THE KANTIAN SUBJECT:
SENSUS COMMUNIS, MIMESIS, WORK OF MOURNING

by

Tamar Japaridze

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University of Toronto

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Tamar Japaridze
Department of Philosophy
University of Toronto

My dissertation is centred on Kant's notion of the *sensus communis* as developed in the *Critique of Judgment*. According to this notion, which exemplifies what I take to be the most significant portion of the Kantian subject, the formation of the self takes place through *a priori* identification with the other. This identification posits the most undetermined relation to the other and thus articulates the possibility of the transcendental law. Undetermined by either desiring or cognitive interest the affective identification with the other becomes the constitutive principle of the transcendental in Kant. This idea is conveyed in the notion of disinterestedness.

It is the ability of aesthetic judgment, by means of its corollaries, the beautiful and sublime, to conjoin the aesthetic with the practical domain of moral ends that makes possible the positing of the universality or transcendentality of feelings. Thus, in the beautiful, the process of the constitution of the transcendental can be seen as the movement that requires not so much the suppression of the sensuous but the transmutation of a sensuous from a heteronomous to a universal feeling.

In reflective judgment the self must discover a new

rule through which it can comprehend the sensuous as radically other. In the sublime, the reflective operation is marked by the self's "withdrawal from the inner sense" or from the determination of the concepts of time.

Language is central to the discussion of the *sensus communis*. Identification defines language as intrinsically metaphoric or analogical. The *als ob* mediates the gap between the theoretical and the practical discourses. Hence, it is this metaphoric language that gives expression to the critical system.

The importance of Kant's aesthetic theory must be understood within the context of the radical critique of subjectivity. In this sense a parallel can be drawn between Kant's aesthetic theory and the work of such modern thinkers as Heidegger (critique of representation), Freud (work of mourning) and Levinas (phenomenology of the other).

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

References to *First* and *Second Critiques* are given in the body of the text itself using the following abbreviations.

CJ *Critique of Judgment,* translated by Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett publishing Company, 1987.

KU *Kritik der Urteilskraft, Werkausgabe,* Band X, herausgegeben von Wilhelm Weischedel, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1968.

CPR *Critique of Pure Reason,* translated by N. Kemp Smith, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1929. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Werkausgabe,* Band III and IV.

Note that for occasional passages not translated into English I have provided my own translation and have indicated this in a footnote giving the full German text and marked "my translation".

PREFACE

> I can "feed" on these realities and to a very great extent satisfy myself, as though I had simply been lacking them. Their *alterity* is thereby reabsorbed into my own identity as a thinker or a possessor. The metaphysical desire tends toward *something else entirely*, toward the *absolutely other*.
>
> -- Levinas[1]

The very project of the *Critique of Judgment* appears fraught with contradiction: it simultaneously posits both disjunction and synthesis. For, while it constructs its edifice around the two irreconcilable poles of necessity and freedom, it, also, calls for their mediation. So, while this apparent "immense gulf" between the realm of the concept of nature and that of the concept of freedom, that is, between the theoretical consciousness of the *First Critique* and the practical consciousness of the *Second,* must be acknowledged and remain, there must also be found an underlying principle that can unify them in "the supersensible that the concept of freedom contains practically" (CJ., p. 33).

An illustration of this contradiction is contained within one of its central notions -- the subject -- and is, no doubt, linked to the variancy that is inherent in this notion

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[1] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity,* translated by A. Lingis, (Pittsburgh: Dusquesne University Press, 1961), p. 3.

itself. At the same time that the subject is a noumenon, or the transcendental ego, it is also a phenomenon, that is, an object or a specific agency caught within the boundaries of experience. The *Third Critique* seems to preserve this variancy and contradiction and thereby maintains intact the propositions of the *First* and the *Second Critiques* but it also assumes a certain underlying cohesiveness within this proposed notion. Thus, it would seem that one can presume a certain structural parity that regulates these opposing concepts. Kantian theory can be read (as indeed it has) within the successive forms in which it is embodied, that is, the systems of oppositions in which these forms are engaged: e.g. the irreconcilability between the phenomenal of the *First Critique* and the noumenal of the *Second* and the necessity of overcoming this polarity in the *Third*. This approach, however, would mean, measuring the success of the *Third Critique* by its effectiveness in eliminating the contradictions inherent in the notion of the subject. Kant's text, on the other hand, gives several indications of other ways by which one might approach the aesthetic of the *Third Critique* and the notion of the subject that it describes.

Interpretations of the *Third Critique* that stress either the failure or the success of its plan (of which post-Kantian philosophy is an especially good example) revolve around the familiar notion of the Kantian subject, that of the self-sufficient ego formed in opposition to that which is

apprehended as its other; in both cases, the subject arrogates to itself the position of autonomy and thus its status is constituted through the exclusion of this other and that which comes into conflict with its self-sufficiency, i.e. the empirical and the sensuous (what Kant comes to identify as heteronomy) all of which has to be transcended by the practical self. In short, there is a certain conception of the subject and its autonomy that underlies these readings. These interpretations stress either that the Kantian subject is unable to overcome the contradiction inherent in it because its constitutive principle is one-sided, or, what essentially amounts to the same view, that it is capable of sublating the other precisely through its self-sufficiency which must not tolerate anything (such as the empirical or the sensuous) that might compromise its transcendental "purity". Thus both of these approaches remain premised on extreme subjectivism.

To some extent my reexamination of the Kantian subject challenges this type of interpretation inasmuch as I try to show that in the *Third Critique*, the notion of the subject is expressed by means of a conceptualisation which constructs this subject along a quite different trajectory. The *Third Critique* also contains, in my opinion, one of the most potent critiques of subjectivity, that is, of the subject as self-presence constituted through the dissolution of its own difference -- a singular *unum quid*. Paradoxically, that is also the very type of subject that has come to be identified

with the foundation of the Kantian philosophy itself.

Instead, in the *Third Critique*, and in the Kantian notion of the aesthetic self in general (which, as I will show, does not require doing away with the transcendental notion of autonomy), the subject is recast in a radical way. It must now be understood not as an identity of the self, or presence of self-consciousness, but (and here lies the aporetic character of this subject) precisely in its non-coincidence with itself. It is this intrinsic dislocation within the subject itself, taking place in the aesthetic, that enables the subject to provide its own internal critique. The aesthetic demonstrates that the subject is constituted through its relation to the other or to alterity and this process, in fact, becomes the constitutive principle of the subject. As we shall see, at stake in this relation is the derivation and genesis of the transcendental. This idea finds itself well illustrated in the notion of the *sensus communis*. To cite but a single example, outside of such an interpretation it would be impossible to discover the meaning of the aesthetic concept of disinterestedness in the *Critique of Judgment*. For, as will be made clear, this notion turns upon an identification or interiorisation that allows the self to form itself through relation to the other, and, thus, is also the basis of the

ethical and practical relation to the other.

It is perhaps peculiar to approach Kant in such a way: is it not Kant, after all, who is the author of the Enlightenment's concept of the subject and its autonomy? Is this not the concept that most requires criticism as it valorises suppression of sensuousness and in this sense can be considered anti-aesthetic? Is this not so because it posits autonomy that is achieved through the suppression of heteronomous desire, i.e. repression of inner nature? Is it then indeed possible to construe Kant's theory in what seems to be an exactly opposite manner without compromising his whole philosophical scheme?

I do not mean to imply that Kant rehabilitates heteronomy by means of the aesthetic. The notion of disinterestedness, however, clearly shows how sensuousness and feelings can be elevated to the transcendental level and thus need not be posited as foreign to the practical self. This idea is expressed in the *Critique of Judgment* (in the section describing the first moment of judgment of taste) by the crucial distinction Kant draws between the relation to the other that is contained within the means/ends dichotomy, (i.e. that which remains within the regime of necessity and experience) and the relation of ends (i.e. the practical) (CJ. p.48 ff.). The first is based on desire and he calls it appetitive and utilitarian; the second is affective, "indirect" pleasure in the object, and it involves

identification effected through the faculty of imagination. Thus, without suppressing the sensuous (that is the affectivity of the self) there can take place a relation to an object, which is the relation of ends and not means to ends. This provides the basis of practical relation. It is not a desiring relation, (such as an appetitive relation), or even the notion of the good (which is based on cognitive conceptualisation), both of which presuppose interest in the object, but an affective identification that makes possible the relation of ends. The possibility of universality of feelings, to which the "Analytic of the Beautiful" is consecrated, is an attempt to argue to this end. It is this affective relation to the other, as I shall show, that forms the basis of the transcendental consciousness and thereby forms the Kantian subject.

Reading Kant this way, we can see that the subject is not formed through the suppression of inner nature or sensuousness etc., but, instead, through the suppression of utilitarian tendencies that inscribe the subject within the realm of necessity and satisfaction of needs. It is not these, however, that form the basis of Kantian ethics. Is it not the nature of taste as such -- a movement from mouth to consciousness, each stage passing through different "mouth-work" (to use a psychoanalytic term coined by Abraham and

Torok,[2]) from the feeling and discernment of the palate to word formation and judgment that effects, and is the expression of, the overcoming (not suppression) of the sensuous?

This point can be further elucidated in terms of the critique of representation which underlies the above argument. Prior to the representational formation of consciousness, as Heidegger points out in his analysis of the Kantian notion of time and the transcendental power of imagination,[3] there must be presupposed through the universal character of pure sensibility, i.e. time, the inherently temporal determination of the Kantian self. That is, selfhood is taken as temporal because any synthesis, recognition and identification would demand a "prior", a pure, identification as Heidegger maintains, which is itself time-forming. Thus, the temporal character of the self must precede the conceptual representations in consciousness (so that it could be possible for a synthesis to occur), which is itself irreducible to the conceptual determination through linear time, i.e. to the order of necessity. In fact, the former is the very condition

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[2] Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel,* volume I, edited and translated by Nicholas T. Rand, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 128.

[3] See Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics,* translated by R. Tuft, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), para. 33 [176-178], p.125ff. This theme is discussed in Chapter Three. The sublime illustrates the critical moment in the identification where the determinations of time become "withdrawn".

of the possibility of such determination since it provides the transcendental grounding for it. That is to say, while the determining subject is inscribed within the order of necessity and the causal relations that define this process of determining through time, the temporal character of the self is outside of such determination and forms the point of unity of the sensuous and the "I". In this way, the most primary relation of the self and the other is disclosed. Thus, the identity of the ego is not derivable from its capacity to "frame" the other through the conceptual structures, i.e. through the reduction of the other to self-consciousness, but through affectivity that does not need to assume such adequation. This idea forms the discourse of the sublime.

Modern critique of subjectivity has centered upon the fact that traditional philosophy has privileged the representational structure of consciousness and as a result has relegated the identification with the sensuous, with the other (Levinas), temporality of the subject (Heidegger), to the secondary issue. The transcendental has been understood as a certain identity of self-consciousness manifested in the capacity for formation of representations and thus in a mastery over the heterogenous, the other and the sensuous.

The aesthetic theory of the *Third Critique,* however, proposes a different version of the subject, one which does not have to be constructed along the lines of the inherent

notions of the self-identity and self-sufficiency of the subject. Instead, without completely renouncing the notion of the subject, it is possible to reconsider the subject by reconstructing the discourse around it so that it would no longer include the notion of adequation to self (the identity of the self), but rather would define the subject as the finite experience of nonidentity to self, as underivable interpellation inasmuch as it comes from the other, or from traces of the other, with all the paradoxes or the aporia of being-before-the law, which is, in the case of Kantian moral law, equivalent to being "before" the alterity of the self.[4] Moreover, it is in the aesthetic self that Kant finds the very possibility of the constitution of the transcendental. In this sense, this interpretation forces us to rethink the notion of the subject so that it can adequately account for its claims to autonomy without suppressing the other. The process of identification forms the basis of autonomy, which as the freedom from the realm of necessity is not necessarily the freedom from the other. This is the point illustrated by the notion of disinterestedness.

By reexamining the Kantian notion of the subject in such a way, Kant can be considered as one of the initiators of its critique and thus be situated in a larger context of the critique or deconstruction of subjectivity. Taking the

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[4] This other version of the subject would give rise to a different version of ethics (community) and of language as its expression.

teachings of Heidegger in particular as a starting point, the critique of the notion of the subject has become associated with the critique of the concept of adequation which attempts to describe consciousness as constituted through a certain self-representation. It is in this sense that the Kantian theory of the aesthetic self and of mimetic identification (which defies a notion of self-representation), can be placed within modern philosophical rethinking of subjectivity that is concerned with constructing a notion of the subject beyond such representational structures. In the writings of Heidegger as well as of the members of the Frankfurt School, in particular Adorno, there is stress placed on aesthetics. Yes, there is a critique of a rather more familiar Kant, a Kant who is one of the main figures responsible for the oppressive shape of autonomous reason and other notions of modernity based in this type of reason. But, there is also a subtle but unequivocal reference to another Kant, whose aesthetic is in the center of the philosophical inquiry into the subject, and, which, moreover, provides a basis for the critique of subjectivity. It is this Kant that will be the focus of the present study.

The importance of this critique, then, is that, rather than renouncing the notion of the subject, the subject is "re-thought" after the critique has taken place. It is in this context, I think, that the reference to the Freudian notion of the subject becomes crucial. Freud's emphasis on the

importance of the concept of identification, as Mikkel Borsch-Jacobsen has demonstrated, shows that the formation of the subject can take place prior to representational formations in consciousness.[5] Freud's conception of the subject reexamines this formation within the context of mimetic identification.

Therefore, it might prove useful to approach Kant "through" both Heidegger and Freud. Each provides a different window through which to view a critique of the self-identical subject and from this emerges a possibility of the notion of the subject that need not be constituted through self-representation. Heidegger tackles this by means of a critique of metaphysical "misconceptions" about the self-identity of the subject that are based on notions of adequation and on a certain type of self-representation. Freud proposes that the subject is in fact formed through mimetic identification with the other, prior to any possibility of the formation of a notion of adequation. As we shall see, these are two major themes that emerge out of the notion of the *sensus communis* in the *Critique of Judgment*. As well as positing the impossibility of such self-representation of the ego, the *sensus communis* also demonstrates how the self is formed

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[5] Mikkel Borsch-Jacobsen, *The Freudian Subject*, translated by Catherine Porter, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988);see, also his *The Emotional Tie*, translated by Douglas Brick, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992). See also, Joel Whitebook's work on Freud and critical theory, which, to a certain degree, contributes to the effort of rereading the Freudian subject, see *Perversion and Utopia*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995).

through a process of identification with the other from which comes the transcendental ground of this subject.

Working in the tradition of Heidegger and Freud in particular, Lacoue-Labarthe and others have carried out a similar critique of subjectivity and representation.[6] However, especially the writings of Lyotard,[7] Derrida[8] and Francoise Proust[9] have indicated the necessity of reexamining the central notions of Kant's philosophy. That is, they have shown the necessity of using the "excesses" that the aesthetics produces within the structure of the Kantian system and of viewing critical philosophy as a radical antidote to subjectivity and its legacies. Along with the theme of aesthetics, and not by accident, the *Third Critique* also

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[6] *Mimesis des articulations*, ed. Sylviane Agacinski etc. (Paris: Flammarion, 1975). As a more general reference to this theme see *Who Comes after the Subject?* edited by Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor, Jean-Luc Nancy, (New York: Routledge, 1991). See also, Derrida, "Desistance", preface to the translation of Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's *Typography*, ed. C. Fynsk, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

[7] see, for example, Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime*, translated by Elizabeth Rottenberg, (California: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[8] To name only a few texts by Derrida that bear upon different aspects of Kant's philosophy: "Economimesis", *Diacritics* 11.2 (Summer 1981): 3-25., *The Truth in Painting*, translated Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). *"Mochlos* or The Conflict of the Faculties" *Logomachia: the Conflict of the Faculties*. edited by Richard Rand, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993).

[9] Francoise Proust, *Kant: le ton de l'histoire*, (Paris: Edition Payot, 1991).

possesses an implicit critique of the theoretical language of communication as well. From the notion of silent communication one can infer Kant's statement on the theory of language. The discourse of the *Third Critique* itself, as it constantly presses (with its notions) against the boundaries of what is sayable, is itself a demonstration of the untenability of the language of subjectivity based on the idea of the transparency of the sign, the idea of absolute representability and the idea of unequivocal signification. The last chapter of this thesis will attempt to reconstruct Kant's theory of language.

The notion of language has a special significance. Although it might be correct to say that "it would be virtually impossible to identify anyone defending ... the centred, transparent ... subject today,"[10] it could also be said that much of the discourse on the Kantian (the Enlightenment) subject "today" has something in common with this subject. The language of "today's subject" is the "symptom" of its existence -- this is, communicative language based on the transparency of the sign.

The case in point is Habermas. His notion of "life world intersubjectivity shared by participants"[11] based on the idea of communication is inferred from conceptual and theoretical language. However, Kant has clearly shown that the

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[10] Whitebook, *op.cit.*, p.267ff.

[11] Jürgen Habermas, "Questions and Counterquestions", *Habermas and Modernity,* edited by Richard J., Bernstein, (Cambridge, Ma: The MIT Press, 1985), p.213.

order of the ethical can only be attained in a regulative sphere that must transcend the instrumental realm of conceptual rationality. The regulative community of the *sensus communis*, finds its parallel in Levinas' communicability (community). Levinas demonstrates that there must take place, "anterior" to communication, in the sense of "theory of communication", i.e. pragmatics (*Handeln*) of communication, a more "originary" communication. More originary in the sense that it provides the basis of all ethical communion and thus is anterior to any subsequent intersubjective association. In Kant, communication takes place immediately through the feeling of the beautiful while in Levinas, communication emerges in the disclosure of the other. In both cases the intersubjective relation has not yet occurred and unanimity within this order cannot be that of argumentation between "rational" subjects. Yet this unanimity (consensus) must be presupposed in any conceptual communication.[12]

Finally I would like to stress that, although this study is essentially concerned with close interpretative analysis of the *Third Critique* and, only then, with the general context in which it can be situated, it also attempts

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[12] Reflections on this type of regulative community, one might say, are in the center of Nancy's and Blanchot's work to name a few. See, Jean-Luc Nancy, *Inoperative Community*, Translated by P. Connor, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). and M. Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, translated P. Joris, (New York: Station Hill Press, 1988).

to approach Kant's ethics as a project that is based not so much on the idea of the autonomy of the subject born out of rigid contradictions (as it might be inferred from a superficial reading of the *Second Critique)*. Instead, this study will take into account the aesthetic theory of Kant, as situated in the dialectical corollaries of the self and the other.

The doctrine of the *Third Critique*, as I hope to demonstrate, has a structural exigency in the overall organisation of the Kantian system. That is, the dichotomy around which the other two *Critiques* are built presupposes an internal cohesiveness which is provided by the aesthetics. Therefore, my approach to the Kantian text is not so much to assume that Kantian theory had not undergone any transformation reflected in this text, but that the theory is marked by a certain structural cohesiveness, and, therefore, regardless of the form in which this theory was finally cast, the central principle of it, can be reconstituted not only through the three major *Critiques* but can also be detected in other texts with which I will be dealing here.

There is a tendency to consider the *Third Critique* as emerging through several turning points. Tonelli[13] shows that the distinction of reflective judgment only arose midway through the composition of the text. Zammito's claim is that

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[13] Georgio Tonelli, "La formazione del testo della *Critik der Urteilkraft", Revue Internationale de philosophie* 30, (Brussels, 1954), 423-48.

the ethical turn occasioned the last transformation of the work.[14] According to him, the origin of the *Third Critique* lies in Kant's bitter rivalry with Herder.[15] These types of considerations do not alter my basic premise that Kant with this *Critique* merely brought his critical philosophy to its logical conclusion by finally providing a comprehensive account of his system as well as of the central notion of his philosophy -- the subject. Moreover, by following rather faithfully Kant's own account of this project given in the introduction of the *Third Critique*, and by taking this work to be the closing statement on the architectonic of reason, one can easily understand the divisions within the *Critique* itself. While the first part -- "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment" -- provides an outline of the aesthetic theory and the notion of disinterestedness, the second part of the work -- "Critique of Teleological Judgment" -- demonstrates how we may cognise nature and why, in order to do so, we need to regard it aesthetically -- as beautiful. It is impossible to treat nature "dogmatically", i.e. through concepts. Nature is inexplicable *(Unerklärlich)* (CJ., para. 74). It is this inexplicablity that leads us inevitably to reflect on the peculiarities *(Eigentümlichkeit[en])* of our cognitive faculties and forces us, in judging nature, to follow "the

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[14] John H. Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgment,* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 7.

[15] Zammito, *op.cit.*, p.9.

standard set by intuitive (archetypal) understanding" (CJ. p.292/ KU., p.361). It is, essentally, in this gesture that the principle of critical philosophy is set, this principle being, the commensurability or the affinity (*Zusammenstimmung*) (*ibid.*) of the laws of nature with our faculty of judging. In the final analysis, what we can know is that neither nature nor mind can be known discursively. This knowledge (of the failure of the understanding) does not give rise to a doctrine. It, however, becomes an indispensable propadeutic of critical philosophy (CJ., p.431/ KU., p. 56).

1. *Critique of Judgment* and the post-Kantian philosophy

In *Kant's Theory of Experience* Hermann Cohen wrote that, "one cannot pass judgment on Kant without, sentence after sentence, betraying what type of a world one carries in one's head".[16] No observation can more aptly convey the fate of the *Third Critique* in particular. Far from being a mere object of contention for scholarship its interpretation has been directly linked with the developments in philosophical thought itself; "there is an overlap," writes Taminiaux, "between the history of the interpretation of this work on the Continent and the history of philosophy itself".[17] Let us look briefly at the post-Kantian developments and see how this is borne out.

For the post-Kantians the stakes surrounding this work were high. Jacobi violently opposed Kantian subjectivism. The critical reason, according to him, was a reason that was solely preoccupied with itself, in the context of which

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[16] Hermann Cohen, *Kants Theorie der Erfahrung*, (Berlin, 1871), p. V.

[17] Jacques Taminiaux, *Poetics, Speculation, and Judgment*, translated by Michael Gendre, (New York: SUNY, 1993), p. 21.

knowledge of phenomena was impossible.[18] With Kant, Hegel wrote, "the highest Idea [is] corrupted with full consciousness".[19] This was, according to Hegel, because, speculative in its very essence in that it tried to overcome the opposition between "two different worlds" of the theoretical and the practical reason, it also made such a sublation unthinkable. For the post-Kantians, Kant had merely called attention to the essential problem which still remained to be solved. That is, even in the attempt to sublate the dichotomy between theory and practice, Kant remained bound to the very premises that made this gulf unbridgeable in the first place. By according the privileged role to practical reason, as Hegel, for example, claimed, Kant remained bound to the supremacy of the subjective over the objective and phenomenal and therefore, in fact, affirmed the impossibility of adequate reconciliation between these opposing realms. Hence, however oriented toward the final and absolute convergence, Kant also precluded its actual passage.

Taken from this perspective the Kantian project finds perhaps its most fitting expression in the Fichtean attempt in the *Wissenschaftslehre* where the overcoming of the disjunction between the subjective and the objective is

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[18] Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *Werke*, 6 vols. (Leipzig: Fleischer, 1812-25), vol. 3., pp. 111ff.

[19] G.W.F. Hegel, *Faith and Knowledge*, translated by W. Cerf and H.S. Harris, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1977), p.92.

actualised from the standpoint of practical reason.[20] In opposition to this, Schiller considered the force of this mediation to lie not in practical reason, but, instead, in the intrinsic equality of sensuousness and reason. In letter XV of *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* Schiller arrives at his own aesthetic imperative (injunction): *"es soll ein Schönheit sein"*.[21] However, the apparent contradiction present in the Kantian system was clear to him and was interpreted by him in a similar way to Hegel. A disastrous exchange (*"Schlimmer Tausch"*[22]) between sentiments and rationality ensued from Kant's practical philosophy. According to Schiller, the problem lay in the transcendental method itself, which "falls into thinking material things as nothing but an obstacle" -- "a way of thinking" that was not wholly alien to the spirit of the Kantian system.[23]

Thus, the ambiguity of this project seemed to be, according to the post-Kantians, a consequence of the blueprint of the Kantian philosophy itself in that, as interpreted by

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[20] For a recent Fichtean type of interpretation of the *Third Critique* see Bernard Bourgeois, "The Beautiful and the Good According to Kant", *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, (New School for Social Research, vol. 16, no. 2, 1993), pp.359-375.

