

THREE PROBLEMS IN KANT'S AESTHETICS

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What does the faculty of Understanding do during the execution of a judgement of taste? How are singular judgements of beauty related to general judgements of beauty? For what reason is beauty the symbol of morality? The first question has a tentative answer, although one not obviously congenial to Kant. The second two questions have no compelling answers.

THE FIRST PROBLEM

If we wish to decide whether something is beautiful or not, we do not use understanding to refer the presentation to the object so as to give rise to cognition; rather, we use imagination (perhaps in connection with understanding) to refer the presentation to the subject and his feeling of pleasure or displeasure. (§1)¹

ACCORDING TO Kant, both cognitive faculties—the Understanding and the Imagination—are at work in the execution of a judgement of taste.²

The question is, What does the Understanding do?

Our most substantial description of the making of a judgement is the one of determinate judgements, those cognitive judgements that are expressly not judgements of beauty. What changes when the judgement is not 'logical' but 'aesthetical'?

Kant believes a great deal must be explained and assumed in an adequate description of the act of determinate judgement. But for our purposes it may do to use this brief, crude synopsis:

The object to be judged, as it were a proto-object, so far identified only in space and time, is lodged in the Imagination. This object-to-be has various aspects or parts. It is

¹ References are by section numbers in the *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987).

² Even though it is no longer so common to do so in translations of Kant, I will capitalize the words 'Imagination' and 'Understanding' to make clear that I am referring specifically to what Kant calls these 'faculties'.

the task of the Imagination to 'mould' the object, to arrange and align its constituents. This can be done in various ways. Suggested ways of doing it come from the Understanding. These suggestions are concepts. The Understanding either itself houses or otherwise has access to an inventory of concepts. A concept is a device for taking the measure of the contents of the Imagination. (I think Kant often thinks of a concept as a rule, but sometimes he may think of it as a pattern or a mould, or even a picture. This is irrelevant here.)

The Understanding supplies various concepts, the Imagination tries arranging its contents to suit each concept, and when a fit occurs, the two faculties are 'in agreement', and thus we have a determinate judgement—for instance, 'This rose is red'.

In an aesthetical judgement of taste, however, culminating in an experience³ expressed by 'This rose is beautiful', the Imagination is not being instructed by the Understanding, its conformity to the Understanding is 'free', and indeed no predicate concept is applied to the object (the rose).

But the Understanding *is* the faculty of concepts, according to Kant, and we know little of its relevant activities other than the one of regulating the behaviour of the Imagination. If it is not doing that, what is it doing?

One might say diagnostically that Kant insists upon the participation of the Understanding because he is convinced that the pure experience of beauty has a rational component.⁴ That still leaves the question of how this rationality is effected—What does the Understanding do?

If the Understanding is not proffering concepts, then what is it doing? If it is putting forth concepts, why do they not subdue the object and therein direct the Imagination, making the judgement determinate? It cannot be that the Understanding is devoid of concepts that can do this. After all, the object *is* a rose, a flower, red, possessed of petals, etc. The Understanding has many concepts it might accurately apply to the contents of the Imagination. Does it simply refuse to apply any of them, restraining itself? That sounds ridiculous to me, but even if it were the truth, it would be a description of what the Understanding is *not* doing, not of what it *is* doing relative to the object engaged in Imagination.

I have one thought about how to understand the activity of the Understanding

³ I will use the word 'experience' both in the contemporary, informal sense and, on a very few occasions, in Kant's special sense of the word in which it applies specifically to the experience of *objects* in space and time. The context will make clear what sense is intended.

⁴ Although it adds nothing to the *argument*, I note that, as I see it, Kant has accepted, essentially, a Humean thesis to the effect that *feelings* must be at the basis of judgements both in ethics and in aesthetics, and then, to avoid what he thinks must be a lapse into an irremediable subjectivism and relativism, he insists that the relevant feelings are somehow 'rational'. Hence the rational feeling of 'respect' [*Achtung*] in the moral philosophy, and the peculiarly rational component in the feeling underlying judgements of taste.

in a judgement of taste, but little confidence that Kant would care for the consequences of the thought.⁵

Suppose that in making a judgement of taste the Understanding accepts the task not of taking the measure of an object by subordinating it to a concept, but of doing full justice to the object in terms of all there is to it, in terms of all the object's aspects. True, the rose is red. But it is not *only* red. It has petals. But neither is that the *whole* truth about the rose. The Understanding can indeed succeed in applying the concepts *red* and *flower* and *possessed of petals* to the object, and many other concepts as well, but in no case does it cease its work with the application of a concept because in every case something of the object has been neglected, and the task of this special kind of reflective judgement—a judgement of taste—is to neglect nothing. The object is to be given full credit: every bit, part, and aspect of it is to be attended to. And that is why the Understanding does not exact compliance from the Imagination. The Imagination never 'submits', because it always has more to offer. This is also why the Understanding does not come to a halt in its legislative efforts. It could if, say, the object were *nothing but* red, or a flower. But no object is like that. Every genuine object of experience supports indefinitely many predicate concepts, an endless list of them.

