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Die Verwirklichung des Allgemeinen im Konkreten. Über Kunst als Exemplifikation

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This paper discusses the notion of exemplification as designating the intertwinement, both of abstractness and concreteness as well as of generality and particularity. As we know from Kant, abstract concepts are empty insofar as they are considered apart from sensible intuition. Conversely, intuition without concepts is too particular a matter. If concepts and intuitions are to enrich each other in order to produce substantial epistemic insights we have to refer to exemplary cases. An individual occurrence, thus, becomes a characteristic case provided that the power of judgement discerns the paradigmatic features of that particular case. According to Alfred North Whitehead, exemplification occurs when a general principle is actualized as a concrete reality. In aesthetic experience, he recognizes a key dimension of all reality. In accordance with this, I will show that a philosophical aesthetics that develops its argument in and through the exemplification of art has a much stronger potential than a philosophy that exclusively argues on the basis of concepts. Insofar philosophical aesthetics is even a stronger type of theory altogether.