[21] Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, translated E. Wilkinson and L. Willoughby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p.102.

[22] G. E. Lessing, *Nathan der Weise, Sämtliche Schriften*, Hrsg. von K. Lachmann. 3Afl. I., (Stuttgart, 1886-1924), I.i.136.

[23] Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, p. 87ft.

Hegel, for example, although the need to transcend the gulf separating subjective and objective was posited, the actual convergence of these two realms was made impossible because this unity was relegated by Kant to pure subjectivity. Therefore, in Hegel's view the value of the *Third Critique* would henceforth lie in its promise of synthesis, which it could not take far enough. Through this promise it won itself the foremost place at the foundation of speculative philosophy and thereby sowed the seeds for the destruction of its own foundation. Thus as the first treatise of speculative philosophy it also turned out to be the last one of critical philosophy.

A certain interpretation of the *Third Critique* thus itself came to be embodied in the foundations of German Idealism. From now on a challenge to German Idealism also meant a challenge to these interpretations. It was for the purpose of rescuing philosophical thought from the synthetic character of speculative philosophy that Schopenhauer turned to Kant. His own project, putting itself in opposition to idealism, found its starting point in Kant and readily acknowledged its indebtedness to him.[24] A decisive part was played by him in the history of the reception of the term

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[24] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation,* translated by E.F.J. Payne, (New York: Dover, 1969), p.164.

"disinterestedness".[25] The opposition between the will and the phenomenal was thought by Schopenhauer to arise out of the nature of the Kantian philosophy and to lie in the idea of the unfettered will, which he identified with the Kantian thing-in-itself. Although it was not unity but separation that was put forward by him, his interpretation in stressing the subjective in Kant could be taken as remaining bound to the Hegelian mode of apprehension. A similar perspective guided the relation of the Neo-Kantians to Kant. Vaihinger's philosophy remained indebted to Schopenhauer's interpretation of Kant.[26] In Cohen, the unity posited in the "aesthetic ego" and in *Ichkeit* is a pure contemplation: by attempting to unify the division between thought and the world within itself the ego turns on itself and thus remains within the bounds of the subjective.[27]

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[25] Wilhelm Windelband, *An Introduction to Philosophy,* translated by Joseph McCabe, (London: T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1921), p. 303. This interpretation had an influence on Nietzsche's understanding of this notion as well -- see, Jacques Taminiaux, *La Nostalgie de la Grece a l'aube de l'idealisme Allemand,* (La Haye: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), p. 38 and also Martin Haidegger, *Nietszche,* volume I, translated by David Farrell Krell, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979).

[26] In Vaihinger's own words "Kantian criticalism, but enlarged and softened by Schopenhauer" was what impelled him toward his own philosophy. Quoted in Klaus Christian Köhnke, *The Rise of Neo-Kantianism,* translated by R.J. Hollingdale, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.212.

[27] See Hermann Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Aesthetik,* (Berlin, 1889).

2. Heidegger: critique of representation

This history of interpretations itself points to a more general controversy concerning the notion of the subject. If we now consider in the more recent past Heidegger's reading of Kant, it is apparent that his encounter with Kant too must be read in the context of his own project which seeks not only to reexamine the inherited notion of the subject but also to dislodge the notion itself and therefore carry the discussion onto a different plane. Therefore, his interpretation of Kant punctuates some key moments of his own philosophy.

As part of the metaphysical tradition Kant, according to Heidegger, has contributed to the perpetuation of its major prejudices. In his *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* Heidegger emphasised the importance of Kant's discovery of the imagination's role in the original synthesis of sensibility and understanding. Much like Hegel, who saw in the idea of the "intuitive understanding" the seed of the sublation of the onesidedness of subjectivity, Heidegger recognized in this original link within reason the key notion that transcended the unilateral conception of reason and pointed to the dislocation of what he called the metaphysical notion of the subject. However, it still remained prisoner of the tradition in that, according to Heidegger, Kant quickly "forgot" this discovery and instead became fixated with the categories and their formation in the *First Critique* and thus

recoiled back on his familiar terrain of the subject - object dichotomy.[28] Yet Heidegger's subsequent remarks on Kant shows that it was Kant himself who, in the *Third Critique* had ventured outside this terrain. It is in the notion of disinterestedness that Heidegger finds the glimpse of this other Kant.[29]

Let me first, however, outline what marks the Heideggerian critique of the subject which puts these two thinkers in close proximity to each other. Briefly put, in Heidegger's analysis one of the main characteristics of this subject is its total assimilation of being into being-represented, by and for a subject, which finds its own autonomy and self-identity through representing itself to itself, in the fashion of *Vor-stellung*. In this way it secures its own boundaries through a posited totality whose precondition is the transparency of a representation and that which is represented. Heidegger's critique of subjectivity centres around the subject that seeks to "appear" as the identity of the self or presence. Thus a certain idea of representation is crucial to this consciousness.

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[28] Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, translated by R. Tuft, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), para. 27ff.

[29] Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, volume I, translated by David Farrell Krell, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979), 78 ff. See also, Jacques Taminiaux, *La Nostalgie de la Grece a l'aube de l'idealisme Allemand*, (La Haye: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), p. 11.

Let me explicate this point in the context relevant to the *Third Critique*. The central problem encountered by transcendental philosophy can be perhaps understood in the following way: the unity of representation presupposes a certain harmony between that which is represented and the representation itself. In the theoretical consciousness the problem of submitting the objects that are independent of the representations (thus delineating the possibility of experience, which is bound to these representations) is posited. In the practical consciousness, in a similar fashion, the relation must be established between representations that find their origin in the mind and the objects outside the mind.[30] The *Third Critique* is structured to mediate theoretical and practical parts and thus find a middle term between the subjective and the objective. This middle term is the very principle of transcendental philosophy -- the transcendental subject, the ego. The harmony and the mediation between these two terms within the transcendental ego is the very condition of, for example, both the Hegelian and Schellingian systems.

In this context, (according to my understanding of Heidegger's critique) the ego constitutes its self-identity through the total representation of itself to itself and thus collapses all the distinctions between itself and the other

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[30] See, for example, F.W.J. Schelling, *System des transzendentalen Idealismus,* herasugegeben von Horst D. Brandt und Peter Müller, (Hamburg: Felix Meinder Verlag, 1992).

qua being. With Kant, however, it is different; he maintains quite unequivocally that the transcendental ego, reason in its totality, is unrepresentable or indemonstrable. It is indemonstrable in as much as it escapes the mode of representing of both cognitive and practical reasons.[31] It can neither be comprehended through concepts nor posited as a self identical will, as the phenomenal itself prevents such a total identification. To somewhat oversimplify the point in order to underline the essential, this mode of apprehending the relation of reason and its other ruptures the mode of representing that is predicated upon a possibility of the total adequation of what is represented and the representation itself. If the harmony between the subject and the object is perfectly demonstrable and representable in the context of the speculative philosophy, it is otherwise with Kant; It lacks the final synthesis of the absolute.

Thus, if it is true that in Kojeve's words the Kantian system does not "*s'hégélianise*"[32] easily (presupposing here Heidegger's assumption regarding the identity of *Begriff* and *Vorstellung*) -- precisely because it

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[31] "So there must be after all a basis of uniting the supersensible that underlies nature and the supersensible that the concepts of freedom contains practically, even though the concepts of this basis does not reach cognition of it either theoretically or practically and hence does not have a domain of its own, though it does make possible the transition from our way of thinking in terms of principles of nature to our way of thinking in terms of principles of freedom" (CJ., p. 15).

[32] Alexandre Kojéve, *Kant*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), p.11.

leaves the transcendental out of the determination by representation -- then how could we envision the mediation and unity within the subject? In the *Third Critique* a notion of the subject is advanced that is constructed within radically different parameters: before and outside of *Vorstellung*. This is what I take to be the importance and the influence of Kant and his aesthetics on the subsequent critique of the subject: it marks the possibility of articulating a configuration of the subject that is not inscribed within the regime of representation that finds its principle with adequation.

3. **Kant: *sensus communis***

It is within this context that we can understand the project of the *Third Critique;* according to the theory elaborated here the subject is formed through mimetic identification and that this constitution can be understood as one of presenting and not representing, i.e. within the distinction of *Darstellung* and *Vorstellung*. This idea is conveyed in the notion of the *sensus communis* developed in the *Third Critique* and represents the most important portion of the development of the Kantian notion of the subject. Moreover, as it posits the most undetermined relation to the other, in it the possibility of the transcendental law is articulated. The law becomes formed through affectivity; it is derived from and originated

in the other as it posits the most universal and abstract relation to the other, that is, "before" this relation becomes possible through the determinations of cognition and desire.

Thus, the process of the constitution of the transcendental can be seen as a movement that requires not so much the suppression of the sensuous but the transmutation of the sensual from heteronomy to universality, the sublimation of sensuousness. A careful analysis of this notion of the subject formed through the other shows that Kant is not introducing a notion of some other radically different subject dislodged from its position of autonomy (i.e. the subject that now would have to be considered as, what Kant would have called "pathological", sensitised etc.). This notion does not even require a demonstration of how the Kantian text can cohere given its inconsistencies (i.e. the inconsistencies of "mistakenly" positing irreconcilable ends of the transcendental autonomy of the *Second Critique* and that of the phenomenology of the *First*, with the *Third Critique* attempting to eliminate this contradiction): the issue taken up here is that of the genesis and derivation of the transcendental. Therefore, it can be said that Kant never failed to notice that the subject is the other to itself, that it is itself because of and through this other. In the *Third Critique* he sets out to demonstrate that through this identification the self can finally constitute itself independently of the contingent and the sensuous that defines it, precisely because

the identification with the other is not grounded in the empirical realm. For this purpose it is necessary to draw a decisive line between empirical and transcendental feelings and this is precisely the task of the analytic of the beautiful in the *Critique of Judgment* to which I will turn in a moment.

To briefly summarise the above, the affective capacity can be understood as the capacity of the aesthetic self to identify with the other. As the "first" relation that precedes any determination by concepts or desire, it remains the most abstract identification free of conceptual determination which is at the basis of representations. Consider in this view the derivation of the moral law. The unconditionality of moral law means that it cannot be based on feeling, nor on the commonness of moral experience, much less on individual sentiment. It also excludes empirical reflection about the other. Paradoxically, however, as much as it is a moral command to detach oneself from the subjective private conditions of one's own judgment, the unconditionality of moral law also demands that moral consciousness shift its ground to the standpoint of the other and refer to the judgment of the other. This reference cannot be for any particular other, much less for any particular opinion, but instead, presupposes the other as such, the other as the exigency, the principle of universality.

The concept of mimetic identification unfolds in the

Third Critique in two parallel themes: the socialisation of the beautiful and the internalisation of the sublime; the latter being the image, record and sign of the former as found in nature. Recognition of the beautiful marks the "social feeling", the acknowledgement of alterity within the subject, while we find the access to this feeling (it becomes manifest to us) through the sublime, the state of mind that correlates with this recognition. The possibility of subjective universality, which is what I would call an affective universality, is demonstrated in the first part of the *Third Critique* and is based on the notion of identification.

As we know, the "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment" of the *Third Critique* is dedicated to the question how the universality of the aesthetic feeling is possible and constitutes the main aim of the exposition of taste. The conclusion Kant will reach in this argument is that the universality of feelings is based on the presumed unity of the self and the other, primacy of which will render any other accord as merely predicated upon this one. Kant also shows that what is universally communicable in reflective judgment of taste is precisely the subjective principle itself, which is the feeling of pleasure and pain.[33]

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[33] As I will show in the chapter on the *sensus communis*, in this there is an explicit critique of the conceptual consensus (as well as of the communicative language), which is an "argued" consensus -- as Kant differentiates between the conflict [*Streit*] as the dispute that characterises the *sensus communis*, on the one hand, and the disputations that are resolved by the presentations of proofs, on the other.

Further, this universal accord which Kant calls the *sensus communis* will be defined as the so called "feeling of life" (*Lebensgefühl*), a feeling that results from the free play of all our cognitive powers and hence not limited specifically to external sense. A free play of faculties is the universal quality of *Lebensgef*ühl as it abstracts from the empiricism of private feeling of charm or attractiveness or emotion.

The notion of life, thus, becomes one of the crucial categories as we shall see in the sublime. Larger than experience and transcending the realm of the empirical, not merely a biological principle, it will become coextensive with reason itself. As a category it will also mark the horizon (of finitude) within which our comprehension of reason must be inscribed.

We can now see that what is important with regard to the *sensus communis* is that it does not require the accommodation to an actual public opinion, but instead it must accompany any such accommodation, since it is the <u>natural</u> basis of that which goes beyond and is prior to a mere "common human understanding". The possibility of agreement is founded on affectivity as such (not cognitive and conceptual formalisations that require representations) toward the other disclosed in aesthetic judgment. The identification with the other also marks respect for the other, to which later practical reason gives a rational formalisation through the

law. Before such formalisation, however, it is the feeling of life (*Lebensgefühl*) brought about by the identification that defines the sphere of the ethical.

In the exposition of the *sensus communis* it will become apparent that such a grounding of universality also forms the backdrop of Kant's notion of the public vs. private uses of reason: these two uses of reason are distinguished by respective communities where they find their root. Private use is contingent on an empirical community and thus lacks the universal character that the enlightened use of reason, its public use, has in the latter -- it is based in the universal community of the *sensus communis*.

It must be now apparent how Kant envisioned in the *Third Critique* the mitigation of the opposition between necessity (the realm of experience) and freedom (the realm of practical reason) in the realm of the aesthetic. This mitigation is accomplished through the function of aesthetic judgment: it is by means of its corollaries, the beautiful and sublime, that judgment conjoins the capacity of pure theoretical reason for experience and that of practical reason to posit moral ends. It is to this end that Kant introduces the notion of the *sensus communis* which demonstrates the possibility of the universality or transcendentality of feelings. From this it can be concluded that the two ends of reason and their corresponding realms -- the realm of experience and the realm of the universal ends -- (and to

demonstrate this confluence is the aim of this *Critique*) must also be inseparable. The strict opposition that exists between phenomenal and transcendental subjects is not dismissed. The aesthetic feeling, however, by transcending the boundaries of the *hic et nunc* and the empirical forms the realm within which the transcendental itself must be conceived.

We can now outline the shape of the subject emerging out of this development as simultaneously evolving around two separate axes: 1. there is the "pathological" and essentially egoistical self, the subject of the realm of necessity, for whom the relation to the object can be only means to ends, utilitarian; this is the self that can be said to be charged with the task of ensuring the integrity of the boundaries of itself in the face of internal instincts and external reality (desires and means of satisfying them). 2. Superimposed without being in conflict with this is another aesthetic reflexive self. It is this self's capacity to constitute itself through the identification with the other -- not necessarily of a particular other but rather of "another" in all its abstractness -- that enables the self to develop in concert with this other and find itself in a life not merely its own. This relation formed outside the means to ends relation constitutes the basis of autonomy, which now can be understood as freedom from the realm of necessity, but not necessarily freedom from an other. This is shown in the recognition of the beautiful -- the most decisive capacity for

the self -- the ability to function without needing to be represented.

Hence, it is on the very level of life, as Kant shows, that the self evolves first as not merely functional, i.e. embedded in the realm of necessity or gratification of needs and then seeking to transcend the limitation imposed by life itself. Affectivity, the capacity to interiorise, equally embedded within life, is the capacity that founds the intersubjective realm and therefore is inscribed within the ethical. Thus it is this aesthetic category defined also as the "feeling of life" that makes possible the precipitation of the practical within the realm of the phenomenal[34] without the need to posit suppression of sensuousness as a primary requirement of the law. In the sublime, for example, this movement is illustrated in the contiguity between facticity and the law that marks the instance when in a sudden "apprehension of the flow of time" all conceptual differentiations become suspended, to reveal, in an "instant" the affinity between nature and its supersensible end.[35]

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[34] It also marks the horizon of the finitude and temporality within which the subject is situated. Foucault, points out that it is the discontinuity of time and with it "the essential, permanent, obsessive relationship that our age entertains with death" that marks the subject's "sensitivity" to fleeting time, a result of situating the "eternal" within, not outside, the present instant. This "within finitude" becomes the topology of the transcendental. See, "What is Enlightenment?" in *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

[35] See on this theme, Jean-Luc Nancy, *L'expérience de la liberté*, (Paris: Galilée, 1988).

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The thematic of the sublime, no doubt, is the focal point of the critical thought, for it is the temporal character of the subject that is at issue in it. The sublime presents the most peculiar character of critical philosophy -- the awareness of thought's limitation as well as a certain defiance toward it. This is illustrated in the sublime in the twofold way. Thinking defies its own finitude by letting imagination go at the limit of what it can present. At the same time, reason, for its part, seeks "unreasonably, to violate the (critical) interdict"[36] imposed on itself which prohibits reason from finding objects that correspond to its concepts in the sensible intuition. This "unreasonableness" will mark critical thinking in its effort to think its own postulates. This, no doubt, explains the central place of the sublime within the self-reflection of reason. The sublime as the instance of reason's "unreasonableness" seem to mar the credibility of the very enterprise of critical philosophy. By highlighting reason's failure (a hubris of thought unable to transcend it's own limitation, mind's factical peculiarity [*Eigentümlichkeit*]) it points to the problematic structure of the critical thinking, its "obscure origin" in "unreason".

However, there is the sense in which the sublime

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[36] Lyotard, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime,* p.55.

vindicates this unreasonable origin of thought. As I point out in Chapter Three the "recoiled path" of Kant's thought which, as Heidegger remarked, hinted on Kant's awareness of the proximity of the sensibility and understanding was just a glimpse into the "labyrinthine" path taken by the critical thought later in the aesthetic. It was circumvented by Kant in schematism, where, according to Heidegger, the insight that could have led Kant (by emphasising the importance of imagination and time) to the origin of the transcendental in human finitude, became discarded in favour of the primacy of understanding and categories. Kant, however, returned to imagination and time in the "Analytic of the Sublime" of the *Third Critique*. Here, imagination asserted its supremacy over understanding by "overpowering" the inner sense of time and in the act of "reversing it" let reason "think without concepts".

This way of thinking is called *Übertragung*. Kant would be pressed by his critics to show that the discovery of this "special" feature of the mind is not merely his own fancy.[37] As it is customary with Kant he would point to the fact that it is merely self-evident and that language and especially ordinary language demonstrates it. Is it not true, also, that the reflective thinking finds its principle in "mother wit", the ability that "no school can teach", in *Witz, ingenium*? It is this capacity to *übertragen* ("transfer",

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[37] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* translated by Lewis White Beck, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1956), p.10.

"transmit" but, also, "translate", "communicate", "delegate" or "infect") that informs the philosophical thought itself. Thus, in the *Third Critique* the theoretical justification of the (sublime) state of mind required for reflective thinking is undertaken. This state must demonstrate that reason can think without needing to cooperate with understanding, i.e. it can think by *Übertragen*.

In the exposition of the theory of hypotyposis Kant points to the ability of thinking to proceed not through schemas but symbols. Hypotyposis can be schematic (direct presentation of an intuition to a purely rational concept) or symbolic (indirect presentation of an intuition to a purely rational concept). "Our language is replete with such indirect exhibitions according to an analogy..." (CJ., p.228, KU., p. 296). The notion of ground, or foundation, for instance, is one of such "indirect" concepts. Hypotyposes "express concepts not by means of a direct intuition but according to an analogy with one, i.e., a transfer of our reflection *(Übertragung der Reflection)* on an object of intuition to an entirely different concept" (*ibid.*).

Thus, the "transference" of thought has to take place when a "different", a "new", concept is contemplated. One of such concepts is ground, foundation, *arche*. Such a concept is analogically presented to the mind, and, thus, carries within itself a metaphorical charge that the

conceptual thinking could grasp only through *Übertragung.*[38] Can such metaphoric ambiguity be a proper way to "think philosophically"? This is indeed one of the most difficult questions that confronts Kant in the *Critique of Judgment.*

Here, Kant must seek to legitimise the synthesis of the architectonic of reason through a proper principle. This is reflection -- (reflective) judging, which is also, what he calls *Witz, ingenium,* a faculty that enables "discovery of the universal for the particular." The "ingeniousness" of the faculty of pure judgment lies in that "although it may not have a special authority to prescribe laws, it nevertheless possesses a principle peculiar to itself upon which laws are sought" (CJ., p.16). This law of laws, the *arche* law, is what will ground transcendentally the Kantian edifice of knowledge. But this law can be thought only indirectly, through a symbol or an ancillary image, through a <u>new</u> concept, in a word, as "*als ob*" or metaphorically.[39] In this sense this type of thinking becomes inseparable from its mode of expression -- from a special type of language.

In the preface to the *Second Critique* where Kant defends himself from the accusation that he arbitrarily "invented a new language" in the *First Critique,* he states:

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[38] See on this theme, Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy", in *Margins of Philosophy,* translated by A. Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 224.

[39] Jean-Luc Nancy, *Le discours de la syncope, I. Logodaedalus,* (Paris: Aubier-Flammarion, 1976).

"I have no fear, with respect to this treatise, of the reproach that I wish to introduce a new language, since the kind of language it deals with is very close to the popular way of thinking...to make up new words for accepted concepts when the language does not lack expressions for them is a childish effort to distinguish one's self not by new and true thoughts but by new patches on old clothes".[40]

If the accepted concepts can easily be expressed through the available means in language then his philosophical language is close to the popular way of thinking, but, what about "different concepts" that require new modes of expression? Kant shrugs off the reproach by insinuating that the critical language is itself "different". Kant in a peculiar note added to the above discussion maintains that the headings in the table of categories of practical reason directly follow the ordinary usage. The division of modality into the "permitted" and the "forbidden" corresponds to "duty" and "contrary to duty" of popular usage. The correspondence is almost exact, but still there is a difference ("not entirely foreign to ordinary language, but (it) is somewhat unusual")[41] in that the former is a merely possible precept, the latter, however, conveys the sense of "what is in such a relation to a law actually lying in reason as such". To illustrate this Kant adds: "an orator is not

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[40] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* p. 10.

[41] ibid.

permitted to forge new words or constructions, but this is permitted, to some extent, to a poet". But what if we place this relation under the heading of modality? In this case, there is no "thought of duty, for if anyone wishes to forfeit his reputation of a speaker, no one can prevent it".[42] Does this not mean, then, that the rule that governs the production of language is above the precepts set by a genre? Moreover, are not the accusers themselves confusing hypotyposis and concepts? And if the invention of new language is legitimated by the transcendental law itself, by the highest sense of moral duty, does it not mean that this invention must be "above" a trope or a genre? Can one forbid a philosopher what one permits a poet? Kant's answer must be no. The law itself permits the invention of new concepts, and since it is the business of critical philosophy to expound this law, it must also be obliged to invent new symbols, new metaphors, in order to present this law. It is a mother-wit, not learning that enables one to find this principle. Thus, the critical mode of representing is neither "foreign to ordinary language" nor to literature.[43]

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[42] ibid.

[43]When Hegel, perhaps best crystallising the reaction against Kant, identified the self-affirmation of autonomous practical subject as sterile and as having a paralysing effect on moral action, and then called the ethical law ugly *(hässlich und zu hassen)* and contrary to aesthetic sense, it was the "vocabulary" of the *Third Critique* that he was invoking against the master. See G.W.F. Hegel, *The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy,* translated by H.S. Harris and W. Cerf, (Albany: SUNY Press,

More to the point, however: if the sublime illustrates the "agitation" of the mind that accompanies reflection[44] (that is, when imagination coupled with reason produces hypotyposes by *Übertragung)* and thus is the inward sign of the (sublime) state of the mind that invents new rules, language, in its capacity to invent new words, is the outward sign of this process. Thus, the critical thinking is marked by the material peculiarities of the mind, by "agitation" or "affectivity" (defined by alteration of pleasure and pain experienced in the sublime) as well as its capacity to invent *(Witz)*.

4. Freud: *mimesis* and the work of mourning

Finally it is, perhaps, Freud's notion of the work of mourning that best outlines the importance of the identification for the formation of the self. My reexamination of the transmutation of feelings that takes place in the argument of the "Analytic of the Beautiful" draws an implicit parallel between Kant and Freud's notion of sublimation taken in the context of mimetic identification.