Another way of putting this is to say that in an experience of beauty, one is attending to the absolute and complete particularity of the beautiful object. Beautiful things, of nature and of art, are thus unique. This consequence of my thought should be congenial to Kant, for it affords a further ground for his insistence that there is no determinate concept of beauty, nor can the fact that an object is beautiful be deduced from any concepts that do apply to the object. This is the point that it is not on account of anything they have *in common* that beautiful objects are beautiful.

What may not be agreeable to Kant is the ease with which this thought elides into various theses of Idealist aesthetics, those having to do with the uniqueness and incomparability of works of art.

One annoying question remains. We now have a picture of the Understanding at work serially and endlessly. The Understanding proffers a concept. The Imagination is indeed able to order its contents in conformity with that concept. But because that concept does not exhaust the object, the Understanding tries another one. This one, too, solicits compliance from the Imagination, but again the object has more to be noticed. And so on. How, then, does this process ever cohere, ever express itself in the judgement that the rose is beautiful?

Perhaps the answer is simply this. The judge's sense is that he has attended to the object in all its multifariousness, but he has not done this in the use of any one concept, and the overall experience is of continuous inspection, always

⁵ The thought is not exactly *mine*; I would never have developed it were it not for a suggestion made to me casually many years ago by Arthur Melnick, a profound and imaginative reader of Kant.

permitting the object to display all of itself. I think of this as a kind of 'vibrating' perception, and perhaps it is what Kant has in mind when he says that in a judgement of taste the cognitive faculties are 'quicken'd'.⁶

It will occur to an analytic philosopher that this way of reading Kant seems inevitably to commit him to the claim that every genuine object of experience can support a judgement that the object is beautiful. Readers of the Kant literature know that in many ways of reading Kant, this commitment is unavoidable.⁷ I will settle for that, if not as the truth, as a reading of Kant.

THE SECOND PROBLEM

For example, I may look at a rose and make a judgement of taste declaring it to be beautiful. But if I compare many singular roses and so arrive at the judgement, Roses in general are beautiful, then my judgement is no longer merely aesthetic, but is a logical judgement based on an aesthetic one. (§8)

According to Kant,

(A) This rose is beautiful

is a singular, aesthetical judgement,

(L) Roses in general are beautiful

is a general, logical judgement, and (L) results from generalizing over a number of judgements of type (A), each about a different rose.

⁶ See §21.

⁷ For instance, see Ralf Meerbote's very useful essay, 'Reflection on Beauty', in Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer (eds), *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), and especially useful—to my mind definitive—is Miles Rind's 'Can Kant's Deduction of Taste Be Saved?', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* (forthcoming). Although it has never been represented directly to me, I have heard of a view according to which Kant cannot have held or been committed to the proposition that all objects are beautiful. The reason, seemingly, is that this is an absurd idea, and Kant could have not have subscribed to it, even by implication. This view seems to me deeply mistaken. In the first place, Kant quite obviously is committed to any number of mistaken propositions. But also, and much more important, is the fact that the idea is not at all absurd. It is imperative to remember what, after all, Kant thinks it *means* for something to be beautiful. It is just that the beautiful object is responsible for a certain way in which pleasure arises in a spectator contemplating it. This is perhaps related to later senses of the word 'beautiful', some of which are relatively narrow, giving the possibility that something might well be pleasing without being beautiful, but Kant's sense of the word is far from congruent with any of those senses. Kant's sense of the word may lead to nothing more severe than the idea that any genuine *object*, any object capable of being made sense of, can be the occasion for the peculiarly uncluttered pleasure that Kant associates with judgements of beauty. This may very well be true—rather like the proposition that everything made by God is beautiful. But even if it is not true, surely it is plausible, and certainly it is not absurd.

This is impossible. Kant's slip is obvious as soon as we compare the judgements of beauty with these:

(A[★]) This rose has petals.

