she would be able to concede that perhaps Kant has been wrongfully condemned.

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