1977), p.154.

[44] Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View,* translated by Mary J. Gregor, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), p.111.

There have been efforts to bring Kant within the explanatory range of Freudian psychoanalysis. Remarkably, it is within this context that the most fruitful critique of Kant's moral law has emerged. This critique is present in the works of Adorno, Lacan and to some extent Deleuze.[45] Both for Adorno and Lacan the contradictoriness of the Kantian moral law makes possible its own overcoming. For their own work it marks the path of their efforts to redefine the principles of ethics beyond metaphysical values of subjectivity: for Adorno this contradiction is to be seen in the notion of the super-ego, for Lacan the undetermined desire -- "mysterious desire" -- the crossing of the invisible line between beauty and desire, what he calls outrage.[46]

Borrowing the psychoanalytic term and attaching it to the Kantian moral judgment, Adorno indicates the "arcanum" of Kant's philosophy through the notion of the super-ego.[47] It is a mark of the highest contradiction of the pure reason that the moral subject needs to be mediated through the transcendental postulates in order to be; this "spooking in

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[45] Gilles Deleuze, *Coldness and Cruelty,* (New York: Zone Books, 1991) and *Kant's Critical Philosophy,* translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

[46] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, (Book VII, The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960)*, translated by Dennis Porter, (New York: Norton and Company, 1992), p. 239.

[47] Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics,* translated by E.B. Ashton, (New York: Continuum, 1987), p.275.

the transcendental subject"[48] is the work of the super-ego and indicates the need of reason to transcend its own postulates. In other words, it is within its own eternal postulates that the subject confronts finitude and therein lies its internal critique. Adorno's critique, I think, is close to that of Lacan. For both, the law is untenable in its rigidity (the super-ego for Adorno), and thus leads to a contradiction which also turns out to be its saving grace. As Lacan points out, the repression that is the principle of the law presupposes the "emptiness" of the law which frees the ethical postulates of their determinations and lifts them from the realm of necessity.

Thus, Lacan too points to the "aporia" that is hidden within the structure of the law itself; Kant's rigorous formulation of a radically new conception, in which the law is no longer regarded as dependent on the good, (but on the contrary the good is made to depend on the law) transforms the law into a self-grounding principle, which means that the law has no longer its foundation in some higher principle from which it would derive its authority, but as self-grounding is valid solely by virtue of its own form. Hence, it is empty; it operates without making itself known. For Lacan, this undetermined character of law is equated with repressed desire. It is this repressed desire, according to Lacan, that gives rise to law: the fact that the law has no object or at

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[48] ibid.

best has an elusive object (because it is empty and must be devoid of all content), makes the law self-contradictory -- it cannot define its object without negating its own principle, which is repression (of desire).[49] The law equated with repressed desire -- this is Lacan's reading of Kant "with" Sade.

There is, however, a second point. The removal of the reference to the good extends Lacan's investigation further into the ethical and in a manner very similar to Kant's. The point of departure of his "Ethics of Psychoanalysis" takes up the question: "what can man desire after all his needs are satisfied?"[50] Lacan launches on the psychoanalytic investigation of the good. The question of the good must be asked after one "has eaten"[51] that is to say, after one has freed one's desire of all determinations. To displace hunger with something that is not edible is equivalent to sublimation and is the main element of the ethical query. Here one can draw a certain parallel between Kant's and Lacan's formulation of sublimated desire. The breakthrough of ethical investigation is achieved by Kant, according to Lacan,[52]when he posits that the moral imperative is not concerned with what may or may not be done: to the

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[49] Jacques Lacan, "Kant avec Sade",(*Critique,* 1963).

[50] Lacan, *The Seminar,* p.239.

[51] *The Seminar*, p. 322.

[52] *The Seminar*, p. 315.

extent that it imposes the necessity of a practical reason, obligation affirms an unconditional "Thou shalt". The void that this unconditional imperative opens is the rift between what Lacan calls the "desiring center" ("metonymy of our being") vs. the "service of goods".[53] This undetermined desire, ("mysterious desire") acquires an ethical value "before" the good as it stands in opposition to the sphere of goods that threaten to engulf the whole universe. Lacan opposes to the function of the good the function of the beautiful: "The beautiful in its strange function with relation to desire does not take us in, as opposed to the function of the good. It keeps us awake and perhaps helps us adjust to desire insofar as it is itself linked to the structure of the lure".[54] This reflection on the function of the beautiful parallels Kant's definition of disinterestedness, in that unlike the good which is embedded within the realm of necessity, it points to the relation not marked by utility. Sublimation, "satiation of hunger" by displacement (through taste) is the key moment both in Kant and in Lacan in apprehending the aesthetico-ethical sphere of the law without content, without object and beyond good.

Weiskel's influential reading of Kant after Freud bears specifically upon the Kantian sublime as it correlates with the sublimation effected through the Oedipal complex and

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[53] *The Seminar*, p. 319.

[54] *The Seminar*, p.239.

is in itself an interesting attempt at bringing these two thinkers together. According to this interpretation, the sublime is modeled on the Oedipal conflict acted out between the sensuous excess and the power of law. Weiskel describes the sublime as "the very moment in which the mind turns within and performs its identification with reason. The sublime recapitulates and thereby reestablishes the oedipal complex".[55] Here Kant's reason takes the role of the superego, the agency generated by an act of sublimation, "an identification with the father taken as a model".[56] I am not so much concerned at this point with the subtleties of this interpretation as with the correlation it points to, between Freud's sublimation of drives and Kant's transmutation of feelings and the importance of the concept of identification for both thinkers.[57] The importance of the identification, as I see it, however, lies not so much in demonstrating the perpetual conflict taking place within the self between the law and the sensuous, as Weiskel presents it, but more fundamentally between the different sensuous relations through which the self is constituted. Freud differentiates primary, anaclitic dependence on the object from mimetic,

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[55] Thomas Weiskel, *The Romantic Sublime,* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p.92.

[56] *The Romantic Sublime*, p.106.

[57] For the analysis of Weiskel's argument see, Neil Hertz, *The End of the Line,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p.50ff.

identificatory; if the first relation is marked by a certain "literal" apprehension of its object, the second transposes this relation into the sphere of the imaginary. It is in this sense also that mimetic relation is guided by a sensuous sign, a metaphor.

These two parallel movements that are responsible for the formation of the ego are analogous. They are similar, in as much as they are both processes of "incorporation" -- ingestion (functional process) and incorporation (psychical process) yet fundamentally dissimilar. Freud defines the first as the function of life, and the second as the function of sexuality, if by this we understand the sphere that is imported into the self from without, i.e. the site of intersubjective, affective, "psychic" relations to others. The conflict played out between these two functions is the conflict between life and sexuality, where this latter is understood as a certain threat to the integrity of the self and its life.[58] However, as Laplanche argues such an understanding of the Freudian ego is situated in a certain limited conception of the ego, as a differentiated individual and as a mere site of the conflict, enacted between drives and prohibitions within it. He proposes instead to look at a model

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[58] Such inference can be drawn from Freud's numerous interpretations of the ego, see in particular "The Psychoanalytic view of Psychogenic Disturbance of Vision", *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*, translated by James Strachey, (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), volume XI, pp. 209-219.

of this ego as a system, an instance of personality that is not a passive site of a conflictual struggle of drives, but an agency that delegates the functions whether it is "nourishment" or higher functions such as "perception", "consciousness", or "thought".[59]

Within this context, we can now understand the ego as the totality which experiences "the secondary functions as also imposed by the requirements of life." Hence, Freud's famous phrase --"finding of an object is refinding it".

Let us see what is at stake here. According to Freud, infantile sexuality frees itself from an entire series of nonsexual activities and emerges from the anaclitic stage, which has its first "leaning" on the self-preservative functions. In the various moments of anaclisis, the ego constantly rediscovers the guiding threads of contiguity and resemblance which cause the drives to emerge from the instinctual function and are defined by symbolisation of the aim and the object. The two essential phases here are first a metaphorisation of the aim, which takes us from the ingestion of food, at the level of self-preservation, to fantasmatic incorporation and introjection as actual psychical process, on the level of the drive and, second, what might be termed after Lacan, a metonymisation of the object, which by substituting something for the object that is a symbolic correlate of it

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[59] See Jean Laplanche, *Life and Death in Psychonalysis,* translated by Jeffrey Mehlman, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p.50.

(e.g. the breast for milk), introduces a hiatus between the actual object of desire and its symbolic representation. If on the anaclitic level the real object, milk, was the object of the function, which is virtually preordained to the world of satisfaction, on the level of incorporation an "object" is merely a symbol. (This is why incorporation can be understood as characterised by a certain *Objektlösigkeit*).[60] Thus, these series of identifications imply a carrying over from the primary needs and dependencies into the different sphere, the symbolic. However, this sphere remains precognitive, albeit a prototype of all knowledge, and is the level also of judgment, as Freud notes; this "primary" judgment, Freud adds, is valid in the first place for the perception of another human being, of a *Nebenmensch*: "...an object *like this* was simultaneously the [subject's] first satisfying object and further his first hostile object, as well as his sole helping power. For this

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[60] The reference to metaphorisation and metonymisation can be understood in the following way in the context of the Freudian text: neither the sexual object is identical with the object of the function, nor can the sexual aim be understood to be in a simple position in relation to the aim of the feeding function; it is simultaneously the same and different. The stimulation of tongue and the lips by the flow of milk is initially modeled on the function. Ultimately however, object, aim and source are intimately entwined and the process can be described as: "It's coming in by the mouth". "It" is the object; coming in is the aim, and whether a sexual or an alimentary aim is in question, the process is in any event a "coming in" by the mouth. At the level of the source we find the same duplicity: the mouth is simultaneously a sexual organ and an organ of the feeding function. Sigmund Freud, "Three Essays on Sexuality", *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* translated and edited by James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press), volume VII, p.135.

reason it is in relation to a fellow human-being that a human-being learns to cognize".[61]

In this context, the relation of the anaclisis and incorporation, can be understood as an alternating relation whereby "loss" is supplemented by "gain", this gain being merely "secondary". It is, however, important to keep in mind the function of this "secondary" relation. It is what guides a human individual's relation to the world as perceptions and judgments form and shape its relations to objects. And here finally we come to language and its singular status within the theory of identification. To take the notion of identification further, Torok and Abraham cast it in such a way that now it explains metaphorisation at the origin of language: speech as "another mouth-work" that is articulated in the community of "empty mouths".[62] This mouth-work is not "anaclitic" but rather a "secondary" mouth-work that supplements a direct relation to an object ("loss of food"). Thus, speech as such is always already informed with emptiness, it rises out of this emptiness. Speech of course cannot uncover, or reintroduce the lost object into the mouth. It establishes the relation to the object that is merely metaphoric and supplementary. As a result, speech also alters

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[61] "Project for a Scientific Psychology", *The Standard Edition,* volume I, p. 331.

[62] Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel,* volume I, edited and translated by Nicholas T. Rand (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 127.

the subject. Introjection and verbalisation at every instant transforms the self and initiates a (painful) process of reorganisation within it. The central moment of this process is that it represents the constitutive stage of the subject and is not merely ancillary of the primary dependence on the object. This language which is not yet conceptual seem to come "before" and hence is at the origin of language. Thus, as the autonomy of the subject is itself dependent upon the "duality" of the self, i.e. the other within the subject, so is the "speech of communication" parasitic upon metaphoricity of speech as we shall see in the concluding chapter.[63]

As such, introjection represents a struggle to conceptualise the border between body and psyche. Most significantly for our purposes it answers Kant's query about "how could it have happened that modern languages especially have come to designate the power of aesthetic judgment by a term (*gustus, sapor*) that merely refers to a certain sense organ" and that, moreover, continues Kant, this process has become associated with the positing of moral ends which resembles the act of tasting something wholesome: "it is even more curious that *sapor*, skill in testing by sense whether I

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[63] Fantasy, to note in passing, is what Kant would call *Schwärmerei;* it would be based on a different "work" of the psyche, that is, on incorporation and would involve de-metaphorisation rather than metaphorisation which would result in loss of reality. This can be interepreted as a process whereby the anaclitic, primary, relation to an object becomes the only real relation for the ego -- a version of "cannibalism". see Torok & Abraham, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

myself enjoy an object...was raised to the name of wisdom itself (*sapientia*), presumably because we need not reflect and experiment on an unconditionally necessary end, but take it into soul immediately, as if by tasting something wholesome".[64]

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There is indeed a parallel between attempts to reread both Freud and Kant along these lines. Freud, equally "difficult", confines the idea of the ego to the rigidity and violence of repressions. Nevertheless there is implicit in Freud (as has been shown by Lacan and Jean Laplanche among others), the idea of the subject that is constructed not along the unilateral axis and the fixed distinctions between the primary needs and drives on the one hand and repression, law and denaturalization on the other, but rather along lines that articulate the notion of the ego whose very constitution is based on an equally "primary", (however "indirect"), imaginary and symbolic relation to the other; this notion also implies another attitude toward the other, that takes place between the reality principle and the function of the imaginary; corresponding to this subject is language in the context of

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[64] Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by Mary J. Gregor, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), p.109.

which the communicative function becomes possible only if understood as predicated upon the metaphoric origin of the sign. The correspondence between Freud and Kant perhaps is simply due to a fundamental exigency of its object -- the contradictions inherent in the notion of the subject itself and thus dictated by it. This "fidelity" to the problematic structure of the subject, was, after all, one of the central points of the project of the *Critique of Judgment* -- to mediate the relation between the phenomenal self and the noumenal self without suppressing the difference between them.

Let us try to bring together various threads of this discussion. First we have seen that what is at issue in the *Third Critique* is not a logical structure of a certain type of judgment, but the nature of the subject itself. Kant's treatment of this theme, in the sense that he had stressed the importance of the aesthetic within the formation of the transcendental self, had also set the parameters of the problem for subsequent thinkers. I have underscored the role of mimetic identification in the formation of the Kantian subject. Freud who was first to make this theme the object of his investigation elucidates what in Kant was merely implicit (but no less unequivocal). Out of this interpretation emerges the notion of ethics which does not conceptualise the sensuous in opposition to reason; instead, it shows that through affectivity the other becomes the very principle of the

transcendental and thus the most central concept of the Kantian ethics.

5. Temporal character of the Kantian subject

The keystone of the Kantian system is that it posits the complete and categorical difference between the sensible and the supersensible, between freedom and necessity, between the order of discourse (knowledge) and the order of transcendence (the power of law). Two types of metaphysics ensue from this division -- metaphysics of nature and metaphysics of morals.[65]

The problem, however, with this division is the problem of which Kant himself was acutely aware from the outset of this project: it was that "snare" *(Skandal)* of reason which, according to him, gave birth to his critique.[66] For Hegel, as we saw above, this dichotomy posited by

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[65] Like the craftsman the philosopher should make sure he or she is not a jack-of-all-trades. In the nascent industrial society, thinking itself should conform to the division of labour. It is not only for the rigour of thought as it reflects the different talents in philosophers "so that the craft does not remain on a barbaric level" that the division of labour is required. It is a nature of systematic thinking that makes this division possible and also desirable. *The Foundations of Metaphysics of Morals*, translated by Lewis White Beck, (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1959), p. 4.

[66] Immanuel Kant, *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, (Berlin: Walter de Greyter & Co.) bd. 12, (780).

consciousness *(Verzweiung)* resulted in the extreme onesidedness of reason. In this schema, according to Hegel, the subject's absolute autonomy was privileged and in fact this onesidedness became the condition of the possibility of this autonomy. Let us dwell on this point for a moment.

Kant's procedure in discussing the phenomena is to treat them as "the things in themselves" as they <u>appear</u>, i.e. as representations. To be more precise, we must distinguish between the representation and what is presented. That which is presented to us is initially the object as it appears. Yet even the word "object" is too much for it. What presents itself to us, or what appears in intuition, is initially a phenomenon as sensible empirical diversity (*a posteriori*) ("I am not saying the bodies merely *seem* to be outside me...it would be my own fault, if out of that which I ought to reckon as appearance, I made mere illusion" [B 69]). However, Kant's insight is that the phenomenon appears in space and time: these are the forms of all possible appearing, that is the pure forms of our intuition and sensibility. What presents itself is thus not only empirical phenomenal diversity in space and time but the sensibility that has a capacity to present pure intuition *a priori* in the form of space and time. Thus, representation itself is already a fruit of the synthesis, a fruit of the faculty of a reception and synthesising imagination. In brief, the affective traces of objects are assimilated and then presented as representations.

aesthetic but actually constitutes this experience as well, it offers, if we might put it so, a subjective (aesthetic) image of experience. Kant is quite clear about the status of the objects for the mind: "they [objects] are nothing to me...", unless they are shaped and framed by the mind, of course (CPR., A 496).

In perfect keeping with this account, as the mind works to constitute experience, it must necessarily submit this experience to its own legislation. This is the meaning of the Copernican revolution in Kant. The fundamental idea and the essential discovery of this revolution "in ways of thinking" is that reason is legislative. Reason "commands" nature and does not "beg", and it even frames "for itself with perfect spontaneity an order of its own according to ideas, to which it adapts the empirical conditions" (CPR., B 576/A 548). In Kant's view, because self-consciousness proceeds from itself alone (reason "is occupied with nothing but itself" (CPR., B 708/A 680)), its claims cannot be based on any other Archimedean point but its own. A radically new task for philosophy is now to determine the condition of the possibility of things. Self-consciousness as "spontaneous" must determine for itself what to accept as evidence about the nature of things, and ultimately, what to regard as an appropriate evaluation of action. It is completely self-determining, not bound to the "given" as foundation, nor committed to the dogmatic belief that the order of thought and

the order of things are one. Kant is certain about this: pure reason must be practical, and it, as an object of the will, must make human freedom possible.

The firm point on which reason can set down its lever is reason's inner idea of freedom, which on account of the unshakable law, stands there as a secure foundation for setting the human will into motion by its principles alone, even against nature in its entirely. This is its inviolable majesty. No inclination, even happiness, can motivate the will.

> Man now finds in himself a faculty by means of which he differentiates himself from all other things, indeed even from himself in so far as he is affected by objects, and that faculty is reason. This, as pure self-activity, is elevated even above the understanding...with respect to ideas, reason shows itself to be such a pure spontaneity that it far transcends anything which sensibility can provide it...[67]

For theoretical consciousness, self-determination means that which is sensuously given does not provide an adequate criterion for knowledge. One cannot grasp the essence of things through mere perception.[68]

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[67] Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 8.

[68] "For although experience forms a system under transcendental laws, which comprises the condition of the possibility of experience in general, there might still occur such an infinite multiplicity of empirical laws and so great a heterogeneity of natural forms in particular experience that

This leads Kant to conclude that the ground and the foundation of certainty must be sought within the subjective and it is only in such a way that this "sensation be universally communicable" (CJ., p. 157). It is indeed "unnatural" in Kant's own words to "go against nature" (*Natur zuwider zu sein)*, that is to mistrust the senses and what one perceives. That what is inner, that what one senses within -- "the intimate self", "the inner life", or in short, "the subjective", cannot be perceived. It does not mean, however, that this "innermost" lacks the "objectivity" or "reality". In fact, taken in the context of what we have just said, it is the only certainly and reality available to consciousness. De Villers, the first French Kant expert describes the Kantian consciousness as the unmeditated reality, as an "organ of life" that is capable of revealing itself to itself: "Here is the only reality that can be grasped by man. This reality is not his cognitive organ, or some object that can be grasped by his eyes or ears. It is his intimate I that immediately manifests itself to the I. It is the central point of his being; it is through it that the self is, that it is alive".[69]

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the concepts of a system in accordance with these empirical laws would necessarily be alien to the understanding..." (CJ., first introduction II.)

[69] *"Voila, la seul des REALITES que l'homme puisse saisir. Ce n'est pas son organe cognitif que est ici, en jeu, cesi n'est point-un object qu'il saisisse mediatement par ses yeux ou par ses oreilles. C'est son moi intime qui se manifeste immediatement au moi; c'est le point central de son etre,*

But must this interiorisation be necessarily such unmeditated manifestation of the "I" within the "I"? In fact, Hegelian characterisation of the Kantian *Verzweiung* can be understood as follows: the "I" that stands apart from the world it perceives is also the "I" which is a part of this world. Hence, the subject finds itself divided within. It is time (the "inner sense") as a "form of interiority" (now not measured by movement but as an absolute form, that gives shape to movement and its flow) that separates and distinguishes the spontaneous "I" and the experiencing subject in time from each other. Time becomes internal to us -- the "I" as determinable in time and the "I" that determines it. Hamlet's phrase "time is out of joint" captures the essence of this rift. As a result of the interiorisation of time, to paraphrase Hamlet "It is I who is out of joint". My existence can never be determined as spontaneous, as it is only determined in time, under the form of time that is as changing, as receptive, phenomenal. On the other hand, I must carry out a synthesis of time and that which happens in time.

Thus, our interiority constantly divides us from ourselves: "I is not me". Further, to recall in the *First Critique* (see, especially "Concepts of Reflection and

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ou par ses oreilles. C'est son moi intime qui se manifeste immediatement au moi; c'est le point central de son etre, s'est par-la qu'il est, qu'il est vivant", (my translation), Charles de Villers, *Philosophie de Kant,* Redigé a Paris pour Bonaparte et Imprimé comme Manuscrit, 1801, p. 17.

"Transcendental Dialectic") the universality was grounded on the unity of intuition of space and time where Kant claims that the locus of all the possible experience is in *ens imaginarium* ("nothing") (CPR., A 291).[70] This nothing or *ens imaginarium* is the "infinite given magnitude" and it must underlie all representations. It is also *reflectio* (a state of mind) -- a formal condition of all appearances of objects. The "zero degree" of all conceptualisation, as pure space and time this *reflectio* comes before all determination and, above all, before that of the determining self. Hence, the movement which presupposes this reflection can be understood as a permanent activity of figuration that constitutes and forms the self as such. The law of this figuration, is not that of determination; this rule that governs the formation of the self is "attraction" or *mimesis*. From this perspective, we can understand how the self is related to the "I". As permanent projecting and transmutation the self forms itself as it acts according to the law of the inner sense, i.e. time. This process seems to be a necessary effect of positing the inner sense as that which underlies all representation, that which precedes the self as a determining singularity.[71] Thus, time and space give a rule to the self, which guides the transmutation of the self from the phenomenal to the

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[70] The importance of time is discussed in Chapter Three.

[71] Roger Caillois, "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia", *October*, 31, 1984, pp. 18-32.

transcendental.[72] Thus, we can see that *mimesis* precedes any other principle within the subject. In short, time and space as interiorised, (as the subject's "inner sense"), define the subject as "more" than this "inner self", more that its own facticity as it transcends and projects itself outside itself through mimetism. Hence, from this point of view, the notion of the determining subject presupposes the prior "law" of *mimesis*. This theme will emerge in the *Third Critique* (in the Analytic of the Sublime) as central in defining the Kantian subject. It will define the subject that is irreconcilable from within as having a prior configuration based on the affects. The *Third Critique* introduces the theory of the affects to show how pleasure and pain through a subjective principle of taste form the subject prior to acquiring the boundaries that let it become an isolated particularity -- the phenomenal "I" (which in order to exist must then seek to relate to others). Kant, thereby, provides the basis for mediating the inner with the transcendental by positing the universal subjective principle -- the universal community of the senses, the *sensus communis*.

At approximately the same time at which Kant had formulated the notion of this "enlarged way of thinking" an enigmatic figure appears in the ethical writings of his British contemporaries, that of the impartial spectator. The

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[72] Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*, translated by Richard A. Cohen, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987), p.33.

notion became a current one of the day. Kant himself made use of it in order to further define his own notion of the ethical community. In the "Reflexionen zur Anthropologie" Kant writes of "the man who goes to the root of things" and who looks at every subject "not just from his point of view but from that of the community" and then adds, in brackets "the impartial spectator" (*der Unpartheysche Zuschauer*).[73] It is in this context that Kant's discussion of the "enlarged community" in the *Third Critique* must be understood.

In this view, the subject that underlies all determinations, that is, the transcendental subject, is not the subject that is torn apart through a contradiction between the phenomenal and the noumenal, but rather the subject that is outside this dichotomy; the affective subject -- an *Unpartheysche Zuschauer*.