(L[★]) Roses in general have petals.

Given a few judgements of type (A[★]), each about a different rose, we may move to (L[★]). The generalization may be thought of diagrammatically:

- I. R₁ is P. [Rose #₁ has petals], R₂ is P, . . . , R_n is P.
Therefore, Rs in general are P.

Presumably the judgements about beauty are similar. Thus

- II. R₁ is B. [Rose #₁ is beautiful], R₂ is B, . . . , R_n is B.
Therefore, Rs in general are B.

Werner Pluhar, in a note in his excellent translation of the *Critique of Judgement*, represents Kant as thinking that generalization II is like generalization I, and I believe Pluhar is correct, that Kant does seem to regard the generalizations in this way. But in an appended note Pluhar inadvertently shows that this will not do. He explains,

In the *Logic*, Kant spells out the (familiar) distinctions between universal, particular, and singular judgements in terms of inclusion and exclusion, total or partial, of the spheres of subject and predicate concepts, and also distinguishes universal from general propositions . . . ⁸

But this explanation cannot avail, precisely because in the premises of generalization II there are no predicate concepts.⁹

Generalization I is acceptable because 'P' stands for the same thing in each instance. It must stand for the same term. In Kant's jargon, it stands for the same concept.

But in generalization II, 'B' is equivocal. In the premises, each of them a genuine judgement of taste, it is Kant's cardinal doctrine that 'B' stands for no determinate concept whatever. But in the generalized conclusion, 'B' must stand for a determinate concept because Kant says that this conclusion is a logical, cognitive judgement. Kant says nothing about what this concept is, but there must be

⁸ Note 27 on p. 59 of his translation.

⁹ Each premiss is a 'synthetic' judgement, presumably, because it is vacuously true that its predicate concept is not contained in its subject concept, because it has no determinate predicate concept.

one, and, further, because this is a synthetic judgement, as Pluhar notes, whatever the concept is, there is one, and it is not 'contained in' the subject concept, the concept of roses.

It may be possible to correct the logical error Kant makes, but it is worth noting the magnitude of his sloppiness. In generalization II, either 'B' stands for the same thing throughout, both in the premises and in the conclusion, or it does not. If it does not, then the generalization is an elementary logical blunder. If it does, then the problem is potentially much more serious.

Suppose that in generalization II, 'B' is unequivocal. If 'B' is univocal, then whatever supplants 'B' means the same thing at every occurrence, both those in the premises and the one in the conclusion. But if this is so, there is no longer any reason to say that the premises are aesthetical judgements while the conclusion is a logical judgement. Nor will there be any such reason if the generalization is recast in what may seem to be a more likely form—

III. I feel pleasure in the mere act of judging R₁, I feel pleasure in the mere act of judging R₂, . . . , I feel pleasure in the mere act of judging R_n.

Therefore, I feel pleasure in the mere act of judging R's in general.

Even with the generalization put this way, there no longer seems any reason to say that each premise is a reflective, aesthetical, subjective judgement, while the generalized conclusion is a determinate, logical, objective judgement.

It might be stipulated that only the premises are aesthetical because aesthetical judgements must be singular, but this would be only an unsupported stipulation. It would also provide for the sheerly unmotivated declaration that although I am saying exactly the same thing about roses in general that I previously said about some roses taken one at a time, I have somehow slipped into making a logical judgement, having previously made a series of aesthetical judgements. Perhaps Kant thinks there has been this slip, but what reason has he given for believing him, beyond the dogmatic assertion that any judgement of taste must be singular?

It seems incredible, and it is more than a little frustrating, that the logic of this inference is so difficult to formulate. Why should it be different from any comparable inference in which the premises are, in Kant's sense, subjective? This inference, for example,

IV. R₁ is S. [Rose #₁ smells good to me,], R₂ is S, . . . , R_n is S.

Therefore, R's in general are S.

Understood as an overly simple inductive generalization, this inference's logic is fine. But, as before, there is no reason to call the premises aesthetical while the conclusion is logical. Surely it is exactly the same thing being said serially of R₁, R₂, . . . , and R_n that is being said of R's in general.

Perhaps we should invoke a feature of Kant's doctrine often recited as a mantra by his defenders, namely that a judgement is not a statement or a proposition, but an act of the mind. The premise as I have written it, 'R₁ is S', is not the relevant judgement, but a transcription of the judgemental act. That act is the pleasant sensation of smelling R₁. The premise I have written is an after-the-fact record of the true judgement.

