

Sensus Communis [CJ #39-40]

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39: Communicability of Sensation

K: sensation: material ["objective"] part of sensation cannot be assumed uniform, bcs this would imply assuming uniformity of sense apparatus; subjective part shows even more diversity [enjoyment]

K: moral feeling: but this is law-bound, requiring concepts of goodness through reason

K: sublime: feeling of our supersensible vocation, thus has a moral foundation; we can require agreement on sublime on basis of morality, not on similar cultivation of predisposition to moral feeling

K: beautiful: pleasure of mere reflection, based on free play; as conditions of cognition as such ["sound and common understanding"], free play must be possible in everyone, so we can demand agreement

40: Taste as a Kind of Sensus Communis

K: we collapse logical and aesthetic [reflective] judgment when we pay attention only to the [shareable, common] results, not to the [act of] reflection [which is different in each case: aesthetic J refers object to felt pleasure {i.e., it judges the subjective purposiveness of the object, its aptitude to arouse pleasure}; while logical J refers object to a concept]. In this case, we can talk about a sense for truth, etc [that is, that judgment produces a shareable object as a result of its operation].

K: common human understanding [sound but uncultivated; produces concepts of truth, propriety, beauty, justice] is least we can demand of everyone; unfortunately this is called a "common sense" [this nomenclature is unfortunate, bcs. "sense" needs to be distinguished from "understanding"].

K: we should rather think of sensus communis as "sense shared by all": judging by 1) taking everyone else's presentational capacities into account a priori; that is, 2) judging by "human reason in general"; 3) we thus escape illusion of mistaking subjective for objective conditions.

K: sensus communis follows this procedure, then: 1) compare our J w/ merely possible J of others, thus putting ourselves in their positions; 2) by abstracting from private limitations; 3) by leaving out matter [sensation--objective or subjective]; 4) paying attention to formal features of a) the presentation or b) our presentational state.

K: comparison with common human understanding: 1) think for yourself in active self-determination of thought as in formula for Enlightenment: understanding; 2) think from a universal standpoint, that is, exercise judgment per se [judgment about judgment: is this judgment properly formal and hence, as following an a priori principle, universal and necessary?]; 3) think consistently: reason [that is, keep your syllogisms orderly and systematically arranged].

K: taste is better thought a sensus communis than is common or sound human understanding, because it relates to our ability to judge a pleasure, which must be felt or sensed [that is, if we assign the term "sense" to judgments that concern the subj purposiveness of objects for felt or sensed pleasure]

K: in contrast, we can certainly share the results of logical J, so this must rest on a shareable [able to be assumed as commonly held] interplay of imagination and understanding; but this is not free play, but is governed by a concept

K: hence we can define taste: ability to judge a priori [hence cannot be sensation/agreeableness/enjoyment] common basis of [pure] feelings directly aroused by a presentation [w/o mediation by a concept {of goodness}]