6. Kant's ethics and its precursors

Kant's attempt to bring the feelings into the philosophical discussion has its historical precedent in the writings of his British colleagues, of Hume and in particular of Adam Smith. Hume gave prominence to the idea that morals were derived from

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[73] "*...weil er auch nicht blos aus seinem, sondern aus Gemeinschaftlichem Gesichtspunkte es betrachtet (der Unpartheyische Zuschauer)*", (my translation), in *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 15. p. 334, # 767.

"sentiment" or feelings. Adam Smith's theory is built on a similar notion of the importance of the feelings for ethics. His notion of "impartial spectator", "the other within", that is conceptualised through the sympathetic identification with other persons, was designed to argue with those utilitarian theories that deployed feelings or egotistical motivations as "prime movers" of morality (Hume). Smith argued that sympathy was the basis of impartiality and thus universality of ethics, because of its capacity to identify with the other, not because it was a drive for satisfaction of desires. Smith's theories and his notion of the impartial spectator, as I will show in a moment, no doubt helped Kant formulate his own aesthetic theory and its importance for ethics. This proximity with the themes of his contemporaries shows that Kant's effort to place aesthetics in the centre of the philosophical research was not an isolated instance, but that aesthetics had already acquired a dominant place in modern thought.

Kant was aware of the attempts made by Hutcheson's, Hume's and Adam Smith's theories which gave prominence to the idea that morals derived from "sentiment" or feeling and that morality must lie "in yourself, not in the object" (Hume). Hume, for example, argued that moral judgment cannot arise from reason because reason can never move us to action, while the whole purpose of moral judgment is to guide our actions. We are moved to act not by this or that being the case, but by the prospect of pleasure or pain that informs what is or will

be the case. It is the passions and not reason that are aroused by the prospect of pleasure and pain. Since reason cannot judge passions, Hume concluded that: "Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions" and that "'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger".[74] On this idea Hume built his utilitarian ethics: self-love, self-profit and utility are the "prime movers" of morality. If reason indeed is enslaved to passions then whence comes the moral "ought" that by definition is regard for another? "In general, it may be affirmed that there is no such passion in human minds as the love of mankind, merely as such, independent of personal qualities, of services, or of relation to oneself".[75] Therefore, according to Hume, there is no natural regard for public interest. And if a society has moral laws they are merely derivatives of self-interest and utility. The transition from natural determination ("is") to morality ("ought") is a matter of extension of the concept of utility. Ought is a merely useful organising principle that enables individuals in a society to pursue their private interests.

Now, the Kantian heteronomy between the phenomenal and the noumenal realms makes it impossible indeed to posit any direct transition from the "is" to "ought". By

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[74] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* edited with an analytical index, by L.A. Selby-Bigge. 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), II, 3,3.

[75] *ibid., III, 2, 1.*

introducing the sentiments into his moral theory, is Kant thereby agreeing with Hume that after all these two realms are the derivatives of each other?

Kant shows that his own morality is based on the categorical imperative and therefore must be absolutely unconditional. Let us look at the difference between two ethical imperatives -- hypothetical and categorical as defined in *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. What distinguishes these two imperatives is their relation to a community.

The hypothetical imperative presupposes that the acts carried out through the hypothetical command have a relevance within the community in and through which these acts find a meaning; they are of the type: "if you want to be a statesman, a wife, etc. you have to act in such and such a way." There is a determined cause and effect as well as the determined goal that this act implies. A goal and means to get to it are prescribed and definite. Therefore, this command does not rise above the realm of natural determination.

To act according to the categorical imperative is to obey the moral law. This obedience does imply "can", and thereby "is". The "ought" that Kant is speaking about is completely detached from its root connection with the fulfilment of a particular role or from carrying out of a functions of a particular office i.e. from contingent events and needs and from social circumstances. If the hypothetical

imperative is of the nature of "you ought to do such and such because ..." where the conditions are either of skill or prudence and is always contingent on a finite, empirical community, the categorical imperative has no such condition. It is addressed to everyone. You simply ought, that is all, no other reason is given than that it is moral to do so. It is for you, the addressee, to do, if you happen to be there. You must obey, or feel guilty and not know why.

Kant's test of a true moral precept is not its usefulness but that it must be consistently universalised. This means that a moral precept as a universal law should be not only valid for an "enlarged mentality" (*eine erweiterte Denkungsart*) but, in addition, be a law of nature itself. That is, although this "enlarged mentality" which is the equivalent of the *sensus communis* does not have to coincide with any existing community and thereby be determined by it, nevertheless, the universality that is implied here must be consistent ("can without inconsistency").[76] The test of the

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[76] Kant with this distinction of two imperatives shows clearly the difference between two public spheres. One is an actual community, in his words private community, which is empirical community and the other transcendental community that grounds the categorical imperative. Hannah Arendt who makes use of the Kantian notion of community associates the "speech", "the discourse" of the "*sensus communis*" ("silent communication") with the Greek *peíthein* (an opposite of *dialegésthai)*, which, according to her, is "the convincing and persuading speech which they [the Greeks] regarded as the typically political form of people talking with one another", ("because it excluded physical violence") and thus, I think, wrongly associates the Kantian moral community with the community proper, i.e. a community that can be embodied by a polis, Hannah Arendt, "Crisis in Culture" in *Between Past and*

categorical imperative is its congruity with nature and this is why there are those who argue that Kantian morality is parasitic upon some previously existing morality and therefore flawed.[77] However, if it indeed presupposes a certain relation to nature, it does not mean it also renounces its premise of unconditionality as the notion of affectivity demonstrates.

Let us, however, turn to the preceding argument where Kant claims that the division within the will between command and obedience implies that there is no knowledge of what one must do, and perhaps is best described as "blind obedience". Hence, it is always *velle* and *nolle* -- a condition that the subject finds itself in is a perplexity whether to will and not to will. St. Augustine complains of this "disease of the mind", or a "monstrous situation", for the will commands that there be a will, it commands itself, "...it commands not another will but itself.. if it were complete, it would not need to command the will to exist, since it would exist already".[78]

Future (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p.223. It is noteworthy that Hegel, in rejecting the dualism inherent in the *Critique of Practical Reason* drew an opposite parallel with the Greeks: he had contrasted this dualism -- of which he had detected analogues in the Judaic religion and in Christianity - with the Greek e'*thos* of reconciliation.

[77] Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics,* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1966), p.197.

[78] Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, translated by Henry Chadwick, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), IX, 8.

This type of "morbid condition" (Augustine) seem to shift the emphasis in morality on to "will-power", to "discipline" (Kant), in contrast to action (bringing about, acting upon something as a basis of moral action). What matters for Kant, and what he considers moral is the obedience to a moral precept, not the action resulting from it. What is the divided will? In terms of Rousseau's political philosophy political power must be in the image of individual will power. In the ideal state "citizens ha(d) no communication one with the other" -- "each citizen should express only his own opinion".[79]

Kant, however, is far from politicising the will in such a way. Morality cannot come under the sway of natural determination for there is a gulf between the effective "countability" of knowledge and accountability of the will. In other words, the boundaries of knowledge and the will and their attending forces cannot be blurred. Then how and according to what principles does the will act?

Kant was not to follow Hume and thus renounce his own morality of the unconditional law. The utility cannot be a ground of the derivation of the "ought", similarly, altruism cannot be rooted in self-interest whereby utility turns natural exigency into the moral imperative.

Kant's own theory of the affects stands closer to

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[79] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, translated and introduction by G.D.H. Cole, (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1973), p.185.

Adam Smith's theory of moral sentiments. Smith followed Hume and Hutcheson on the idea of moral sentiments, with the very important exception (especially for Kant) that he considered utility as absolutely opposed to the moral imperative. The Germans took an interest in Smith, but mainly in the field of aesthetics -- Lessing in *Laocoon* (1766) quotes a passage from Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* in his own translation.[80] Herder also makes several references to it, the earliest one being in his aesthetic work, *Kritische Wälder* (1769). The first German translation of this work was of the third English edition and appeared in 1770. Kant knew and valued it, judging from a letter of 1771 written to him by Markus Herz. A passage in this letter speaks of "the Englishman Smith, who, Mr. Friedlaender tells me, is your favourite (*Liebling*)" and compares it to another related work by Lord Kames, *Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*.[81] Here, too, reference is made to its relevance for aesthetics.

Smith, along with the concept of sentiments emphasised the importance of "a spectator", a notion which helped shape the disinterested character of the moral agent.

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[80] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoon,* edited by William A. Steel, (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1949), p. 21.

[81] "*Ueber den Engländer Smith, der wie Herr Friedländer mir sagt, Ihr Liebling ist, habe ich verschiedene Remarken zu machen. Auch mich hat dieser Mann ungemein belustigt, aber gleichwohl setze ich ihn dem ersten teil von Home Kritik bey weiten nach*", (my translation), Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften,* vol. 10, p.121. About German reception of Smith, see Walter Eckstein, *Einleitung*, in Adam Smith, *Theorie der ethischen Gefühle,* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1977).

He introduced this notion into his theory in order to refute the utilitarian notion that moral actions are initiated by self-interest. The spectator is not personally involved, as is the agent or a person affected by the action. This theory of moral judgment implies impartiality. Hutcheson and Hume although they too resorted to the idea of a spectator never used the adjective "impartial" in this connection. It may have been suggested to Smith by Addison's dedication of volume I of *The Spectator* which begins: " I should not act the part of an impartial spectator, if I directed the following paper to one who is not of the most consummate and most acknowledged merit". The originality of Adam Smith's impartial spectator lies in his development of the idea to explain the source and nature of conscience, i.e. of a man's capacity to judge his own actions and especially of his sense of duty.

It is not hard to see how Kant's own idea of "disinterestedness" in the *Third Critique* touches upon these themes. Let us look at Smith's own development of this idea since he goes to great lengths on this subject in order to show that utility is not a right criterion in evaluating moral judgment. According to him, conscience is a product of social relationships. Our first moral sentiments are concerned with the actions of other people. Each of us judges as a spectator and finds himself judged by spectators. Reflection upon our own conduct begins later in time and is inevitably affected by the more rudimentary experience. "Reflection" here is a live

metaphor, for the thought process mirrors the judgment of a hypothetical observer. "We suppose ourselves the spectators of our own behaviour, and endeavour to imagine what effect it would, in this light, produce upon us. This is the only looking glass by which we can, in some measure with the eyes of other people, scrutinize the propriety of our own conduct".[82] The looking-glass requires imagination: Smith's impartial spectator is not the actual "man without" but an imagined "man within". When I judge my own conduct I do not simply observe what an actual spectator has to say; I imagine what I should feel if I myself were a spectator of the proposed action.

There is an important difference between this view and the more straightforward idea that conscience reflects the feelings of real external spectators. If I imagine myself as a spectator, I may on the one hand fail to overcome my natural partiality for myself as the actual agent, and in this respect "the man within me" may be an inferior witness. But on the other hand "the man without" is liable to lack relevant information that I possess, and in that way the judgment of conscience can be superior to that of actual spectators. Smith showed how the imagined impartial spectator can reach more objective opinion than actual spectators, who are liable to be misled by ignorance or the distortions of perspective.

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[82] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* edited by D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie, (Indianopolis: Liberty Press, 1976), (III.I.5).

Imagination can conjure up a spectator free from those limitations, just as it can enable us to reach objective judgments of perception.

Against popular opinion Smith argues that "the jurisdiction of those two tribunals, of the impartial spectator and of the actual spectators, are founded upon principles which, though in some respects resembling and akin, are, however, in reality different and distinct".[83] The judgment of the real spectator depends on the desire for actual praise, that of the imagined impartial spectator on the desire for praiseworthiness. Smith maintains the distinction in other parts of the new material added to the sixth edition, especially in his treatment of self-command.

In Smith's view, the mainstream of ethical theory has offered only two suggestions for a firm criterion of right action: one is utility and the other is the impartial spectator, however, it is in the latter's sympathetic feelings and impartiality that the right answer is found: "none of those systems either give, or even pretend to give, any precise or distinct measure by which this fitness or propriety of addiction can be ascertained or judged of. That precise and distinct measure can be found nowhere but in the sympathetic feelings of the impartial and well informed spectator".[84]

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[83] *Moral Sentiments*..., III.2.32.

[84] *Moral Sentiments*..., VII.II.I.49.

No community and its judgment can replace this "spectator" : "The applause of the whole world will avail but little, if our own conscience condemn us; and the disapprobation of all mankind is not capable of oppressing us, when we are absolved by the tribunal within our own breast, and when our own mind tells us that mankind are in the wrong " And "... whatever may be the authority of this inferior tribunal which is continually before their eyes, if at any time it should decide contrary to those principles and rules, which nature has established for regulating its judgments, men feel that they may appeal from this unjust decision, and call upon a superior tribunal, the tribunal established in their own breast to redress the injustice of this weak or partial judgment" "...the judgement of this supreme arbiter ... is the applause (*Beifall* in Kant). This other within is devoid of all particularity: "We conceive ourselves as acting in the presence of a person quite candid and equitable, of one who has no particular relation either to ourselves, or those whose interests are affected by our conduct, who is neither father, nor brother, nor friend, either to them or to us, but is merely a man in general, an impartial spectator who considers our conduct with the same indifference with which we regard that of other people...".[85]

The impartial spectator is not a god, but a demigod that resembles more a *daemon* of the poets than God the Father.

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[85] *Moral Sentiments*..., III.2.30.

When he has to pass judgment he is divine, but in his suffering he appears as mortal:

> ...This demigod within the breast appears, like the demigods of the poets, though partly of immortal, yet partly too of mortal extraction. When his judgments are steadily and firmly directed by the sense of praise-worthiness and blame-worthiness, he seems to act suitably to his divine extraction; But when he suffers himself to be astonished and confounded by the judgments of ignorant and weak man, he discovers his connection with mortality and appears to act suitably, rather to the human, than to the divine, part of his origin.[86]

But how does one orient oneself toward this "man within", the "great inmate"? It is not enough to "model" one's own behaviour in order to seek an approval of the "impartial spectator". It is important to *identify* with him inwardly through sentiments and feelings.

> He has been in the constant practice, and, indeed, under the constant necessity, of modelling, or of endeavouring to model, not only his outward conduct and behaviour, but as much as he can, even his inward sentiments and feelings, according to those of this awful and respectable judge. He does not merely affect the sentiments of the impartial spectator. He really adopts them. He almost identifies himself with, he almost becomes himself that impartial spectator, and scarce even feels but as that great arbiter of his conduct directs him to

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[86] *Moral Sentiments...*, III.3.24.

feel.[87]

We can see a similarity between the Kantian notion of the affects and its connection with the impartial spectator in the sense that it is the most perfect other, a most abstract image of the other; we "know" of it because we "identify" with it. The abstraction that this "other" exhibits is not a "conceptual" abstraction. The shape and the origin of the transcendental subject is revealed as formed by the identification with the other, through the affectual relation: "the self identifies with the other, almost becomes himself the other" (Smith). This identification cannot be cognitive, as cognition belongs to a different order. This identification, in fact, precedes cognition. It would be more accurate to say that the universality that thus takes shape is imaginary (i.e. as a product of the faculty of imagination) and affective. Furthermore, as taking place prior to concept formation the language of communication in this order is substantially different. Kant says, the universality of this state must be communicated but that the language of this communication is silent. This language, because it is universal in the highest degree, must come prior to the "conceptual language of communication".

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[87] Ibid.

7. Outline of thesis

In Chapter One I present an overview of the Kantian system as a whole. The relevance of the aesthetic, as we shall see, is in showing the "concrete" nature of reason, its "life-pulse" (Hegel) so to speak. One of the main aims of the *Third Critique* is to show that sensuousness is not alien to reason. It is the architectonic of reason itself, its systematic "organic" structure constructed through the analogous *techne* with nature, that is "signalled" in the apprehension of the beautiful. The "feeling of life" *(Lebensgef*ühl) brought forth (experienced) in this apprehension marks the self as at once body and ethical being, because this realisation of the self as body is concomitant with the realisation of the *"mit"(gefühl),* of being with the other, the feeling of the *sensus communis* and with the ethical as such. This topic is treated at length in Chapter Two. Chapter Three examines the concept of the sublime and its relation to the notion of life developed in the *Third Critique*. In the "suspension" of the understanding, in the violence done to inner sense (to time), and to the self's ability to frame the experience according to concepts with the help of this inner sense, nature or life itself is revealed not as framed by categorical distinctions, but as something beyond it -- as categorial, as the transcendental and noumenal substrate -- the law; not an abstraction, this transcendental law manifests itself in the

sensuous presence of nature.

In conclusion, I turn to Kant's notion of language as developed in the *Third Critique*. It is one of the central notions here because of the special status that language holds in the mimetic identification. Mimetism is at the origin of language -- it defines the possibility of language. Moreover, as the comparison with Levinas shows, it founds language on the ethical basis. The ethical law makes the language of communication possible and not the other way around -- that is, language is possible only as based on the *aesthesis,* the anterior communicability of the senses. The notion of the metaphor, of the *als ob*, which bridges the gap between the theoretical and the ethical discourses conveys precisely this idea.

Chapter 1: SYSTEM

> For what the highest degree may be at which mankind may have to come to a stand, and how great a gulf may still have to be left between the idea and its realization, are questions which no one can, or ought to, answer. For the issue depends on freedom; and it is in the power of freedom to pass beyond any and every specified limit.
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> -- Kant[1]

> We should be able at the same time to show the unity of practical and theoretical reason in a common principle, since in the end there can only be one and the same reason, which must be differentiated solely in its application.
>
> -- Kant[2]

> Reason is the fundamental category of philosophical thought, the only one by means of which it has bound itself to human destiny.
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> -- Marcuse[3]

1. System of critical philosophy

In the spring of 1784 Kant celebrated his 60th birthday. By

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[1] CPR, A 317/B 374.

[2] Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, translated by Lewis White Beck, (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill, 1959), preface 391.

[3] Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p.135.

then his major work, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, had been available for three years and his second major work, the *Critique of Practical Reason*, was just a few years away. The *First Critique*, after years of neglect and miscomprehension, had by this time, begun to be read more widely and was even enjoying a certain commercial success. Kant was beginning to become well known not only as a teacher, but as a major philosopher of his age. In celebration, at his birthday, his students presented Kant with a medallion that on the one side had his portrait with his (incorrect) date of birth. On the reverse was depicted the leaning tower of Pisa with a sphinx at its foundation. The image of a tower of knowledge, had been suggested by Moses Mendelssohn, and was taken from the *Prolegomenon*. The exergue reads in Latin "*Prescrutatis fundamentis stabilitur veritas*".[4] That this might be taken as a comment on the precariousness of his or any philosophical edifice was certainly not the intention of his admirers, but it must have stung Kant nevertheless. The image, awkwardness aside, is an eloquent one: that of the foundation of a system of knowledge as a sphinx (the ultimate enigma and metaphor for silence) and the presentation of the ground as ultimately non-representable. Later, in the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant too will look to Egypt for an "aesthetic idea" of the unrepresentable introduced by the symbol of

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[4] "*Nur durch genaue Erforschung der Grundlagen wird die Warheit festgestellt*", A. Gulyga, *Immanuel Kant,* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1981), p.161.

nonrepresentability, only this time it will be Isis, Goddess of Nature and the Unrepresentable.

It is the very logic of the complete, the very possibility of the system being "closed", Kant feels, demands that one ultimately confront the notion of non-representation. This will be the main issue and the very starting point for thought and language in Kant's systematic philosophy.

The issue to which Kant returns in the *Third Critique* with the vigour of a final effort, is the unity of reason, and with it the unity and the final shape of a "complete" philosophical system. This happens to be a system of his own manufacture, of course, viz.: critical philosophy. The *Third Critique* is the work that must bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical parts of Kant's philosophy and, thus, is its final articulation.

The *Third Critique*, as the final and "binding" part of the system, is also a meditation on a philosophical system as such. It is a peculiar kind of self-reflection in which Kant explores philosophy as a living organic system complete unto itself. In the *First Critique* he had indicated the need for unity in human reason, since it is by nature architectonic: "That is to say it regards all our knowledge as belonging to a possible system" (*ibid*. B 502/A 474). Architectonic is the "art of constructing systems" (*ibid*. A 832/B 60). It is a doctrine that turns a mere systematic aggregation of knowledge into scientific knowledge, into a

whole body of organised knowledge. This is the task that the aesthetic must accomplish in the *Third Critique*.

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For Kant's successors, this work had a special significance because it accentuated the weakness of critical thought by attempting to correct it. In Hegel's opinion, this is the work that came closest to resolving the contradictions within thought itself and to positing totality and the Absolute. Kant's *Third Critique*, Hegel writes, "sets forth the rhythm of knowledge, and of scientific movement", but in its effort to establish at last the unity of the Idea in the present as the "concrete" and not as the "beyond", the triplicity of Kant's system has merely hinted at fulfilling these promises. Its fault, and its failure, according to Hegel, consists in that thought here still unfolds itself in the subjective form alone and remains one-sided, therefore, he concludes that it is not more than a good introduction to philosophy.[5] According to Hegel, as work "beyond" critical philosophy, the *Third Critique* also posits that which was missing from consciousness sundered apart by the "split" nature of this philosophy. Nevertheless, for Hegel, this effort is still rudimentary. He grants, that the intellect has to exhibit

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[5] G. W. F. Hegel, *The History of Philosophy*, translated from the German by E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson, vol.III, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), p.472 ff.

correctly the opposites of what it has posited, as well its "bounds, ground and condition", which Kant has done. However, reason must unite these contradictories: it "posits both together and suspends them both".[6] This final suspension of contradictions, the final turn of reason, will, according to Hegel, always be missing from critical philosophy, despite the effort made in the *Third Critique*. Therefore, Hegel says, he will start here, at the site where Kant failed, to erect his own edifice of knowledge. Thus, perhaps, it is Hegel who is partially responsible for the fact that the *Third Critique* has come down to us with the gravity of a failed project. Its difficulty and incomprehensibility can conceivably be explained by a failure, first, to rectify the wrongs inherent in the Kantian enterprise, and second, to completely carry through with its own exigency -- the absolute unity of the phenomenal and the noumenal. This criticism would make sense, however, only if we assume that Hegel's "corrections" in the name of the Absolute were necessary.

Nevertheless, Hegel, even with all his self-serving exaggerations, has singled out the problem which happens also to be the starting point of Kant's philosophy. Kant radicalised the theory of knowledge not by expanding but in fact by limiting the claims he will make on absolute

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[6] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's Systems of Philosophy*, translated by H.S. Harris and W. Cerf, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977), p.103.

knowledge. Finite knowledge, for Kant, is the only knowledge that is possible. This is exactly why absolute knowledge or infinite understanding is reduced by Kant to an idea of reason, in a way a mere "adjunct" of understanding. By taking finitude as a starting point of his theory of knowledge, the traditional questions of metaphysics now have to be reconsidered from this new point of view. Hence, with this new beginning point, the principle characteristic of human knowledge, the fact that it is always bound to sensibility and to intuition, cannot be ignored, or relativised. Sense-based knowledge can now finally acquire its full legitimacy. Kant affirms the importance of the sensible, of the aesthetic and the immanent, while the rest is dismissed as a metaphysical illusion. However, legitimating such a starting point needs to take an account of the relation between finite sense-based knowledge and the immutable ideas of reason itself. Therefore, beginning with finite knowledge as the first block in the foundation of a new theory of knowledge still ultimately requires the eventual positing of the unity of all reason. Subsequently, Kant's task would be to negotiate what at first seems unnegotiable -- the finite and the ground of its possibility -- the immutability of reason. This is why the notion of the system is so central to Kant's argument. System is what regulates the relationship between the finite and the infinite. The *Third Critique* will provide the outline of this system.

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According to Kant the structure of knowledge can be represented as an edifice with a firm foundation on which the edifice itself must rest. Spatial metaphors help define the topology of the system: knowledge must be systematic and the system itself can be said to have a topography in space, for example, a base or a foundation on which the superstructure of knowledge can be built. A systematic unity grounds as well as gives a plan and unity of procedure for the exposition of knowledge. Reason can supply a plan of inquiry into that knowledge. "Reason has insight only into that which it produces after the plan of its own" (CPR., B xiii). This is why reason is always in the position of a judge. Although it learns from nature, it does so by compelling "the witnesses to answer questions which he has himself formulated" (CPR., B xiv). A capacity to judge as we shall see is also a capacity to supply transcendental principle to nature. It is this principle that will distinguish philosophical system from other systems of knowledge.