I might agree to that, especially if it is more faithful to Kant's doctrine of judgement. But the price is steep, for now 'R₁ is S' looks very much like a logical judgement, not significantly different from 'R₁ smells good to Paul', and, again, the premises will be on a par, epistemologically, with the conclusion. The same will be true of judgements of beauty.

The only promising suggestion I know comes informally from Miles Rind. To the best of my knowledge, Rind has not developed this suggestion, and I do not know how he would go about it, nor whether he would approve of the possible beginning I will suggest. It is at best a beginning; I have no idea how to complete it.

Rind suggests trying to adapt an insight of J. L. Austin concerning what Austin called 'performative utterances'. In an 'explicit performative utterance' there is always a verb indicating the act performed in the issuance of the utterance. The role of that verb, says Austin, is not to describe the act being done, but to 'make explicit' what act is being done. The verb in question *can* be used to describe an act, however, and that is exactly what it does when it occurs in forms other than the first person, present tense, singular, indicative mood, active voice form it has when it occurs as an explicit performative verb.

Thus, when Jack says 'I promise to do X', the word 'promise' does not describe. But when, based on Jack's utterance, I say 'Jack promises to do X', the word 'promises' does describe what Jack has done. Or, again, Jack himself subsequently might say 'I promised to do X', and, again, the word 'promised' describes what Jack did.¹⁰

This inference is not as simple as it may appear. 'Jack promised to do X' does not follow from 'I promise to do X'. It follows from the utterance not in the sense of the thing said, but in the sense of saying the thing. 'Jack promised to do X' follows, that is, not from 'I promise to do X' but from Jack's saying 'I promise to do X'.

If this point is to be adapted to Kantian judgements of beauty, then this will have to be done: in generalization II, the word 'beautiful' occurs both in the

¹⁰ The doctrine of 'performative utterances' is to be found in J. L. Austin, 'Performative Utterances', reprinted in J. L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1961), and also in his *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U.P., 1962). Austin came to abandon the doctrine, as can be seen in the later chapters of *How to Do Things with Words*, but his reasons for abandoning it do not show that the doctrine might not have some currency in understanding Kant on the matter at hand.

premises and in the conclusion. We must construe its presence in the premises to be making explicit what act is being performed by the judge, and then we will understand its function in the conclusion to be to describe the acts indicated in the premises.

This is an exceptionally intriguing idea, but I am unable to work it out. And so I am left thinking that Kant's sense of a connection between 'This rose is beautiful' and 'Roses in general are beautiful' is a logical misapprehension.

THE THIRD PROBLEM

On beauty as the symbol of morality. (§59)

According to Kant, a symbol is an indirect presentation of a concept.

Some concepts have only indirect presentations. Some concepts have both direct and indirect presentations. And, although Kant says nothing about this possibility, I do not think he could maintain that any concept had only direct presentations, but that is of only slight concern here.

Let C be a concept, Cd a direct presentation of C , and Ci an indirect presentation of C . Then for some Cs there will be no Cd but only Ci , for some Cs there will be both Cd and Ci , and I think there will be no Cs that have Cd but no Ci (but as I just remarked, that last possibility is of little concern).

The first question is what makes Cd a presentation of C . This is a leading topic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, where it calls forth Kant's baffling doctrine of the 'schematism', and, fortunately, it need not concern us here because our concern is with Ci , which generates a problem of its own even on the assumption that Cd is unproblematic.

The problem is to understand what Kant thinks makes Ci a presentation of C .

The problem is perhaps mitigated when C is a concept supporting both direct and indirect presentations. With such a concept it is already given that Cd presents C , and we might explain Ci by saying that it somehow resembles Cd . Of course, this cannot be a very thoroughgoing resemblance, for if it were, Ci would be a direct presentation of C , just as Cd is. In Kant's own example a hand mill is said to be an indirect presentation (a symbol) of the concept of a despotic state. Then this would be explained in terms of the mill's similarity to something that directly presents the concept, an actual despotic state—say, Syracuse under its Tyrant. Thus, the mill is similar enough to a despotic state to symbolize despotism, but is not sufficiently similar actually to be an example of despotism.

Those of us who have struggled to understand the role of similarity or resemblance in metaphor and representation are not likely to be sanguine about this plan to link Ci to C by way of some similarity relation between Ci and Cd . But let that pass, for the moment. There is problem enough remaining.