In the *Third Critique,* Kant once again recapitulates a point that he had made in the *First Critique*: that unity and systematicity is "natural" to reason, since reason itself is by nature architectonic. There is a certain idea of a philosophical system -- of an organic system -- that underlies Kant's thinking about philosophy. The organic is also archi-

tectonic (technical), as opposed to mechanical. It is on this distinction that the exposition of the system will rest in the *Third Critique*.[7]

Kant defines a philosophical system as unifying the manifold modes of knowledge under one idea -- a concept of a whole that defines *a priori* not only the scope of the whole but, also, the position of parts within this whole. Further, Kant compares a philosophical system to an organisation of a living being, to an organic body: "It may grow from within (*per intussusceptionem*), but not by external addition (*per appositionem*). It is like an animal body, the growth of which is not by the addition of a new member, but by the rendering of each member, without change of proportion, stronger and more effective of its purposes" (CPR., A 833/B 861). In the preface of the *First Critique* he states: "For pure speculative reason has a structure wherein everything is an organ, the whole being for the sake of every part, and every part for the sake of all the others..." (CPR., B xxxviii).

In the *First Critique* Kant chooses a model that the new metaphysical system will follow and this model must derive from the methods of sciences. For Kant, the main purpose of the critique of pure speculative philosophy is to completely

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[7] The importance of the exposition of the system in the doctrine of the *Third Critique* is discussed in Helga Mertens, *Kommentar zur ersten Einleitung zu Kants Kritik der Urteilskraft: zur systematischen Funktion der Kritik der Urteilskraft für das System der Vernunftkritik,* (Muenchen: Berchmann, 1975).

revolutionise the study of metaphysics and refashion it in the image of sciences (CPR., B xxii). This will be a fresh beginning for metaphysics -- a scientific beginning and Kant will have metaphysics embark on "the secure path of a science" (CPR., B vii). However, he cautions, and we will see in a moment why, that this is only by analogy "as species of rational knowledge, may permit" (CPR., B xvii). Science and philosophy both are formed by the very fact that they are coterminous. In this relationship philosophy will supplying a plan of knowledge. This, however, will redefine the boundaries of science. The essence of philosophy, consists in circumscribing the limits of knowledge: "Indeed it is precisely in knowing its limits that philosophy consists" (CPR., B 726/A 754).

This new beginning of philosophy must also redefine the relationship to its own past. Metaphysics before Kant had been a battle-ground *(Kampfplatz)* of controversies. His science of metaphysics, will stand outside this controversy, Kant argues. Polemics, with which philosophy had been preoccupied until now, had been, according to Kant, a sort of "exercise in mock combats" *(ibid.)* that led nowhere. A mere "groping among concepts" -- is the assessment that Kant gives to what has gone before him in the history of philosophy. Kant wraps up the whole history of pure reason on the very last pages of his immense work, *Critique of Pure Reason*, and reduces it to a two page struggle between rationalism and

empiricism. Philosophy on these pages indeed appears as an uneventful record of struggles where nothing really took place, nothing but this repetition of nothing that could not lead thought anywhere.

If polemics had been up to now, the real history of philosophy where nothing took place except that new conceptual frameworks were created to replace old ones, then the only stake in this struggle had to have been the rewards arising out of simply another struggle for power. The polemics a partisanship in philosophy had produced nothing. No real scientific advance had been made and there had certainly been no unanimity of contentions that is necessary to ensure a secure starting point for thought.

So, if Kant's critical philosophy was to be centred outside this battle, it could now assign itself the function of arbitrating old or present conflicts of metaphysics[8] in the name and in the interest of reason -- it can be an "impartial" arbitrator of all conflicts of thought. Kant proposes with his "experiment" to follow the path of science which as a result of a "sudden revolution" in thought, in particular in

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[8] see also, Immanuel Kant, "On the Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy", in *Raising the Tone of Philosophy*, edited by Peter Fenves (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). This is a polemical text written against certain Platonists. It exemplifies a circular way in which a critical philosopher engages in a polemic: in order to guaratee that the polemic is conducted according to the principles of human reason it is first necessary to establish an "eternal peace" -- a common ground (reason).

mathematics and natural science, has found a true path to knowledge.

Kant sees the fault of the previous developments of philosophy in that they lacked the sense of history. This is because philosophy unlike the sciences has had no object. The sciences are devoted to the augmentation of knowledge of their object, and by virtue of this have a history (which is a history of this development, of this augmentation). This is why, Kant concludes, the history of metaphysics has been a mere game for nothing, a mere transformation of forms of thought, a mere record of who was "stronger" and when.

The reason of this stagnation, was that attention was never given to any object of inquiry, and, more specifically, to pure thought itself. Philosophy as "a fundamental science" (CPR., B xxiv) must reclaim it as its object. Indeed, Kant criticized Wolff's work on the grounds that it was marked by the lack of "critique of the organ, that is of pure reason itself" (CPR., B xxxvii). Thus, it is "the critique of the organ", that will earn philosophy a place among sciences.

Kant contends that by following the discovery and work of Copernicus in particular (CPR., B xvii), and by imitating the procedure of sciences philosophy, too, would be able to determine the objects a priori: "it should be possible to have knowledge of objects *a priori*, determining something in regard to them prior to being given" (*ibid.*). This is the

Copernican revolution carried over into philosophy. In the center of this inquiry is the philosophical "organ", "tool" -- pure reason itself.

This "carrying over" transforms metaphysics. In this new topography of knowledge, despite the fact that it might seem that metaphysics should trail after ("meta") the sciences, metaphysics, in fact, will come first. To use a spatial metaphor again -- metaphysics will be at the bottom, at the foundation of the edifice of knowledge, and the sciences will be built on this foundation. This difference and hierarchy between the sciences and metaphysics will be maintained because the "object" of philosophy will appear to be radically different from an object of science. Furthermore, this object will also redefine the structure of knowledge, and will further specify the structure of philosophical system. As a result, scientific methods will become useless in the context of philosophy.

For example: "... mathematics (*Messkunst*) and philosophy, although in natural sciences they do go hand in hand, are none the less so completely different, that the procedure of the one can never be imitated by the other" (CPR., A 726/B 754). Although mathematics provides an example of success in pure reasoning, its methods, when applied to philosophy, not only are useless but can lead to illusory fantasy (CPR., A 712-13/B 740-1). It is important to "cut away the last anchor of these fantastic hopes, that is to

show that the pursuit of the mathematical method cannot be of the least advantage in this kind of knowledge" (CPR., B 726/A 754) and "in philosophy the geometrician can by his method build only so many houses of cards, just as in mathematics the employment of a philosophical method results only in mere talk" (CPR., A 727/B 755). The choice of this precarious ground of transcendental concepts "... permits them (sciences) neither to stand nor to swim, and where their hasty tracks are soon obliterated" (*ibid*).

Hence, what distinguishes this metaphysical science from the old metaphysics and any other system of knowledge is the knowledge of the finite (an "organ" of philosophy, the mind). Furthermore, philosophy, by "choosing" or rather by discovering its object, transforms and redirects its task. As a result, it also acquires a "limit" as it can now define itself in relationship to its object. Most important, philosophy becomes more "topical" in a sense: as a result of this fundamental transformation it finds what it lacked before -- a standpoint, a place of its own, a foothold, from which it can arbitrate and judge. *Kampfplatz* and "polemic wars and struggles" will have no place in philosophy any more. Philosophy now can become non-partisan, impartial, stand outside but also intervene into theoretical discourse, because it has a broader vantage point. Paradoxically, it is the fact that it is limited and limiting that will provide a place from which to view knowledge also in a broader way:

> No one attempts to establish a science unless he has an idea upon which to base it. But in the working out of the science the schema, nay even the definition which, at the start, he first gave of the science, is very seldom adequate to his idea. For this idea lies hidden in reason, like a germ in which the parts are still undeveloped and barely recognisable even under microscopic observation (CPR., A 834/B 862).

This broader view of knowledge is what Kant calls "universal interest" and it is this interest that must define the "impartial", non-partisan, standpoint. Science cannot supply this interest. What the mere description of a project always lacks, is a universal interest, the idea, and the overall plan of inquiry of what one has done:

> Consequently, since sciences are devised from the point of view of a certain universal interest, we must not explain and determine them according to the description which their founder gives them, but in conformity with the idea which, out of the natural unity of the parts that we have assembled, we find to be grounded in reason itself. For we shall then find that its founder, and often even his latest successors, are groping for an idea which they have never succeeded in making clear to themselves, and that consequently they have not been in a position to determine the proper content, the articulation (systematic unity), and limits of the sciences (*ibid*).

The difference between scientific structure and philosophical structure is that scientific knowledge is

constituted by a unity that is merely mechanical, and not organic or architectonic. More specifically, the "end" of this structure, Kant argues, lies outside itself. It is not limited from within but without. What makes the reach of philosophy as "fundamental science" (or as a knowledge that has attained completeness), exceed that of any other type of knowledge, is that philosophy is able to graft on other type of knowledge and delimits the whole plan of science in order to reveal its internal structure.

> It (metaphysics) is a treatise on the method, not a system of the sciences itself. But at the same time it marks out the whole plan (*Umriss*) of the science, both as regards its limits and as regards its entire internal structure (*Gliederbau*)... Since it is a fundamental science, it is under obligation to achieve this completeness (CPR., B xxiii).

It is in this way that "the labors of reason can be established on a firm basis" (CPR., B xxxv). Reason is at home here. This domesticity of reason, Kant insists once again, is natural to reason: "we cannot well refrain from building a secure home" (*ibid.*).

Thus, the relationship between the sciences and metaphysics is fundamental in a literal sense, because metaphysics is at the foundation of any knowledge. It provides what no other system of knowledge can supply -- a limit as a foundation. Furthermore, this new philosophy does

not only concern itself with theoretical knowledge, but it must also exceed it in order to limit it. Philosophy is itself practical since it is a domain of practical reason that delimits that of the theoretical. It is, one might say, a practice (practical in the Kantian sense making its object actual [CPR., B x]).[9] So if the value of this relationship may, at first glance, seem negative because metaphysics is able to draw a dividing line inside the theoretical field, by standing outside it limit its scope, in fact, it is in a position to protect knowledge from both illusion and dogmatism. Its stake is the fate of the scientific practice. It exceeds science, it stands outside it but if philosophy is in a privileged position to sciences, it is only with it, in connection and relation to it that philosophy itself becomes a science. It is neither ideological nor partisan, it is a fundamental science. Through this relation an abstract and ahistorical concept of reason transcends the limits of false consciousness, or ideology, by linking itself to "human destiny" or "general human interest" (CPR., B xxxi), interest that is supplied by practical reason. It is in this sense that philosophical inquiry is practical and emancipatory.

The essence of philosophy, then, seems to lie in the excess that it produces in the field of knowledge, that it is

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[9] "We are immediately convinced that there is an absolutely necessary *practical* employment of pure reason--moral..."(CPR., B xx).

more than knowledge, this "more" being, also, in a way, the other of knowledge. By putting finite knowledge in the center of his concern, making it into an "object" of philosophy, Kant transformed the structure of systematic knowledge. To the study of the organ of knowledge corresponds the organic structure of systematic philosophy, the peculiarity of which lies in taking the subjective as the starting point to prove the immutability of the "concrete". The key to this study is the reflective judgment the exposition of which is the task of the *Third Critique*. As Lyotard puts it: "For in critical philosophy the very possibility of philosophy bears the name of reflection."[10]

The *Third Critique* does not reorganise the relationship of theoretical to practical reason, but, rather, it further defines it. To posit the necessity for the overarching architectonic is not new to the *Third Critique;* it is present in the earlier *Critiques* as well. What is newly developed in the *Third Critique* is the thought that for the system as a whole to sustain itself, it is now necessary to consider reason in its proximity to the sensuous and the finite. The undeveloped thought of the previous *Critiques* of a "mystery and hidden art" inherent in reason, but also of the "incomprehensible factuality" of practical reason will now be clarified. This clarification was perhaps Kant's most lasting

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[10] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime,* translated by E. Rottenberg (California: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 31.

contribution to that tradition of German philosophy (Heiddeger, Adorno etc.) which, although it disrespected the isolated achievements of Kant's first two major critiques, embraced the idea of reason developed in the third.

The discussion of the concept of the beautiful, to which I will turn next, recapitulates the theme of the relationship of theoretical and practical reason. The idea of the beautiful ("the voluptuousness of nature") sets a limit on our comprehension of nature through the concepts of understanding. "Nonknowledge is the point of view whose irreducibility gives rise to the beautiful, to what is called beautiful."[11] Out of this irreducibility there arises another type of knowledge -- the knowledge of the purposiveness of nature -- of a causality that has "nothing analogous to any causality known to us" (CJ., p.254), that is to say, to the category of understanding and its determination of necessity in time. Reflective judgment by contemplating nature as beautiful limits understanding and its laws and posits rational (transcendental) principle as above and beyond these laws. This ability to "judge" defines reason's proximity to the sensuous of nature; it is, indeed, this sensuous, the irreducible alterity, that which does not subordinate to any law "we know of" that becomes a guarantor of the transcendental law of reason. Thus the *"Übergang"* ("the

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[11] Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting,* translated by Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 91.

passage" [the crossing over] of the sensuous to reason) that is depicted in the *Third Critique* must also be the very premise and the starting point of the critique of reason.

2. The concept of beauty and the Kantian system

In the *Third Critique* Kant poses a question: "why nature has so extravagantly spread beauty everywhere" (CJ., p.142)? and proceeds to elaborate this question.

In the introduction to the *Third Critique* Kant distinguishes two types of judgement -- determinative and reflective. Judgement in general is an act by which the manifold is brought under unity. When consciousness masters a plurality of the manifold, by schematising and finding rules for it, it performs a judgement which is determinative. This is a type of judgment we see in the *First Critique*. It consists in the accord between imagination -- which by synthesising posits the sensible as a manifold -- and understanding -- which by collecting this manifold under unity of the "I" fixes the final synthesis. By so doing judgement unifies the manifold under the legislation of the "I" and converts the manifold brought under its rule into the object of knowledge. Understanding comprehends sensible nature through the laws it applies to it and with their aid grasps what is given it in experience. Determinative judgement

mediates the relation between theoretical reason and its object -- sensible nature -- and finds a logical validity of concepts for them. Reflective judgement, on the other hand, must seek the particular rule of unification of a given manifold by means of reflection on the object. For this purpose, reflective judgement, which is also called a critical faculty (*facultas dijudicandi*), posits the existence of purposiveness in nature. This is a merely subjective presupposition drawn from the observation that nature exceeds the bounds imposed on it by the unity of determination. The surplus that nature produces exceeds the limitations imposed by understanding and its laws. The name that Kant gives to the excess is "beauty". Beauty provides "voluptuousness for the mind in a train for thought that he can never fully unravel" (CJ., p.167). From the point of view of the theoretical consciousness (and determinative judgment that defines it) the judgment of taste that appreciates this beauty is an aborted logical judgment. In the apprehension of the beautiful the subject displays not sound understanding (*sensus communis logicus*) but, rather aesthetic common sense (*sensus communis aestheticus)* (CJ., p.138).

Kant argues that we have a tendency to infer from the formal subjective purposiveness of nature[12] -- beauty

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[12] For a detailed account of the concept of purposiveness see Georgio Tonelli, "Von den Verschiedenen Bedeutungen des Wortes Zweckmässigkeit in der *Kritik der Urteilskraft", Kantstudien* 49/2, 1957/8.

experienced in aesthetic pleasure -- that there is beyond mechanical causality of nature another causality which can objectively determine its own production. We look at nature with favour (*Gunst*), and we ascribe the objective and real purposiveness to it. By doing this, we transform it into a purposive principle, the principle of "natural purpose" and thereby confer upon it an absolute freedom that is incomprehensible to finite understanding, and posit the absolute categoricity of this purpose. Judgement, which "compares the concept of a natural product as it is with what it ought to be" then imputes onto it the technicality (the capacity of organic production) and thus validates its freedom through the necessity of this judgement. Because this judgement exhausts the physico-mechanical explanation of nature, as it acts on this imperative, it achieves its purpose by negating the claims of cognitive consciousness and, in so doing, posits the freedom of objective nature itself (its capacity to produce itself organically and not mechanically). This is to take nature as analogous to art, as an "organisation", the principle of which is finality (purpose). "This principle, which is also the definition of organised beings, is: *An organized product of nature is one in which everything is a purpose and reciprocally also a means*" (CJ. p.255).

In other words this organisation exhibits spontaneous causality of will, that is to say, it is its own

cause and, at the same time, its own effect. This type of causality -- final cause (*nexus finalis*) is formulated in counterdistinction to efficient cause (*nexus effectivus*): "A causal connection, as our mere understanding thinks it, is one that always constitutes a descending series (of causes and effects): the things that are the effects, and that hence presuppose others as their causes, cannot themselves in turn be causes of these others. This kind of causal connection is called that of efficient cause" (CJ. 250, KU., 318). The former type of causality is conceived in terms of the concept of reason (the concept of purposes). This causality is differentiated in the following way:

> ...here we could call a thing the effect of something and still be entitled to call it, as the series ascends, the cause of that something as well" and Kant also adds: "This sort of causal connection (*Verknüpfung*) is easily found in the practical sphere (namely, in art) (*ibid.*).

Now, the whole point of the argument hinges upon the distinction between mechanical causality and organic causality, between the machine and the organism. The "inscrutable property" which is organic causality has to be understood by analogy of art or life i.e. as real and existent, however, it remains inexplicable. Inexplicable not because it contradicts reason, but because it exceeds it. We must only speak of it analogically, since, as it exceeds our

cognitive determination it also exceeds the language that is based in this determination:

> But intrinsic natural perfection, as possessed by those things that are possible only as natural purposes and that are hence called organized beings, is not conceivable or explicable on any analogy to any known physical ability, i. e., ability of nature, not even - since we too belong to nature in the broadest sense - on a precisely fitting analogy to human art *(ibid.)*.

This "inexplicable art" allows us to "use a remote analogy with our own causality in terms of purposes generally, to guide our investigation of organised objects and to mediate regarding their supreme basis -- a meditation not for the sake of gaining knowledge either of nature or of that original basis of nature, but rather for the sake of [assisting] that same practical power in us [viz., our reason] by analogy with which we were considering the cause of the purposiveness in organised objects" (CJ., p.255).

Hence, the distinction between mechanical and organic causalities consists in the following: although we may be inclined to regard subjective purposefulness as the ground of an objective purpose, we cannot make such a transference from one to the other. Our conceptual mode of thinking and expression can deal perfectly well with what nature presents, and thus affirm that it is more "reasonable" to see nature in terms of mechanical causality and to see beauty as merely

relevant to our own feelings and reflective judgment as only contingent. As an explanation, the physico-teleological view is just as suitable. We can explain away "how cattle need grass, and how people need cattle as a means for their existence" but, then, as soon as we seize upon this thought we are unable to explain ... why people should have to exist..." (CJ., p.258).

That is to say, we can oscillate between mechanical and technical causalities because ultimately, there is nothing in nature that can allow us to posit the final purpose. However, beauty clearly shows that nature does not merely obey mechanical causality, that it goes beyond a mechanical determination: "Strictly speaking therefore, the organisation of nature has nothing analogous to any causality known to us" (CJ., p.254), that is, the necessary causality in time. Through beauty nature reveals itself as "more" than the sum total of empirical laws. Thus the beauty makes it necessary to posit transcendental principle (CJ., p. 89) and it is through it that beauty realises its practical function. Moral consciousness, which is unconditional and legislates over freedom rather than nature, thus finds the effectuation of the final purpose -- the unity of freedom and nature -- in the domain of nature through the consciousness of natural purposiveness. This final purpose cannot be realised but in a sensible being:

> The effect [at which we are to aim] according to the concept of freedom is the final purpose which (or the appearance of which in the world of sense) ought to exist; and we must presuppose the condition under which it is possible to achieve this final purpose in nature (in the nature of the subject as a being of sense, namely, as a human being). It is judgement that presupposes this condition *a priori*, and without regard to the practical, [so that] this power provides us with the concept that mediates between the concepts of nature and the concept of freedom (CJ., p.36).

"Final purpose is a concept of our practical reason" (CJ., p.345). Moral law prescribes an end without condition. Here, reason takes itself as an end, and freedom gives itself a content as supreme and determined by law. The final end is "man under moral law (CJ., p.340)", as a being which is a part of an organisation of moral beings under moral law. Here lies the absolute unity of a practical finality and unconditioned legislation. Further, this unity forms a "moral teleology", insofar as practical finality is determined *a priori* in ourselves with its law. "The moral law is reason's formal condition for the use of our freedom and hence obliges us all by itself, independently of any purpose whatever as material condition. But it also determines for us, and *a priori*, a final purpose, and makes it obligatory for us to strive toward [achieving] it; and that purpose is the *highest good in the*

world that we can achieve through freedom" (CJ., p.339).

Thus, in the moral community, the final end -- "man under moral law" (*ibid.*) -- as a noumenal supersensible being, becomes also the last end of sensible nature: the concept of freedom must realise the end imposed by its law in the sensible world. One of the ways that this condition is realised, as we have seen, is in aesthetic finality and teleology. Here the unity of the natural end and the final end is realised in the unconditional freedom of both. Thus, the natural end is nothing other than the final end. Here the unity of all ends "the idea of totality of all ends", indeed, the determinant of the will, shows that these ends are not incompatible. Thus it is the absolute moral duty of the human soul to "hope and further" the natural law, "natural rights arising out of the common human understanding" (whose expositors are philosophers and not lawyers)[13] since it is only in accordance with it that the end of reason can be realised.[14] Here, as Kant affirms, thanks to this inversion, within the very duality and incompatibility of the ends of reason there lies their convergence: "For in the face of the omnipotence of nature, or rather its supreme first cause which is inaccessible to us, the human being is, in his turn, but a trifle. But for a sovereign of his own species also to

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[13] Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, Translation by Mary J. Gregor, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), p.161.

[14] *ibid.*, p.157.

consider and treat him as such, whether by burdening him as an animal, regarding him as a mere tool of their designs, or exposing him in their conflicts with one another in order to have him massacred -- that is no trifle, but a subversion of the ultimate purpose (*Endzweck*) of creation itself"[15].

This idea is expressed in Kant's analysis of the French revolution:

> The revolution of a gifted people which we have seen unfold in our day may succeed or miscarry; it may be filled with misery and atrocities to the point that a sensible man, were he boldly to hope to execute it successfully the second time, would never resolve to make the experiment at such cost--this revolution, I say, nonetheless finds in the hearts of all spectators (who are not engaged in this game themselves) a wishful participation that borders closely on enthusiasm, the very expression of which is fraught with danger: this sympathy, therefore, can have no other cause than a moral predisposition in the human race.[16]

The principle that is revealed through this event (*Begebenheit*) is "something moral and pure" and as such it is presented as the acknowledged duty of the human soul "which hails, with such universal and impartial sympathy, the hopes for its success and the efforts toward realising it (*ibid.*). Here, Kant judges this event as a spectacle that merits an aesthetic response from "all spectators". This

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[15] *ibid.*, p.161.

[16] *ibid.*, p.153.

event, whose principle can never be presented, because of its unpresentability and "purity", nevertheless tells the following: that this event is a phenomenon of evolution, not of revolution, of a constitution in accordance with natural law presented in the form of duty (*ibid.*). The response to this immanent determination is sympathy which is equivalent to properly moral interest -- respect. With this, the rational formalisation of practical reason brings concrete sense to what it determines. Thus, the contingent accord of sensible nature with human faculties, the final relation of nature and rational finite being is fulfilled within human finitude itself. Nature reveals the "not yet" of this finitude in a form of duty and imperative and the condition of its realisation, as we can now just glimpse, in the moral community that is "not yet" -- *sensus communis*.

Thus, beauty is a constant reminder that we must not "forget" practical reason. It is a necessary reminder. Kant shows with clarity that it is easy indeed to "forget" ethics, because it is after all "contrary" to understanding, to logical common sense and its mechanical determination.

Kant takes beauty in a certain sense to be a given (CJ., p. 142). However, what kind of a given can it be? As an "object" not of determinate but of reflective judgment it is marked precisely as a "non-given" of the sensible intuition, as absence and as such a "sign" and an indication of that other which is not given empirically. In other words, beauty

is a disclosure of absence in the sensibly given, a sign of the "emptiness" in thought. Judgment is made, transcendental principle discovered, through some other materiality which is in this case auto-affection. The subject reflects on its own state to discover that there has occurred something -- that the mind has been affected. This affect is a sufficient material sign for thought to reflect on the given -- in this case on its own state. As the transcendental principle is based on such auto-affection, this reflection must be a necessary condition for thought. In the next two chapters I will attempt to look closely at the process of affection. It is this process that defines the disinterestedness in the subject. As we shall see in the next chapter it is through affectivity (pleasure and pain) that the empirically given becomes interiorised and thus transformed in an aesthetic object for thought. More precisely, the interiorisation of the object here means "taking the object in" as something that has affected us, not simply as a thing that can be comprehend through a concept and, hence, be reduced to our own mode of apprehension, to the conceptual apparatus that is not altered by it. In reflective judgment, on the other hand, the self is forced to discover a new rule through which it can grasp the sensible. As we saw, such a rule was to posit the transcendental in nature. The key in this process (in achieving the state of disinterestedness) is the subject's "withdrawal from the inner sense", that is to say, from the

determination through concepts in time. This is the theme developed in the sublime to which Chapter Three is devoted.

Chapter 2: SENSUS COMMUNIS

> Taste is a power of making *social* judgements about external objects as we imagine them.-- Here the mind feels its freedom in the play of images (and so of sensibility); for social relations with other men presuppose freedom -- and this feeling is pleasure.
>
> -- Kant[1]

> The profounder basis is the soul [*Seele]* itself, the pure Notion which is the very heart of things, their simple life-pulse...
>
> -- Hegel[2]

> The Thing-in-itself is altogether an empty, lifeless abstraction. In life, in movement, each thing and everything is usually both "in itself" and "for others" in relation to an Other, being transformed from one state to the other.
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> -- Lenin[3]

1. **Aesthetic faculty**

In the *Critique of Judgment*, the final part of the critique of reason, Kant takes on two formidable tasks. The first centres

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[1] Kant, *Anthropology,* p.109.

[2] G.W.F. Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic,* translated by A.V. Miller, (London: Humanities Press, 1976), p.37.

[3] V. I. Lenin, "Philosophical Notebooks", *Collected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1963), volume 38, p.109.

around the investigation of that faculty of mind that derives from the capacity for pleasure and pain, as well as its corollary faculty that he calls judgment. For his second task Kant attempts to mediate the division between the theoretical and the practical parts of critical philosophy. In so doing Kant hopes to bridge what has been up to now the large gap between nature and freedom and, thereby, complete his philosophical system.

The effort is fraught with difficulties. To begin with, given the binary structure of the subject that is implied in the division between the cognitive and the ethical in the two previous *Critiques*, this new agenda might seem puzzling. Desire (the faculty of the moral subject) engages in the production of the good, cognition (the faculty of the theoretical subject) in the production of the truth. Kant, as we know, treats this distinction as non-negotiable. So, how can the *Third Critique* now overcome this distinction without attenuating the claims to self-sufficiency of each of these parts as described in the earlier works?

Second, the threatening spectre of sensuousness was always denied a place among the higher faculties of the mind. It was only by repudiating the sensual (as the pathological), that these higher faculties were constituted in the first place. Yet here, in the *Third Critique*, Kant elevates the faculty of pleasure and pain to the transcendental level, although it is true he maintains that the aesthetic faculty,

in comparison with the faculty of cognition and the faculty of desire, still remains "the least rich in *a priori* grounds of determination".[4] Further, even though it also gives rise to the teleological part of philosophy, there is no positive doctrine that arises directly from it. "The power whose own principle we are here trying to discover and discuss -- the power of judgment -- is of a very special kind: it does not on its own produce any cognition at all (whether theoretical or practical) and regardless of its *a priori* principle, it does not supply a part of transcendental philosophy as an objective doctrine, but constitutes only the connection (*Verband*) of two other higher cognitive powers (understanding and reason)" (CJ., p. 431). Kant speaks of the exposition of the doctrine of judgment as propaedeutic and at the same time as encyclopedic. The former, he explains, is an introduction of a proposed doctrine, while the latter introduces the doctrine itself into a system of which it is a part. The *Third Critique*, then, provides an introduction to the system and lays the necessary groundwork for it. So, paradoxically, the weakness of the faculty to which the *Third Critique* is consecrated, is also its strength: it lays the ground of the system of reason, its first building block.

Ostensibly at least, the *Critique of Judgment* does not claim to produce an auxiliary doctrine that can span the

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[4] Immanuel Kant, *Philosophical Correspondence, 1759-99*, edited and translated by Arnulf Zweig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p.127.

gulf between cognition and desire. Previous to Kant, there had been other aesthetic theories that linked moral and cognitive concerns to the aesthetic, but Kant wishes to set himself apart by insisting that one cannot speak of knowledge in connection with aesthetic taste (Baumgarten), or of the beautiful in connection with truth or the concept of the good, or of the *sensus communis* as it has been worked out by Hutcheson,[5] Hume and Adam Smith in connection with "moral feelings". Rather, what Kant takes as the domain of the aesthetic is that which is non-conceptual and that which has nothing to do with the desire and will. This is the notion of disinterestedness.

Kant separates aesthetic feeling -- and therefore, according to his own understanding, virtually the whole of art -- from the faculty of desire at which the "representation of the existence of an object" is aimed. At the same time, as the aesthetic faculty emerges as autonomous and independent of desire, we receive that first indication of the inclination to morality in the subject. This seems like a paradoxical modification of the doctrine of the *Second Critique* which centres around the complete hegemony of desire.

By reintroducing the notion of affects into critical doctrine Kant contends that, prior to the division of the faculties, there must be presupposed a fundamental unity

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[5] Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973).

of the three faculties within the subject. There is an important kinship between the faculties, since these three mental powers constitute the subject itself. For example, one of the roles of judgment, as a higher cognitive power, is to link understanding and desire. However, there is a more important "ordering", Kant maintains, which involves the notion of the *sensus communis*, or the free and harmonious relationship of the faculties: "... there is also (judging by analogy) another basis, for linking judgment with a different ordering of our presentational powers, an ordering that seems even more important than the one involving judgment's kinship with the family of cognitive powers. For all of the soul's powers or capacities can be reduced to three that cannot be derived further from a common basis: the *cognitive power,* the *feeling of pleasure and pain*, and the *power of desire*" (CJ., p.16).[6]

Here we get a first glimpse as to how Kant intends to accomplish the task proposed in the *Third Critique*. As the *Third Critique* elaborates on a theory of the formation and composition of the subject as such, we can see it as a critique of this "complete" subject. So, in this sense, it is not a question of "binding" through judgment what has been

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[6] "the power of desire is necessarily connected with pleasure of displeasure (whether it precedes the principle of this power, as in the case of the lower power of desire, or, as in the case of the higher one, only follows from the determination of this power by the moral law" (CJ. p.16).

defined already, but rather of providing a theory that could give a transcendental account of the mind and all its faculties.

It is true that, in the *First* and *Second Critiques* Kant has posited several substantial and irreconcilable differences among many versions of the relationships of the faculties with each other and their objects, such as cognition to phenomena, self-legislating will to noumena, and judgment as an auxiliary faculty that brings about these relationships.[7] But even more, one of the most intractable features of the Kantian subject, as we know it, is precisely its tendency to balk at being reduced to an affective, sentimental, feeling ego, forming itself exactly in opposition to what are, according to Kant, the "pathologies" of experience. Kant himself had seeming difficulties trying to find an *a priori* principle for pleasure and pain. Several years before the publication of the *Third Critique* he wrote to Reinhold:

> I am now at work on the critique of taste, and I have discovered a kind of *a priori* principle different from those heretofore observed...and though I thought it impossible to find such principles, the systematic nature of the analysis of the previously mentioned

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[7] for a discussion of the different meanings of the notion of the "faculty" see Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy,* translated bt Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) p. 3ff.

> faculties of the human mind (the faculty of cognition and the faculty of desire) allowed me to discover them, giving me ample material for the rest of my life, material at which to marvel and if possible explore...[8]

From now on, he claims, there must be recognised three parts of philosophy: theoretical, teleological and practical.

So the question that needs to be asked here is this: why after having set up this immense antagonism between the autonomous subject and the affective subject, does Kant now try to reduce the difference between the two? I would like to suggest a way of reading this so that we can escape the contradictions. Instead of forcing a dialectical opposition on these two schema of the subject so that we can arrive at some later synthesis, we could instead consider the formative issue that is the main concern of the *Third Critique* as an explanation. This shift of emphasis would then allow us to see that the role played by the affects is central in constituting the subject as such. In brief, Kant's point is that the formation of the subject is played out anterior to any division such as occur in the *First* and the *Second Critiques*. If we invert the "chronology" of the *Critiques* that is based on the usual sequential reading, we can now read

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[8] Immanuel Kant, *Correspondence*, p.127. See also a letter to Schutz from 25 of June of the same year, *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., bd.9., p.328.

the *Third Critique* as a doctrine that must underlie and precede the notion of the subject as articulated in the *First* and the *Second Critiques*.

To anticipate my argument, the notion of the *sensus communis* developed in the *Third Critique* reveals that the formation of the subject takes place through *a priori* affectivity where the mechanism of affective identification with the other takes place as a capacity of the aesthetic self. That is, there takes place a relation to the other that is neither a desiring nor a cognitive relation. Kant's argument is that prior to the "I" with cognitive or desiring interests in the other, there is the "I" that must emerge through the identification with the other and this identification is affective, i.e. based on feelings. Furthermore, it is through this relation that the conditions for transcendentality as well as for experience are fulfilled and in this sense it is a prior relation. In the discussion of the notion of disinterestedness, where Kant juxtaposes the affective, aesthetic relation to desiring and cognitive relations (para. 12 ff.), it is shown that through this relation there is established non-contingent (non-heteronomous) relation to the other. In it the self emerges not as sundered apart by the theoretical distinction that juxtaposes the subject of experience to the subject of desire, but, instead, as unifying within it (as it affirms the possibility of the universality of feelings) the condition for

both, universality, as well as, experience. So it is identification that brings the self into being and not the reverse.

This interpretation is not in conflict with Kantian ethics, as it is the aesthetic capacity that is, in fact, the constitutive element of the affirmation of moral interest -- respect. Even further, we can understand this as "the birth of the social feeling" which in turn provides the seeds for moral law. The unconditionality of moral law, as we know, means that it cannot be based on contingent conditions of common moral experience, or much less on an individual feeling. Paradoxically, however, as much as it is a moral command to detach oneself from the subjective private conditions of one's own judgment, the unconditionality of moral law also demands that moral consciousness shift its ground to the standpoint of the other and refer to the judgment of the other and that this reference, as the notion of the *sensus communis* demonstrates, must be affective. As this judgment operates under the laws of pure practical reason it preserves one from the "empiricism of practical reason, which places the practical concepts of good and bad merely in experiential succession".[9]

In order to demonstrate this, Kant has to show that the universality of aesthetic feeling is a possibility. He does this by removing the subject's interest in the existence

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[9] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, translated by Lewis White Beck, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1956), p.124.

of the object, and thereby removing it from the self-interest of satisfaction (as taste ascends from gratification to aesthetic pleasure) by arguing that in the aesthetic contemplation of the object there is neither direct interest in the existence of the object nor a direct satisfaction (or utility) from this object. The subject could be said to experience a disinterested pleasure in this contemplation. Further, in this contemplation which is not based on understanding and its laws, and, therefore, is "not yet" conceptual, there is no representation of an object supplied to the subject. The passage from the direct interest in a particular object (this interest being that of either the faculty of cognition or desire) to the object of imagination, i.e. the object of aesthetic pleasure, is a passage from "this here" to interiorisation. In this process the object is "lifted" from the causal determination to which both cognition and desire submit it (CJ., *ibid.)*; imagination that "governs" this relation "violates" the inner sense of time and frees the object from the subordination to the relations of cause and effect (conditioned by necessary relations in time). This is, put briefly, the argument in the sublime the full exposition of which will follow in the next chapter. Thus, by being "freed" from the determination of time (cause and effect) the object is also removed from its position in relation to cognition or desire, (i.e. as a representation for

consciousnenss). The "intentional" relation[10] of consciousness to its object is substituted by disinterested enjoyment, which is defined by an awareness and self-cognizance of the absence of this object, of a vacancy left by it. This vacancy defines the work of mourning.[11] One cannot "sink one's teeth" into this object.[12] As such there is no objective representation of a "thing" (in terms of the laws of necessity, i.e. in terms of the categories). How can a reference to this "absent object" be universalised? It can be done only through the identification with the other -- "by putting oneself in the place of the other." This communion of "empty mouths"[13] constitutes an unspoken shared reference or the *sensus communis*. The communion among free citizens (CPR., A 738/B 766), among a fellowship of "men under moral law" (CJ.,p.300) is the very condition of any communication whatever, of sociability itself. The conflict engendered by the subjective aspect of taste (*Streit)* (CJ., p. 211ff./ KU., p. 278) illustrates how this accord (*Einstimmung)*, which is presupposed by the *sensus communis,* is achieved through the

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[10] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity,* translated by Alphonso Lingis, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), p.123ff.

[11] see Abraham & Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel,* p. 128.

[12] "in satiety the real I sank my teeth into is assimilated, the forces that were in the other becomes my forces...the alterity of nutriments enters into the same." Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity,* p.129.

[13] Abraham & Torok, ibid.

transcendental law to which this aesthetic identification gives rise.

2. Sensibility and judgment

The whole of the first part of the *Critique of Judgment,* the "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment", is dedicated to the grounding of this question about how the universality of the aesthetic feeling is possible. All is framed by the language of theoretical reason. In a paradoxical way, the whole vocabulary of aesthetic judgment in introducing the contradictory terms such as finality without end, universality without concept affirms the supremacy of this reason, but also, as we shall see, betrays its limits. [14]

Aesthetic judgment, according to Kant, is not a domain of a logician, but that of a transcendental philosopher, to whom it must reveal a "property of our cognitive power which without this analysis would remain unknown" (CJ., p.57). We are immediately reminded of the secret of the "a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we have no knowledge" (CPR., B 152) of the *First*

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[14] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Lessons of the Analytic of the Sublime,* translated by Elizabeth Rottenberg, (California: Stanford University Press, 1994), p.45. See also, Derrida, *Truth and Painting*, translated by Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Prtess, 1987), p. 64ff.

Critique -- the synthetic capacity of schematism (CPR., A 134-47/B 176-87) -- that "unresolved mystery of human soul" which turns out to be the subjective principle of thought of the *Third Critique*.

In the *Third Critique* Kant places sensation in a kind of symmetry with the schema (CJ., p.63). This parallel at first glance is tenuous and Kant remarks on this; schema makes knowledge possible, whereas sensation provides no knowledge. Nevertheless, there is a way in which these faculties are comparable. If the schema unities imagination and understanding, sensation is a sign of this unity: ("... that unity in the relation [between the cognitive powers] in the subject can reveal itself only through sensation" [*ibid.*]). In both cases there takes place a relation between the same faculties. The schema is determinant of the object of knowledge. This objective relation can only be thought, however, insofar as it has subjective conditions, "it can nevertheless be sensed in the effect it has on the mind" (*ibid.*).

Schematism, given in the *First Critique*, establishes the necessity of the categories and shows that they are applicable to a space and time manifold. The function of the imagination plays the key role here. Understanding brings this original synthesis of the imagination to concepts. In the schematism the productive role of imagination is in mediating between a priori concepts and the empirical manifold.

Schematism, does not, however, account for the original synthesis of the empirical manifold into unity. The argument here cannot face the question, how is the empirical manifold structured so as to be amenable to categorical synthesis. This makes Kant remark:

> This schematism of our understanding, in its application to appearances and their mere form, is an art concealed in the depths of the human soul, whose real modes of activity nature is hardly likely ever to allow us to discover, and to have open to our gaze (CPR., B 181/A 142).

It was Heidegger who stressed that this aspect, i.e. the unity of sensibility and imagination had not been sufficiently developed by Kant. Instead, according to him, Kant "shrank back from this unknown route" and concentrated on the primacy of understanding and categories.[15] Then, Heidegger comments: "We cannot discuss here the sense in which the pure power of imagination recurs in the *Critique of Judgement* and above all whether it still recurs in express relationship in the laying of the ground for metaphysics as such...".[16] Instead of pursuing the original link between sensibility and understanding, the thought that "rational creature" is determined through "sensibility", Kant became interested in categories. It is "only this way" Kant thought

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[15] Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, p. 110ff.

[16] *ibid.*

that "... ethicality (was) able to be grasped as pure, i.e. as neither conditioned by nor even made for the factical, empirical human being."[17] Thus, Kant cut his way short to human finitude by grounding it "in the pure, rational creature". Heidegger's own path was to take this investigation in the direction of the relation of the transcendental power of imagination to time.[18]

Imagination, indeed, recurs in the *Third Critique* in the sublime in conjunction with time. Here, imagination "overpowers" the inner sense of time which guides the determinations of understanding (cause and effect), and lets the practical self emerge in time rather than through time (i.e. through the determination of understanding and its concepts). Simultaneously, outside of the determination of time but within its flow, the finite subject will realise itself as both transcendental and sensible. Thus, Kant was finally able to "open up to our gaze" the "mystery of the human soul." This is the theme taken up in the next chapter.

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As we know, what Kant found objectionable in Baumgarten's undertaking in the *First Critique* was precisely the latter's

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[17] *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, p.* 115.

[18] *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics,* p. 118.

effort to try to base aesthetics on *a priori* conditions of pleasure and pain. Kant did not believe it was possible "to bring the critical treatment of the beautiful under rational principles, and so to raise its rules to the rank of a science". Baumgarten's was an "abortive attempt" and Kant claimed that such endeavours were fruitless (CPR., A 21). Whatever to make, then, of Kant's critique of taste here -- where he, too, is concerned with "part of the general problem of transcendental philosophy: how are synthetic judgments possible *a priori*" (CJ, p.153)? -- In Kant's view, the justification of a judgment of taste -- the judgement, for example, that a particular object, such as a tulip or a painting, is beautiful -- requires a deduction of a synthetic *a priori* judgment. For, in considering an object beautiful, we each express our own pleasure in it, and then impute this feeling onto the public as the potential audience for that object. We presume that our feelings can be the subject of a public discourse, and that although "there can be no rule by which anyone should be compelled to acknowledge that something is beautiful, we are nevertheless entitled to respond to a beautiful object with a universal voice...and lay claim to the agreement of everyone" (CJ, p.59).

The universal validity of our response to a beautiful object cannot be based simply on an *a priori* assumption of a similarity between our own responses and those of others. The presumption of aesthetic judgment can be

defended only if we can answer this question: "How is a judgment possible which the subject, merely on the basis of his *own* feeling of pleasure in an object, independent of the object's concept, judges this pleasure as one attaching to the presentation of that same object *in all other subjects*, and does so *a priori*, i.e., without being allowed to wait for other peoples assent" (CJ, p.153).

In the antinomies of taste the irreconcilability between the subjectivity of feelings and its universal principle is posited. Neither Hutcheson's "sense of Beauty" as the basis of the universal intersubjective agreement or even Burke's "psychological observations", nor Baumgarten's rationalist grounding of the universality of the aesthetic sense in its identification with the moral sense (the beautiful as the confused perception of the good)[19] could suit Kant. The first he considered interesting but good only for "empirical anthropology" (CJ, p.29); the second wrong as not differentiating the aesthetic response from ordinary cognition. The resolution of every antinomy demands a recourse to noumenology. So does the antinomy of taste: "The sole key for solving the mystery of this ability [i.e., taste] concealed from us even as to its sources is the indeterminate

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[19] Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, 2 vol. Frankfurt an der Oder,1750-58. Reprint. Hildesheim; Georg Holms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961. #177, #183. Edmond Burke, A *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, edited J.T. Boulton (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958).

idea of the supersensible in us" (CJ, p.214). The peculiarity of aesthetic universality consists in the fact that judgment does not connect the predicate of beauty to the object, but it nevertheless it assumes an unmediated consent of "the entire sphere of judging persons". This universality is different from logical universality in that it's validity is derived from the subjective presupposition of the presence of this feeling in every subject, rather than the objective reference to the cognitive power of the mind.

> Here we must note, first of all, that a universality that does not rest on concepts of the object (not even on empirical ones) is not a logical universality at all, but an aesthetic one; i.e. the [universal] quantity of the judgment is not objective but only subjective. For this quantity I use the expression general validity, by which I mean the validity that a presentation's reference to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure may have for every subject, rather than the validity of a presentation's reference to the cognitive power (CJ., p.58).

Kant's main task here is to find subjective universality of the aesthetic and, indeed, to go beyond by breaking away from the empirical universality of the *sensus communis*. This universality, a common principle, shared by all of humanity, ultimately has to be rescued from empiricism and psychologism for it to ground taste transcendentally. A further consequence is that this will ground the *sensus*

communis on the so called "feeling of life" (*Lebensgefühl*), a feeling that results from the free play of all our cognitive powers and hence not limited specifically to external sense. A free play of faculties is the universal quality of *Lebensgef*ühl as it abstracts from the privacy of particular feeling of charm or attractiveness or emotion. There must be a necessity attached to an object of reflection -- to beauty. "Beautiful is what without a concept is cognized as the object of a necessary liking" (CJ, p. 90).

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Kant holds that what is universally communicable in reflective judgment is precisely the subjective principle itself, which is the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. Yet paradoxically, one can also hold onto one's own opinion regarding taste because one cannot demonstrate to anybody why they should like this or that thing. What Kant tries to show is that the expectation of the assent is based not on any proof but on a presumption of the immediate agreement of the other person; "the solution to this problem", he adds, "is the key to the critique of taste..." (CJ., p.61). Kant calls this subjective demand of universality a "public judgment of taste", and it is this that differentiates it from a merely private judgment, which would be based on simple delight in an object. A judgment that, for instance, something smells good

is an aesthetic judgment, but based on empirical delight of the senses.

The distinction between the feeling of pleasure in the experience of the beautiful and the feeling of pleasure in all other experiences lies in the different type of causality that takes place between the subject and the object: "Consciousness of a presentation's causality directed at the subject's state so as to keep him in that state, may here designate generally what we call pleasure: whereas displeasure is that presentation which contains the basis that determines [the subject to change] the state [consisting] of [certain] presentations into their own opposite (i.e., to keep them away of remove them)" (CJ., p.65). There is no interest involved in this pleasure. This pleasure is without desire and it is not grounded on the will:

> Neither an object of inclination, nor one that a law of reason enjoins on us as an object of desire, leaves us the freedom to make an object of pleasure for ourselves out of something of other. All interest is the basis that determines approval, it makes the judgment about the object unfree (CJ., p.52).

Kant specifies three distinct ways that the subject takes to an object; these are: sensual and utilitarian

(appetitive pleasures) and disinterested.[20] The first two are radically different from the disinterested pleasure in that the pleasure involved in these two instances is necessarily connected with desire. The disinterested pleasure is, on the other hand, a contemplative pleasure that is not based on a "appetitive" satisfaction of desire, or interest in the good. Desire displays an "appetite" for an object, Kant states, while taste is about appreciation of an object:

> ...if the pleasure is not connected with appetite for an object and so is not basically a pleasure in the existence of the object represented, but one that is attached to the representation taken simply by itself, it can be called a merely contemplative pleasure or inactive satisfaction. The feeling of contemplative pleasure is called taste (*ibid.*)

This is a crucial distinction. The examination of this distinction would lead us to the main point of the argument about the radical difference that marks the subject's apprehension of an object in an aesthetic experience. Its peculiarity clearly hinges upon the fact that the pleasure in the beautiful which is also contemplative pleasure is not derived from desire and interest as in the case of the other two relations.

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[20] Immanuel Kant, *The Doctrine of Virtue*, Part II of *Metaphysics of Morals*, translated with an introduction by Mary J. Gregor, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964), p.8.