The problem, still, is to understand what makes Ci a presentation of C , but now there is not even the (perhaps illusory) hope of doing so in terms of a

relation between C_i and C_d because there is no C_d . If C is a concept with no possible direct presentation, then we have nothing but C and C_i , and we will have to explain what connects them. I have no good idea how that might be done, nor, do I think, does Kant.

Let us dip very slightly into Kant's conception of concept instantiation, keeping clear of as much of it as possible, especially the part having to do with schematisms. A true *concept*, properly so called, according to Kant, has what he calls *merkmale* [marks] by means of which it is attached to its instances. However these marks are thought of—whether visually, as something like outlines or patterns to be matched to samples, or more abstractly, as kinds of operational definitions or rules that can be applied in effective procedures of identification—it is the marks that link concepts to the instances falling under them. Now a concept without marks is not really a proper concept. It is called an Idea by Kant, or an Idea of Reason, or, sometimes, a Rational Concept. That is what we are dealing with here, a concept without marks, and, consequently, *a concept that has nothing strictly falling under it*. That is, it has no direct presentation. It is a C with no possible C_d .

Thus C_i does not *fall under* C . Then what connects it with C at all? It is not that C_i is some free-floating object, attached to no concept whatever. Indeed, it must instantiate (directly present) any number of concepts, just as the mill directly presents the concept of a mill, while indirectly presenting the concept of a despotism. But it does not directly present C ? Why does it present it at all?

Here is another, farther-fetched route we might explore. Suppose the relevant similarity relation holds, not between instancial objects, but between the concepts being instantiated. Then the mill-and-despotism example works like this. M is the concept of a mill. D is the concept of a despotism. m is an actual mill. d is an actual despotic state. Previously we supposed that m is a symbol of D (indirectly presents D) because m is similar to d , and d directly presents D . Let us try saying, instead, that m indirectly presents D because m directly presents M , and M is similar to D .¹¹

Such a manoeuvre seems circuitous and unnecessary in dealing with the mill and despotism, but it may serve well in an example in which one of the relevant concepts has no direct presentation. And that is the case we are trying to understand. We are trying to understand what links C_i to C when there is no C_d . Perhaps it is this. Although C_i does not instantiate C , it must directly present some other concepts. Suppose one of them is the concept X . Then why not say

¹¹ Perhaps Kant himself thinks less of concepts and objects than of the human experience of these things. I once attempted an explanation along those lines in 'Why Beauty is the Symbol of Morality' (Cohen and Guyer, op. cit.). I now think it does not matter how things are set up. Everything said in this essay about determinate concepts, the objects instantiating them, and indeterminate concepts can be recast in terms of the experience of those things.

that the reason why C_i symbolizes C is because C_i directly presents X , and X is relevantly similar to C ?

In the example at hand, in whose service Kant deploys his conception of symbolization, we have the concept of morality, M , the concept of beauty, B , and some beautiful object, b . We might say that b indirectly presents M because it directly presents B , and B is relevantly similar to M . And that would explain why, as Kant sees it and says it, 'beauty is the symbol of morality'.

I see no reason not to say this, but also no reason to suppose that this *explains* anything. There seems to me an insoluble problem in rendering this explanation coherent when it is forced to cohere with what Kant says elsewhere about the 'concepts' of beauty and morality, but I pass over that problem here because the explanation at least *looks* promising.

The promise, however, proves empty. We now have to take seriously the idea that B and M are relevantly similar. What can that mean, that two *concepts* are similar? I have no idea unless it means that objects instantiating them are similar. One might say that the concept of an alligator is similar to the concept of a crocodile, and I might not mind that because I would understand it to rely on the fact that alligators are similar to crocodiles. And it need not matter if one or both of the concepts were in fact uninstantiated. Thus, one might say that the concept of a horse is similar to the concept of a unicorn, relying on the fact that horses are similar to unicorns, despite the fact there are no unicorns. The concept of a unicorn is the kind of concept that *can* have direct presentations. Indeed, it is precisely because the concept of a unicorn is what Kant calls a determinate concept that we know just what a unicorn would be if there were any, and hence that we know there are none.

But when a concept is 'indeterminate', it has no marks, and there is no way to say what would count as a genuine instance (such a concept has no direct presentations, and can have none). It is a concept, in Kant's memorable declaration, that has application to no possible experience. (It is a contingent matter that we have no experience of unicorns; it is necessary that we have no *experience* of God.)

Then what makes any of these indeterminate concepts more or less relevantly similar to any other concept? That is the question, and I think it has no good answer.