Let us look closely at all these three types of pleasure. Pleasure arising from sensation alone -- sense pleasure -- excites a desire that results in an interest in the existence of an object. Gratification in that which pleases in sensation alone, the merely pleasurable in sense, is bound up with an interest, since "by means of sensation, the judgment arouses a desire for objects of that kind" (CJ., p.48). Consequently, although the judgment that something is pleasant is an aesthetic judgment insofar as the senses are affected, it is still not an aesthetic judgment of taste in that it is not a disinterested pleasure, but rather pleasure that is gratified by satisfying an interest, need, or want. We cannot say that it is a product of reflective judgment.

Similarly, the pleasure arising from objects of utility -- that which is good for something or that which is good in itself -- also excites a desire for their existence. Satisfaction in the good, like that in the pleasurable to senses, is always tied to an interest in an object:

> ...despite all...difference between the agreeable and the good, they do agree in this: they are always connected with an interest in their object. This holds not only for the agreeable ...and for what is good indirectly (useful), which we like as the means to something or other that is agreeable, but also for what is good absolutely and in every respect, i.e. the moral good, which carries with it the highest interest. For the good is the object of the will (a power of desire that is determined by reason). But to will something and to have a liking for

> its existence, i.e. to take an interest in it, are identical (CJ., p.51).

Finally, the pleasure in the beautiful is not related to the faculty of desire in any way, because desire is tied to an interest. In the experience of beauty, however, the response to an appearance of an object is to its form, not to its existence. This is an engagement with an object that neither desires nor is desired. If delight is determined by the object, pleasure in the aesthetic has no such use and it escapes this type of causal relation where subject desires object. In short, the aesthetic does not connect with the faculty of desire. It is, nevertheless, a causal chain of a special and paradoxical sort; having no interest motivate the subject, causality here takes a form of auto-affection. It also gives meaning to what Kant defines as "purposiveness without a purpose", "a conformity to law without a law", "disinterested interest". In this contemplative pleasure, the representation of the object judged to be beautiful affects the judging subject in such a way that the subject is interested in remaining in that state. What tends to be maintained is the state of mind of the subject which is the pleasure grounded on the harmony of the mental faculties. This interest expresses relation not to an object, but to one's own state.

Pure judgment of taste, thought as independent of charm and emotion, which defines the subject's attitude toward

the object as disinterested, derives from an "inner causality". It is this inner causality that marks aesthetic pleasure. Therefore, although the subject is affected by an object, it should not be taken as entirely passive here. Since, the economy of this relationship gives rise to *Lebensgefühl* which sets in motion the faculties of the subject in the free play. This relation is also a "*primum mobile*" of all subsequent relationships of these faculties.

In the process of engaging in aesthetic judgment, the subject acquires a middle voice, so to speak. It is in a reflexive mode, rather than in an active mode as in cognitive judgment. To be more precise, it is not entirely passive since there takes place an inner movement as a result of the interiorisation of an external object, which defines the process of the contemplation of this object. In this way, the subject achieves a state of what might be called auto-affection, which is accompanied by an excitation. It is this auto-affection that causes pleasure. Moreover, this is not to be taken as a satisfaction or gratification in externality, but, rather, as a movement that is tied to an experience with two phases: the first, interiorisation, and the second, repetition or lingering (*verweilen*), or "spending time on." It is with this movement that *Lebensgefühl* is incited and this explains why repetition and remembering become the focal points of affection. Every time the subject brings the memory of an object up, (a representation of it) it gives the subject

pleasure. It is the sensation that is caused by the recalling that gives it pleasure, not so much the memory of the actual thing. What gives pleasure is the act of remembering as it recalls itself, or, it is the repetition of the act of interiorisation that provides the equivalence of that pleasure. This is how I understand the reference to a pure form.

> Yet it does have a causality in it, namely, to keep us in the state of having the presentation itself, and to keep the cognitive powers engaged [in their occupation] without any further aim. We *linger* in our contemplation of the beautiful, because this contemplation reinforces and reproduces itself. This is analogous to (though not the same as) the way in which we linger over something charming that, as we present an object, repeatedly arouses our attention, [though here] the mind is passive (CJ., p.68).

There is lingering and repetition, spending time (*Verweilen*), or killing time (*Langweilen*). In the *Anthropology*,[21] Kant has much to say about the relation between representation and boredom. This lingering strengthens and reproduces the mind's powers, awakens us and sharpens our attention (*Aufmerksamkeit*) and it engages our powers (*Beschäftigung*) for the purpose of maintaining a representation. Now, what is so pleasant and why? It seems that what Kant calls pleasant is the movement of excitation,

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[21] *Anthropology*, p. 101 ff.

the play of forces that takes place during "the workings of imagination", i.e. of a reproduction of an object in the subject, which is also a correlate of what Kant refers to as the "feeling alive".

The subject leaves off certain conceptions of reality (reality functions) and attains a satisfaction through an imaginative process. There is a kind of metabolism that takes place here. Nature is taken as food for thought. Indeed, as Kant's "gastronomical" metaphor points out, the objective correlate of need (food) is metabolised into an "object" and, moreover, into a sign that is introjected and digested cogitatively. A certain synthesising quality of the faculty of pleasure precedes and determines that which is yet undefined for thought (concepts). What is more important still, the subject here displays a peculiar nondifferentiated unity of moral, aesthetic and cognitive selves. This is a communal sense manifested in the free play of the faculties.

Thus, to summarise, the interest here is reflective or auto-affective -- there is an interest in maintaining the state of the judging subject or of the self where, in the experience of the beautiful, the cognitive powers are in free and harmonious play and are caused to continue in that state, not through any act of will or desire on the part of the experiencing subject, but solely through the formal purposiveness of the representations themselves. The cognitive powers can be said to be active, but they are not

active towards a specific activity, i.e. in determining an object. Beautiful objects tend to maintain and hold our interest, and they do it first, by holding our attention and second, by keeping us interested in them even after the initial experience has ended (CJ., p.65).

Kant further specifies the concept of disinterestedness as the basis of the liking that is called "favour" (*Gunst*) (CJ., p.52, KU., p.123). This type of liking is not founded on an inclination -- as in the liking of what gratifies us, or respect as in the liking of what we esteem as good. Rather, it is directed toward the object and it is capable of "holding up to" (*zusammenhält*) the feeling of pleasure and displeasure the quality (*Beschaffenheit*) of the object (CJ., p.51, KU., p.123). This connects (*zusammenhält*) the quality of the object to the self and thereby establishes the affinity between this other and the self.

As we shall see, the *Critique* will have to base this affinity between subjective feeling and an object on a "supersensible" principle. The principle will remain an indeterminate concept, and its end of which the affinity is one of the effects will remain unknowable. This is the conclusion of the antinomy: "A judgment of taste is indeed based on a concept, but on an *indeterminate* one (namely, that of the supersensible substrate of appearances)..." There cannot be any room for the will because one must perceive in the judgment of taste a "finality of form without the end ".

No final causality is applicable to taste. One could not even say that pleasure is the effect of the beauty we attribute to the object. This is why Kant excludes perfection from his consideration of the beautiful.(CJ., para. 15). One cannot say that an object pleases because its form is "perfect" in relation to an "Idea" of beauty. Kant's contention is that since perfection requires a concept of a definite objective purpose which an object must fulfil in order to be perfect, and since the aesthetic judgment is not conceptual, the judgment of perfection is not the required judgment when we judge something beautiful. The distinction between adherent beauty and free beauty rests on a similar argument. In the case of adherent beauty, a concept is needed to determine what sort of an object a thing ought to be while free beauty needs no such reference. This is, also, his argument against Baumgarten's thought that beauty is a perfection as such.

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At last, in the fourth moment of the exposition we come to the final point of the categorical exposition of the analytic of the beautiful -- the argument for why beauty ought to be liked -- "The Modality of the Liking for the Object". The argument is resumed again after interruptions in "The Doctrine of the Sublime" and "On Fine Art" and finally resolved in the

"Dialectic of Taste." It is here that the condition of the necessary liking of the beautiful is established which is the *sensus communis*.

As we have seen in the judgment of free beauty, the judgment made by our feeling regarding the form of the object operates without a concept. The judgment expresses a necessary link between sensations and the cause of this sensation, but it does not give us the rule by which this link might be established. It can claim an exemplary necessity of this judgment insofar as a dissenting opinion from no one is tolerated. The make-up of exemplarity is such that it must be universal and it is this exigency that constitutes its essence.

> This necessity of a special kind. It is not a theoretical objective necessity, allowing us to cognize *a priori* that everyone will feel this liking for the object I call beautiful. Nor is it a practical objective necessity, where through concepts of a pure rational will that serves freely acting beings as a rule, this liking is the necessary consequence of an objective law and means nothing other than that one absolutely (without any further aim) ought to act in a certain way. Rather, as a necessity that is thought in an aesthetic judgment, it can only be called *exemplary*, i.e. a necessity of the assent of *everyone* to a judgment that is regarded as an example of a universal rule that we are unable to state (CJ., p.85).

The judgment of taste exemplifies a universal rule which is impossible to formulate. But if the rule cannot be

discovered, then the critique must find some principle which would determine by means of feelings alone and not through concepts what pleases and also has universal validity. Kant founds this principle on the *sensus communis* -- *Gemeinsinn*.[22]

This is not common human understanding, the ordinary faculty of reasoning which is attributed to every thinking being, "man's sound, but not yet cultivated understanding", but instead, and this is its most important defining feature, it is a disposition to "put ourselves in the position of everyone else" (*ibid*). Furthermore, it must also free us from any private and subjective conditions because "intrinsically nothing is more natural than abstracting from charm and emotion when we seek a judgment that is to serve as a universal rule" (*ibid.*). Hence, we are able to authorise the universal exemplarity of taste and the necessity felt singularly in taste, to fulfil the function of the missing rule. The validity that ensues from this process is not a universal validity, a general validity of logical *Allgemeingültigkeit*. It would be more appropriate according

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[22] "Whenever we make a judgment declaring something to be beautiful, we permit no one to hold a different opinion, even though we base our judgment only on our feeling rather than on concepts; hence we regard this underlying feeling as a common rather than as a private feeling. But if we are to use this common sense in such a way, we cannot base it on experience; for it seeks to justify us in making a judgment that contains an ought; it does not say that everyone will agree with my judgment, but that he ought to" (CJ., p.89.).

to Kant to call this a subjective universal validity -- *Gemeingültigkeit* -- a validity for all. *Gemein* implies a commonality, as in *Gemeinsinn* -- a common sense. The universal voice, the *allgemeine Stimme*, as a shared principle, also conveys a sense of community.

In the discussion of "Transcendental Doctrine of Method" in the *First Critique* as well as later in the essay "On The Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy" Kant raises the question of voice or tone of reason. How do we distinguish a true voice of reason within ourselves? How do we distinguish the voice of reason that speaks to each of us in private from the "oracular" voice that merely pretends to speak in the name of reason?[23] In the Enlightenment essay, Kant also implies that "to speaking in one's own voice" is the condition of the proper utilisation of reason.[24] The voice of reason *(der Stimme der Vernunft)*, Kant says, speaks to each without equivocation *(deutlich)*.[25] It arbitrates, commands and judges. It resounds in every person -- this voice is the voice of command: for every person has in him the idea of

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[23] Immanuel Kant, "On the Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy", p. 52. In *Raisining the Tone of Philosophy,* edited by Peter Fenves, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

[24] Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'", p. 54. in *Kant's Political Writings,* edited with an introduction and notes by Hans Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

[25] Immanuel Kant, "On the Newly Arisen Superior Tone...", p.67.

duty. This subordination to the command is the mystery (*Geheimnis*) -- the secret of reason. Reason does not lend itself to interpretation, it does not "reason" with one, i.e. tell one why one should do this or that, it does not promise anything in return for the obedience to the law. Those who merely pretend to know this *Geheimnis* think that "it suffice to lend an ear to the oracle within oneself" and thereby reveal its nature. They think they can know it. This arrogance, however, is the *Verstimmung der Köpfe zur Schwärmerei*[26] -- a raving, Kant maintains. Thinking that one can know what is not knowable is what characterises this *Verstimmung der Köpfe* -- an "ill-humour" or "disagreement in the head". But *Verstimmung* also means "disaccord". Tribunal of reason resolves such disagreements; it puts an end to them. The "right state of mind" would be the agreement, the attunement or accord of the *sensus communis,* the accord between all the faculties of the mind, between the a priori affectivity and the cognitive faculties. Only such accord can be the condition of the reception of the law. In this accord one is able to hear the voice of the law without knowing "what for" or "what it is saying". The *Geheimnis* is the irreducibility of the tone of this voice to any other voice that "we know of". The mystery, then, is the aesthetic affinity with the other, the affectivity as such, which is preserved in the non-knowledge of this other. It is this that

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[26] Ibid., p.62.

creates the basis of the law. This is argued in "The Discipline of Pure Reason in its Polemical Employment" in the *Critique of Pure Reason* to which we shall turn in a moment.

In the above argument in the *Third Critique* Kant takes subjective condition of the universal validity to be a necessary condition of any knowledge that is not skeptical. This is because, according to Kant's reasoning, the possibility of universal communication required of knowledge must also be required of the mental state accompanying knowledge: "...[F]or this attunement is the subjective condition of the process of cognition, and without it cognition in the sense of the effect of this process could not arise" (CJ., p.88).

An object of taste, an exemplar, not being conceptual, cannot be imitated either. Taste, too cannot be imitated, for it must itself obey the logic of spontaneous production. Hence the judgment which is a "peculiar talent that could be exercised but not taught, itself a quality of mother-wit" can generate a pattern, a rule that can be only a mere idea, not a concept which everyone must produce in himself alone and according to which everything that is an object of taste must be judged. What this means is that it must be possible to have a rule that cannot be reproduced.

Exemplarity makes possible a universal accord but only in the sense that it does not provide a premise of common agreement. On the contrary the accord that ensues from this

"predates" this type of common agreement. A rule of adequation is missing here; exemplarity as present-ing its own singularity does not re-present anything. Therefore, although a necessary agreement is required regarding the object of taste, one does not dispute taste -- the object always remains pleasant "for me" (CJ., p.212).

Thus, the discourse on taste deals with the nonrepresentational character of the product of taste. This point is brought out by Kant in the distinction he draws between two types of conflict: dispute, on the one hand, and quarrel (*Streiten*), on the other. Kant asserts that one can very well quarrel about taste, but not dispute it (CJ., p.211). To dispute is to exchange arguments that obey the rules of conceptual logic and objective knowledge. Mainly, it involves the giving of proofs, for, during the course of a dispute, phenomena are put forward (*dargestellt*) in order to prove that a given empirical concept does in fact have its object present in experience. The presumption of all involved in disputation is that the object of the judgment is presentable *a priori* in experience. One turns to presentation, to exhibition and demonstration (CJ., p.216). Similarly, both imagination, the faculty of presentation, as well as understanding, the faculty of concepts, cooperate in giving proofs of the arguments allowing one to come to a "decision" about the argument and its opposition.

When the object of a dispute is taste, on the other

hand, a decision cannot be reached between judgments on the subject of the beautiful. Indifferent to knowable experience and lacking concepts or rules, judgment of taste is incapable of presenting logical arguments and proofs of aesthetic validity. Instead, it provides material for "quarrel" (*ein Streit*): a subject for conflict that must arbitrate contradictions.[27] In this case, a consensus can never be reached without communicable proofs that would enable one to declare a dispute resolved. What this debate affirms, however, without resorting to consensus, is the possibility of unifying what is heterogeneous. Moreover, the concept that frames this conflict is indeterminate; it is not a "provable" concept. Nevertheless it motivates and circumscribes the debate. What Kant seems to be suggesting here is that for this type of exchange, no "outside standard", such as a representation, is found, but rather this standard is found in the exchange per se. To be more precise, in a somewhat circular fashion Kant argues that the freedom of this exchange is in turn authorised and governed by the freedom to have such an exchange: "Reason depends on this freedom for its very existence...Reason's verdict [whose "searching examination ...knows no respect for persons"]...is always simply the

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[27]Instead of a more commonly used term *Widerspruch* to mean logical contradiction Kant used the above term *Streit* and *Widerstreit*, which indicates that the "quarrel" is engendered through an a priori contradictoriness of thought, i.e. the antinomies of reason, see M. David-Menard, *La folie dans la raison pure* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrain, 1990), p. 30.

agreement of free citizens" (CPR., A 738/B 766). Hence, while this "speech" on taste, expressing nothing beyond itself (it could be a mere sigh of pleasure uttered in solitude) becomes a "prototype" for the theoretical language of communication. With this argument Kant establishes the status of the aesthetic communication -- "silent communication" and thus of the aesthetic proper within the architectonic of the faculties of the mind.

3. **Reason:** *"das was hierbei streitig wird, ist nicht die Sache, sondern der Ton"*

In the essay "An Answer to the Question 'What is Enlightenment?'" Kant discusses private and public uses of reason.[28] He draws the distinction between these two "uses" of reason on the basis of the different types of communities in which they find their root. He characterises the public use of reason ("the most innocuous form of freedom") as "speaking in one's own voice". It is through this type of use that Kant defines true freedom. More precisely, Kant indicates that this use of man's reason must always be free, which in itself is the basis of his enlightenment and hence of freedom: "it alone can bring about enlightenment among men..".

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[28] Immanuel Kant, *Kant's Political Writings*, edited with an introduction and notes by Hans Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 54ff.

Moreover, the audience for this type of "use", that is to say, the addressee of this communication must be that "enlarged community" that forms the basis of truly free community of citizens. In opposition to this, the private use of reason is one that is made in a civil post, for example, and is subordinated to external authority and, therefore, heteronomous.

The political importance that Kant ascribes to the "true reform in ways of thinking", i.e. the public use of reason, is well known. "A revolution may well put an end to autocratic despotism and to rapacious or power-seeking oppression", but the real revolution comes from enlightened thinking, the foundations of which Kant finds in the development of the subject and its rise from self incurred immaturity through the "right use of reason", which is enlightened and also public.

The difference between the public and the private (*privatus*-incomplete, deprived) use of reason is also in that the latter use does not involve any criticism. It finds its "standard" in an external authority, that is, it is defined by Kant as the use of reason that operates in this subordination to external heteronomous authority. Whereas, the public use of reason must be based on an authority which finds its ground within itself, and not outside itself. Thus this enlightened reason is, in itself, the reason that is also the very condition of this enlightenment. This authority is the voice

of the other within, whose basis is the *Einstimmung* between the I and the other. Let us turn our attention to this feature of reason which is best demonstrated in certain passages of the *First Critique*.

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The authority is a disciplinary power that regulates discursive use of reason in the *First Critique*. Kant introduces this idea in connection with the fact that reason has a capacity to "randomly grope" among concepts (CPR., BXV). This aimlessness of thought results from the restraints that concepts put on thought. More precisely, as a result of the "over-use" the conceptual apparatus of the mind becomes too defining, too overdetermined and as a consequence gives reason false illusions of omnipotence; as if the concepts in their zeal to determine lose ground by producing the "overkill" of determinations. According to Kant the excessive confidence in the power of concepts leads the mind astray. How could reason be prevented from taking flight into illusion, *Schwärmerei* (*ibid.*)? Kant argues that reason must use self-discipline: "it undertake anew the most difficult of all its tasks, namely that of self-knowledge and institute a tribunal which will assure to reason its lawful decrees, but only in accordance with its own eternal and unalterable laws. This tribunal is

no other than the critique of pure reason" (CPR., A XX-XXII).

Reason's task seems indeed impossible; it is required to check its own operation by resorting to self-discipline. In fact, that is its essential task. Kant concedes: "that reason, whose proper duty it is to prescribe a discipline for all other endeavours, should itself stand in need of a discipline may indeed seem strange..."(CPR., A 710/B 738). Yet, it is a necessary compulsion "by which the constant tendency to disobey certain rules is restrained and finally extirpated" (CPR., A 709/B 737). If the external discipline is what characterises the private use of reason, here, reason instead of calling on to an other force, must resort to its own power in order to guard itself against extravagance and error (CPR., A 711/B 740). Kant further specifies this self-reliance as a regimen that must be based on "a system of precautions and self-examination" (*ibid.*). "The Transcendental Doctrine of Method" in the *First Critique* is to explain this reflexive character of a critique of reason. This discipline is also defined as a type of exercise that cannot yield a determinate knowledge; its value lies elsewhere. Let us pursue Kant's thought further:

> where the limits of our possible knowledge are very narrow, where the temptation to judge is great, where the illusion that besets us is very deceptive...there the negative instruction, which serves solely to guard us from errors, has even more importance than many a piece of positive information

> by which our knowledge is increased (CPR., A 709/B 737).

In "The Discipline of Pure Reason in its Polemical Employment" Kant argues that reason can only lose its authority by appealing to power or force. He also claims that "there can properly speaking, be no polemic (*Polemik*) of pure reason" (CPR., A 750/B 778). One resorts to polemic in self-defence which cannot be regarded as proper to reason itself. It aims only to indicate failures of reasoning of others. It is true that discipline, or a certain restraint is called for even in polemics "to allow your opponent to speak in the name of reason and to combat him only with the weapons of reason" (CPR., A 744/B 772).

For the conflict that is arbitrated by reason *(Streit)*, the disciplinary power must be able to arbitrate and override resolutions that are established through "war" (the barbaric resolution of conflicts that is also characteristic of reason) *(ibid.)*.

This discipline, Kant explains, must be able to arbitrate argumentations by emphasising only the tone that one assumes in a polemic, not the subject matter itself: "this is about the tone, not the subject matter itself" *(Das was hierbei streitig wird, ist nicht die Sache, sondern der Ton)*.[29] How does one negotiate this difference in tone?

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[29] in Kemp Smith's translation it reads: "What is here disputed is not the practical interests of reason but the mode of their representation."

Where does the power to dispute, contest, discipline or restrain lie?

Further, by the fact that in this arbitration reason must surrender "the language of knowledge" and instead employ "in the presence of the most exacting reason" an entirely different language, a "legitimate" language of noumenology (CPR., A 745/B 773). This means that the whole juridical process of these arbitrations must take place in a different language, entirely foreign to the theoretical consciousness. Thus, theoretical consciousness could at best listen but never participate in or influence the process. Unless, of course, it learns this language, and this is what is demanded of it. Consciousness must "surrender" to this other language, get used to its tone, to its mode of expression (trope). Thus the *Einstimmung* established by reason in this arbitration gives true voice to reason: the critique of pure reason itself is regarded by Kant as the true tribunal and the supreme disciplinary power. Thus, a juridical sentence (*Prozess*) must strike at the very root of the conflicts and thereby effectively secure an eternal peace. "The endless disputes of a merely dogmatic reason thus finally constrain us to seek relief in some critique of reason itself..." (CPR., A 752/B 780). Otherwise the critique of reason is in the state of nature, where it "can establish and secure its assertions and claims only through *war*" (*ibid.*).

The condition of the resolution of the conflict must

be found in self-examination, self-knowledge of reason. This is where the disciplinary power draws its source. The tribunal of pure reason is set up to direct this self-reflection with its negative instructions.

> Reason must in all its undertakings subject itself to criticism: should it limit freedom of criticism by any prohibitions, it must harm itself, drawing upon itself damaging suspicions. Nothing is so important through its usefulness, nothing so sacred, that it may be exempted from this searching examination which knows no respect for persons. Reason depends on this freedom for its very existence. For reason has no dictatorial authority; its verdict is always simply the agreement of free citizens, of whom each one must be permitted to express, without let of hindrance, his objection or even his veto (CPR., A 738/B 766).

The injunction of reason, as far as knowledge is concerned, leaves matters unresolved. In the arbitration of the tone that limits reason's interest to the form only and not to the content of disputations, reason discovers its ultimate practical authority. Reason in this context cannot supply the disputations with a content and so end them. However, it uses its highest authority to presuppose and take account of the plurality and the heterogeneity of voices. Reason here commands that they must be listened to. This is the highest type of arbitration, indeed, the most enlightened form of justice because this type of arbitration is based on reason's pure and disinterested involvement in the case. This

highest tribunal of reason in the *Third Critique* is the *sensus communis*.