Miles Rind has told me that Kant almost certainly thinks that what underlies successful symbolism is a kind of analogy, and although Rind has not suggested that this idea can save Kant's account of symbolism, I think it should be considered, if only to show that it will not solve the problem. I think that explanation-by-analogy is, in the end, simply a version of explanation-by-similarity, for the following reason.

In recent writing, philosophers mainly have given up the idea that every metaphor is underwritten by an implicit similarity. If a successful metaphor is ' a is b ' or ' a is a b ', then the relevant similarity would be ' a is like b ' or ' a is like a b '.

The similarity sentence may well be apt or even true, but it is likely to be hopeless as a reductionist explanation of the metaphor either because it is vacuous or because it is itself a figure of speech—virtually another metaphor.

Suppose one attempts an explanation of ‘Juliet is the sun’ in terms of ‘Juliet is like the sun’. Of course, there are respects in which Juliet and the sun are literally like one another—respects in which they are the same. For instance, both Juliet and the sun occupy space, are visible objects, have mass, and so on. But none of these similarities seems to be Romeo’s point in declaring Juliet to be the sun. That point is approached, however, in statements like ‘Juliet and the sun are warm’, ‘Both brighten the day’, and so on. But Juliet is not warm, or a day-brightener in the way the sun is. Thus ‘Juliet is warm’ and ‘Juliet brightens the day’ are as much metaphorical as ‘Juliet is the sun’.

It is tempting—at least to some—to suppose that what underlies the metaphor is a construction more complex than a simile, namely an *analogy*. Thus Juliet stands to Romeo as the sun stands to something—perhaps also Romeo. Or, perhaps, Juliet stands to Romeo as the moon stands to some other man.

This move from similes to analogies looks promising, if only because it acknowledges the complexities invoked by some metaphors, but this is an illusion because there is no move. Such an explanation by analogy, in the end, is nothing but an explanation by simile.

What analogies underlie ‘Juliet is the sun’ or ‘God is my father’? Suppose we take Romeo to be saying that Juliet is to other women as the sun is to the moon. Then we may write

$$jRw : sR^*m$$

And let us suppose that the line in the *Yom Kippur* poem says that God stands to me (Ted) as my father stands to me. Then we may write

$$gRt : fR^*t$$

Now in both cases, with the analogies represented in this way, we need to understand the ‘as’ in

$$xRy : wR^*z \text{ [x is to y as w is to z]}$$

and the obvious question is, what is the relation to one another of these two relations, R and R*?

Are the relations the *same*, as they are, for instance, in

$$2 \text{ is to } 4 \text{ as } 3 \text{ is to } 6$$

Here the relation R is the same in both cases. That is, even if we write

$${}_2R_4 : {}_3R^*6$$

R and R* are the same, and so we might as well have written

$${}_2R_4 : {}_3R6$$

Those who think that metaphors are underwritten by literal analogies must be thinking that R and R* are the same. But in most cases of metaphor they are not. The relation of Juliet to other women is not the same relation as that of the sun to the moon, nor is the relation of God to me the same relation as that of my father to me. There is, no doubt, a *similarity* between the two relations, but this means that the promised explanation by analogy as an improvement over an explanation by simile is an improvement only in the sense that the putative underlying similarity is now a relational similarity, and it is no more a literal similarity than is the original metaphor a literal statement. One may indeed offer statements of similarity as aids in understanding metaphor, and it may be even more helpful to offer statements of analogy, but the aids are still themselves figurative, and we are no closer to understanding just what literal similarity it is that anchors the metaphor.

A final quibble. Even if it made sense to say that beauty symbolizes morality, Kant would still be overstating his point. The mill symbolizes the concept of a despotic state; but so do a mortar-and-pestle, a bulldozer, a guillotine, a chainsaw, and a waterfall (if you think it important that the mill, once constructed, works 'by itself', it is easy to find comparable machinery and natural operations). Then each is *a* symbol of despotism; none is *the* symbol. Why is beauty the only symbol of morality? Given every way I have found in which even to begin to understand how a beautiful object might symbolize morality, all of which rely on very nebulous conceptions of similarity, I cannot see why any number of other things might not do as well. Kant's only remark on the relevant similarity between a mill and a despotic state is to say they are similar in 'how they operate' (§59), and then to add, cryptically and in parenthesis, *Kausalität*. But many things operate in this way. Thus, there must be many symbols of a despotism besides a mill, and, similarly, even if it makes sense to call beauty a symbol of morality, there is no reason to call it *the* symbol.

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