4. Critical faculty

In the *Critique of Judgment* Kant calls the concept of reason the supersensible. What lies above the sensible is indemonstrable (CJ., p.215). Further, this reason cannot supply a representation and, therefore, it escapes all means of proof. As a regulatory idea, it regulates, but does not delegate which also means that the certainty that ensues from it is immediate but cannot be demonstrated. From the *Second Critique* we know that this is a theoretically empty concept, but one which conditions the very possibility of morality as an "empirically unconditioned causality". It is also the substrate of all the ideas (in the antinomies) and guarantees that all the faculties, however different they might be, will be unified without putting an end to their diversity. In short, it is a unifying power itself as much as it is the substrate that underlies nature (*Substrat der Natur*). As the principle through which the affinity of nature with our power of knowing is determined, it is seen subjectivly as the pleasure of taste (*Prinzip der subjectiven Zweckmässigkeit der Natur für unser Erkenntnisvermögen*). In this sense, the

supersensible is the principle of harmonious accord that must serve as nature in all acts of thought and all judgments however heterogenous they might be. This "natural" principle is called the "supersensible substrate of all the subject's faculties", and hence, of thought itself. This is how the *sensus communis* is defined -- as "a critical faculty which in its reflective act takes account of the mode of representation of everyone else in order, as it were, to weigh its judgment with the collective reason of mankind" (CJ., p. 293). It must be understood not as a requirement to accommodate an actual public opinion, i.e., as the requirement to accompany any such accommodation, since it is the natural basis of that which goes beyond what is merely natural -- "common human understanding".

In this "taking account of everyone else's mode of representation" (i.e. *Ton*) there is an expectation of agreement. There is no knowledge, message or an order that is passed on or communicated. However, before such agreement there is an accord between the voice of the other and the "I". The ground of the command of the law of reason itself must lie in this accord *(Einstimmung)* with the other. Knowledge cannot supply the respect for the other to which only practical reason must give a rational formalisation through the law. The transference that takes place from the other to the I is the site of this formalisation.

Thus the *sensus communis* is not isolated community

formed through an aesthetic experience, but rather, what Kant means is that this community is constitutive of any community whatsoever as well as of any experience, be it cognitive or practical. This is because the *sensus communis* forms the transcendental reference of the subject and it must, thereby, be at the root of any experience.

This is also a non-cognisable reference and as such only felt. By showing the transcendental ground of this feeling Kant has elevated the aesthetic to the status of the higher faculties of the mind. This feeling is marked by *Lebensgefühl* (the feeling of life), the "agitation" in the mind that "announces" the fact that the mind is affected. The sublime defines the crucial moment in the process of identification, namely, when the self withdraws from the necessary determination of time. This movement points to the original (supersensible) purpose (and the ground) of nature, the material sign of which is affectivity itself.

Chapter 3: THE SUBLIME

> The sublime is counterpoise (*Gegengewicht*) but not the contrary (*Widerspiel*) of the beautiful. It is the counterpoise because our effort and attempt to rise to a grasp (*apprehensio*) of the object awakens in us a feeling of our own greatness and strength; but [it is not the contrary of the beautiful because] when the sublime is described or exhibited, its representation in thought can and must always be beautiful. For otherwise astonishment becomes abhorrence, and this is something quite different from admiration, a judgment in which we do not grow weary of being astonished...
>
> -- Kant[1]

> ... philosophising, in a sense that does not involve being a philosopher, is a means of warding off many disagreeable feelings, and besides the stimulant (*Agitation*) to the mind that introduces an interest in its occupation -- an interest which, just because it is independent of external contingencies, is powerful and sincere, though it is merely in the nature of a game, and keeps the vital forces from stagnating"
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> -- Kant[2]

In this instance, the homo noumenon does not threaten the homo phenomenon with its frightening image: they seem to merge. In this

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[1] I. Kant, *Anthropology,* p., 111.

[2] I. Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, tr. Mary J. Gregor, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), p.185.

> feeling nature has been accepted as ethical. The sublime is an event, where the smallest detail of reality becomes elucidated for eternity. This unity of nature and the ethical, so that both is one in spirit and in body, we call: the beautiful.
>
> -- Cohen[3]

1. **Time and the vital forces**

The experience of the sublime demonstrates the fundamental character of the aesthetic, affective, identification. The sublime is the expression of the finitude of human subjectivity, or, to put another way, of the temporality of the "I". It also conveys the fundamental character of time as self-affection. The power of imagination will play the essential role in what would determine the sublime as the experience of the withdrawal from the inner sense of time. The experience in this instance will be determined, measured, quite differently from the empirical intuition of the *First Critique* -- here time will be "measured" as it affects the

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[3] "Jetzt mahnt nicht als ein Schreckbild der *homo noumenon* den *homo phaenomenon:* sondern sie scheinen verschmolzen. In diesem Gefühle hat die Sittleichkeit Natur angenommen. Die erhabene Aufgabe wird schlichtes Ereigniss, und die geringste Wircklichkeit ist verklärt zum Ewigen. Diese Vermählung von Natur und Sittlichkeit, sodass sie Beide Ein Geist und Ein Fleisch werden, nennen wir: das Schöne" Hermann Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Aesthetik,* (Berlin, 1889), p.281.

"I".[4]

As we know all representations according to Kant are subject to time. Empirical intuition is directly concerned with that which is present in the "now". Time here is understood as the aggregation, concatenation, of "nows" and it must be taken as pure sequence of these "nows". Pure intuition must stay ahead of this sequence so that it can look "ahead at its coming at any minute" and look back "on its having just arrived".[5] Pure intuition, therefore, can only form the pure succession of the sequence of "nows" as such if it is in itself "prefiguring" and reproducing capacity of the power of imagination.[6] The synthesis that is required to bring together the experience of the "now" moments presupposes

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[4] Rudolf Makkreel in *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant* takes the "regress of the imagination" that annihilates the condition of time to be the critical point of the sublime:"within the framework developed in the sublime, (the idea of the supersensible)...functions as a transcendental condition disclosed by the regress of the imagination. When so conceived, the idea of the supersensible may be used in a transcendental philosophy of mind to found a theory of the subject as a whole." *(Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of the Critique of Judgment* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990], p. 79). Thus, according to this reading, the experience of the sublime is a "mirror stage" in the constitution of the subject -- in this experience the subject forms itself in light of the formlessness of nature. According to my reading, on the other hand, if there is, indeed, a self-recognition that takes place in the sublime, it is in the fact that the subject "realises" its own "formlessness" and its affinity with nature in that sense. It is this realisation that defines reflection in the *Critique of Judgment*.

[5] Heidegger, p.119.

[6] Heidegger, p.120.

that the mind has the possibility of retaining the representations, i.e. bringing back, "remembering", the representations form the earlier moments (CPR., A 103, A 126). This capacity of retention and recollection that accompanies interiorisation, is the capacity of imagination to form future, i.e. synthesise the past experience in the present by producing a new representation. The synthesis of the self-same moments through concepts, i.e. a representation of each moment of experience, hence, presupposes a capacity of pure identification "before" such conceptual synthesis. That is to say, as there must be "before" the appearing of each moment the ability to recognise them as self-same, i.e. belonging to one representation under one concept, there must also be a sense that this recognition is based on some prior presence (not representation) which must precede the sequential flow of time and belongs to the sense of time that is "before" this sequential order. Consequently, the power of imagination is able to posit the original wholeness of experience before such experience has "begun" in the sequential flow of time (see, the difference between "*comprehensio logica*" and "*comprehensio aesthetica*" below). This is the transcendental ground of all experience and in this moment the "I" and time are united as the supersensible substrate (unifying force), of all human experience. "I" is not simply in time but is time. It is this temporal character of the "I" that determines this "I" as auto-affective. How can this "I" that is time and stands in

time "measure" or "know" this time, as time can no longer be gauged by the sequence of nows? Time affects us; it is felt. "I" as time is "pure self-affection.[7] In the experience of the sublime the "interchange" of feelings is the measure of this affection. Time is felt by alteration of pain and pleasure, through "agitation" experienced by the subject. It happens when the inner sense and the field of experience are abandoned and the subject is able to "see" in the *Augenblick* nature as presence (this vision being the affection itself); it realises its own temporality and unity with this other or sensuous. In this specific finitude of human subject its transcendental ground is revealed. This vision is also a foresight: transcendental is not only unseeable Kant says, but also unforeseeable. How is it that this vision of the presence is also a gaze toward the future, toward that which is in itself unforeseeable? The subject feels itself as constituted by time through the power of the effects that it produces in the subject. The discussion of the affects as the "measure" of time in the *Anthropology* is the illustration of this critical moment. I will turn to this theme at the end of this chapter.

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[7]Heidegger, p. 129ff.

Just what does Kant mean by the notion of the "vital forces" and life as such? The *Third Critique* abounds with such notions as: the "feeling of life" (*Lebensgefühl*), and its corollaries -- the "attunement" and "agreement" of all the faculties of the mind (*Stimmung, Über-Einstimmung*) that have their basis in this life-feeling; this is soul's capacity to attune to, and bring together all the faculties of the mind that form the *sensus communis* itself. All these notions seem to congregate first, around the physiology of the human individual, and, second, around certain biological principles that invoke the purposiveness of nature and thereby link the subjective principle on which the reflective (aesthetic) judgment rests to teleology ("as a principle inherent in Natural Science" -- that is, the second half of the *Critique of Judgment*). In addition, with regard to practical reason, as we saw in the previous chapter, the affects are not passive but instead characterised by a movement of interiorisation, "agitation", that acts as a "motor" that compels the will to act according to its own principle -- that is, the command to obey.

The chapter on the sublime does not provide any simple insight into the passage (*Übergang*) from the phenomenal to the noumenal, or bring us, at first glance, any closer to what might be called the state of harmony between mediated nature and reason. One of the main themes in the subime is *Gewalt* (see the dynamic sublime) - the violence of nature

exerted through its might which "reveals itself aesthetically only through sacrifices" (CJ. p.131), such as when sensibility is overcome (CJ. p. 132) and as a result displeasure and pain is experienced by the subject at the encounter with the sublime; a gradual appreciation of (and a harmony with) the mighty forces of nature is made possible by the senses that have been tempered by a certain "contrariness" (*Widrigkeit*) -- a "withdrawal from the inner sense". This appreciation is a sign of culture, for an "uncultured mind", Kant contends, sees nothing in these forces but danger, hardship and misery (*ibid.*). Briefly, there are two violent "annunciations" of nature superseding each other and both exacting certain sacrifice: one discloses itself in "hardship and danger" and thus challenges the mind to free itself from its fetters by taming it, the other no less violent "reveals itself aesthetically", through "deprivation and sacrifice" though it "serves our inner freedom" (*ibid.*). The latter is the experience of the sublime, where nature declares itself as an object of a pure intellectual liking, that is -- "moral law in its might, might that it exerts in us over any and all of those incentives of the mind *that precede it*" (*ibid.*). Moreover, the judgment concerning the sublime, like that of the beautiful, has an exigency of universal validity because, although it signals the presence of culture only in those who experience it, it must be presupposed of all humans since the moral feeling has no other foundation but in human nature:

"... in something that along with common sense, we may require and demand of everyone, namely the predisposition to the feeling for (practical) ideas, i.e. to moral feelings" (CJ., p.125). This is why, the sublime is both a topic of the transcendental as well as of the anthropological reflections for Kant. To draw a parallel between the transcendental investigation of the possibility of experience of the beautiful and the sublime (i.e. the project of the *Third Critique*) and anthropology, (which is a mere description of human experience -- "an investigation of what nature makes of man")[8] as such is debatable. However, there is a sense in which critical judgement "allows" such a parallel to be drawn. Critical judgement must discover a rule according to which the given is to be comprehended. Unlike determinate judgment, where it is merely a matter of supplying the rules to the manifold of nature, in reflective judgement mind takes "clues" from nature, nature is taken as a "sign" for a transcendental rule to be discovered. "Beauty" is one of such signs, as well as "revolution", as we saw in chapter one. In this sense, reflective judgment always partakes of the realm of experience. Thus, physiological state can itself become a sign from which transcendental rule can be derived. Such is, for example, an "agitation", physiological state of exchange *(Wechsel)* between pleasure and pain, in the case of the sublime. This fact explains why the descriptions of the

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[8] *Anthropology*, p. 3.

sublime in the *Anthropology* stands so close to that in the *Critique*. It can be argued that, this description is itself an example of the interchange *(Wechsel)* between the order of the sensual and the order of the transcendental established by critical thought.[9]

An analysis of the sublime begins with an examination of the transition from the power of judging the beautiful to the power of judging the sublime. In the introduction of the *Third Critique* the sublime is mentioned only in passing. The theory of the sublime is presented only as "a mere appendix" to the investigation of the purposiveness of nature. In the following "crucial preliminary remark" Kant characterises the sublime thus:

> ...the concept of the sublime in nature is not nearly as important and rich in implications as that of the beautiful in nature, and that this concept indicates nothing purposive whatever in nature itself but only in what use we can make of our intuitions of nature so that we can feel a purposiveness within ourselves entirely independent of nature. For the beautiful in nature we must seek a basis outside ourselves, but for the sublime a basis merely within ourselves and in the way of thinking that introduces sublimity into our presentation of nature (CJ., p.100).

Even though it is presented as an *addendum*, the

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[9] See, Jean-Francois Lyotard, "Judiciousness in Dispute, or Kant after Marx", in *The Lyotard Reader*, edited by Andrew Benjamin, (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p.328.

concern articulated in conjunction to the sublime is central to Kant's argument in the *Critique* as a whole. I would like to isolate two guiding threads: contrariness (*Widrigkeit*) (counterpurposiveness, but also contrariness to the senses) and the idea of the exhibition of the supersensible, i.e. its phenomenal manifestation. How are these two thoughts related? In a more literal sense, of course, the stakes surrounding the sublime are already clear without the exposition that Kant embarks on here. The doctrine of the sublime is about "counterpurposiveness", about a brief moment of displeasure or "negative pleasure" (*Anthropology*), about formlessness and limitlessness. The sublime precedes the exhibition of nature, or rather, it is the process of this exhibition itself, the state of mind that makes possible such exhibition, since that which is actually exhibited as a finished "work" is always beautiful.[10] There is no such a "thing" as the sublime. Kant describes the relation of the beautiful and the sublime in the following way: "So the sublime is not an object for taste. It is, rather,the feeling of being stirred that has the sublime for its object. But when an artist exhibits the sublime to us, by describing it or clothing it (in ornaments [*Nebenwerken*], *parerga*), it can and should be beautiful, since otherwise it is wild, coarse and repulsive, and so contrary to taste".[11] Thus, beautiful is a *parergon* of the sublime. If the

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[10] See Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Aesthetik*, p. 281.

[11] *Anthropology*, p.111.

beautiful is "the work" and the product of the sublime, the sublime is "the state" that precedes or rather produces this "work". The work that goes into the production of beauty, is a painful labour that starts with introjection -- the first psychic pain -- a labour of mourning.

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The sublime is, Kant tells us, less important than the beautiful because it is "connected to the feelings" and thus it merely describes the subjective state, a state of the subject at a certain moment. There is no sublime object as such, since this feeling cannot be embodied in any sensible form. Kant, however, adds a somewhat misleading remark to his characterisation of the sublime, where he calls the sublime "an object of nature": "The sublime can be described thus: it is an object (of nature) *the presentation of which determines the mind to think of nature's inability to attain to an exhibition of ideas*" (CJ., p.127).[12] However, it is

[12] Lacoue-Labarthe comments on the sublime as follows: "We are confronted then, in Kantian terms (but also in pre-Kantian terms, for this has been said in any number of ways since Longinus), with the canonical definition of the sublime: the sublime is the presentation of the nonpresentable or, nore rigorously, to take up the formula of Lyotard, the presentation (of this): that there is the nonpresentable." See, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, "Sublime Truth" in *Of The Sublime: Presence in Question,* translated Jeffrey S. Librett (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), p.74.

important to understand that by referring to the "objectivity" of the sublime Kant means that it is objective wherein it describes the mind's expressiveness when the mind strains at leaving behind its sensible side so that it can expand its powers in order to become commensurate with the infinite and thus the domain of the practical. That is to say, the sublime is a state of mind and a "symptom" and in this sense objective, i.e. an expression of the violence and perturbation done to the mind's faculties, namely to inner sense. Thus, the sublime is not an object, but is more accurately described as a "mental state" (CJ., p.112). In Hegel's succinct characterisation: "the sublimity -- as Kant says himself -- is not contained in anything in nature but only in our minds, insofar as we become conscious of our superiority to the nature within us and therefore to nature without."[13] This brings us to the second important point, which in Hegel's words again describes the sublime as "outward shaping which is itself annihilated in turn by what it reveals, so that the revelation of the content is at the same time a suppression of the revelation, is the sublime" (*ibid.*).

The state of mind that characterises the sublime alters the character of the representation itself. As we already saw in Chapter One, beauty as a sign of the supersensible refuses all adequation. The supersensible

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[13] Hegel's *Aesthetics, lectures on Fine Art,* translated by T.M. Knox, vol. I, (Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1975), p.363.

emerges as non-representational, more precisely, as something that could only be represented through a material non-adequation with itself. As a *parergon* of the sublime, as an "ornament" beauty manifests but at the same time conceals, "suppresses" (Hegel), what it reveals. As an ornament it does not "stand" for the whole work, but instead is "metonymic" and, thus, further accentuates its "inadequateness" in relation to the whole.

We now can see the importance of the sublime within the Kantian system; it is, indeed in the center of the systematic concern which seeks to establish the unity of the supersensible and sensible. If the non-adequation of the one with the other is the issue here then how can the unity be established and, more to the point, exhibited? The overall argument of this peculiar relation of the sensible with the supersensible, of this *mimesis*,[14] should by now be familiar to us: "common reason demands us to posit unity"; however,

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[14] My understanding of the sublime owes much to de Man's reading of Kant. De Man separates that which comes under the rubric "materiality" from the "organic" and the "architectonic". He sets it apart from the system in order to show that "materiality" exceeds and, therefore, supersedes and eventually destroys the system. However, I see the sublime as expressing the excess of the architectonic system itself, as it expresses the subjective measure and as such underlies everything to which it gives a measure. This is indeed the main point of the exposition of the subime. Moreover, the affinity between nature and the mind that unerlies the architectonic of reason is premised on the idea of limitessness which is the basis of this affinity. Paul de Man "Phenomenality and Materiality in Kant" in *Hermeneutics, Questions and Prospects,* ed. G. Shapiro and A. Sica (Amherst, 1984).

"this very reason finds it difficult if not impossible to show it, point to it, or prove it". Nevertheless, in the sublime we search for the source of this presentation of the totality:

> For we soon come to realize that nature in space and time (i.e. phenomenal nature) entirely lacks the unconditioned, and hence lacks also that absolute magnitude (i.e. totality) which, after all, the commonest reason demands. And this is precisely what reminds us that we are dealing only with nature as appearance, which must yet be considered in turn, the mere exhibition of nature in itself (of which the reason has the idea) We cannot determine this idea of the supersensible any further, and hence we cannot *cognise* but can only *think* nature as an exhibition of it. But it is this idea aroused in us when, as we judge an object aesthetically, this judging strains the imagination to its limit, whether of expansion (mathematically) or of its might over the mind (dynamically) (CJ. p. 128).

Thus, beauty as a *parergon* of the sublime in its metonymic inadequation should demonstrate, paradoxically, the existence of the whole. This paradox is taken up in the exposition of the sublime. As nature puts the spectacle of splendour and might, it also exhibits itself as the supersensible. However, how does the immateriality of the supersensible get translated into a phenomenal sign of its presence? To see this one needs a "different vision"; the whole -- the supersensible that supports and supersedes the superstructure of the sensible -- is the architectonic, for

which one needs, as Kant puts it in the *Anthropology*, the "other eye". The "supersensible substrate" as the arche and telos grounds as well as marks out the destination of the sensible (The spatial connotation of the "above" and "under" marks the dual topos of the transcendental as a destination as well as the ground). The scientists who lack the vision of this architectonic whole are like "cyclops" Kant says, -- they "have one eye missing: the eye, namely of true philosophy".[15]

The notion of vision follows this argument as a guiding thread. In order to see the aesthetic unity, the unity of the architectonic system, one must look at nature from a different perspective, the way, Kant argues, the "poets do". What do poets see? They have an "architectonic" vision of the whole, thus, they too must use like "true philosophers" the "other" eye. What is revealed to this vision is that the facticity of nature as life is the transcendental itself: "*was der Augenschein zeigt*" is revealed without a need of a categorial (discursive) deduction. This vision is the vision of what cannot be seen but only felt, what shines like a star and hits the eye, as Kant says, "directly". This vision must "surpass every standard of sense" and in this process "comprehension in an instant (*Augenblick*)" involves "imaginative regress" which presents (*darstellt*) rather than (*vorstellt*). The formal procedure that accompanies this vision is "*comprehensio aesthetica*" which aids the mind

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[15] *Anthropology*, p. 95.

accompish the impossible -- to reveal to the senses the supersensible -- to see the unseeable.

Before moving to the material details of the text I would like to outline once again Kant's argument here: the relation to nature in the sublime is based on the "withdrawal from the senses"; the displeasure and pain lasts an "instant", as Kant remarks in the *Anthropology* and founds the vision of aesthetic unity. Now we have the most important concept on which the exposition of the supersensible rests: that is, temporality of the supersensible that metastasizes the facticity of life into the transcendental "fact" -- finitude of the future life. The "withdrawn time" in memory and imagination, although makes use of the sequential flow of time, "works" differently than the time that determines categorially and according to cause and effect. We shall see the details of this argument in the *Anthropology*. This other time blasts open the continuum of discursive time to reveal with force, "directly",(it does not prove anything discursively, it merely shows) the supersensible as *Factum* -- as a sheer power of presence -- the law of the other.

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The difference between the mathematical and dynamic sublimes stresses the particularity of the aesthetic unity.

Mathematical unity extends to infinity:[16] however, "more" and "many" have no categorial but only categorical value, (a number is a concept that can determine always one more *ad infinitum*). That is to say, mathematical unity is not a supersensible substrate, it has no practical force. On the other hand, aesthetic unity in the dynamic sublime has power as its principle and the supersensible as its ground.

The discussion of the aesthetic unity is foregrounded in the relation posited between the beautiful and the sublime. In this relation it is shown that the role of speculative ideas in determining concepts of understanding is crucial. Limit itself is the idea of reason (CPR., B 311) and it must partake in determination of any knowledge. In the experience of the beautiful there is a feeling of intensification and acceleration of the life forces, for this feeling easily arises out of the play of imagination. In the feeling of the sublime, however, pleasure is indirect. In the *Anthropology* Kant describes it as a feeling that comes after inhibition (*Hemmung*), which keeps back the vital forces. Retention is followed by a sudden outpouring (*Ergiessung*). This intensity he calls a negative pleasure and it lasts only for an instant (*Augenblick*). Pain is the feeling of life being

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[16] This difference between mathematical infinite and "systematic" infinite of practical reason is commonly overlooked in the discussion of the sublime. See, for example, Francis Ferguson, *Solitude and the Sublime* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

hindered. In this peculiar sequential order pain must precede any enjoyment: "pain always comes first." [17] No enjoyment can follow directly upon another: between one and the other, pain must intervene", and indeed, this is one of the ways the sublime announces itself.

The sublime differs from the beautiful in one fundamental way -- it is a formlessness as such and is therefore contra-purposive (*zweckwidrig*).[18] It is either a sheer magnitude, a greatness or a force and cannot be represented as such.

Aesthetic judgment of the beautiful does not involve reason -- only understanding and imagination have a role here. In the sublime, however, imagination surrenders itself to an activity quite distinct from that of discursive reflection of understanding. The feeling of the dynamic sublime, for instance, is experienced when one is faced with the formless immensity of power (*Gewalt*). The comparison between the beautiful and the sublime shows that with regard to quality they are similar as both please "for their own sake" (*für sich selbst*) (CJ., p.97), that is to say, they are independent of all interest. With regard to their quantity, both are singular judgments, non-objective but universally valid: similarly, both the sublime and the beautiful are concerned not with logical judgments, but with subjective feelings of

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[17] *Anthropology*, p.100.

[18] *Anthropology*, p.111.

pleasure and pain.

There are however "significant differences" (CJ., p.98). Taste, a judgment of the beautiful, is induced by the form of the object: the sublime, by a "formless object", or by unlimited object (*Unbegrenzt*):

> Beautiful is what we like when we merely judge it (and hence not through any sensation or by means of sense in accordance with some concept of understanding). From this it follows at once that we must like the beautiful without any interest. Both the beautiful and the sublime, of universally valid aesthetic judging refer to subjective bases. In the case of the beautiful, the reference is to subjective bases of sensibility as they are purposive for the benefit of the contemplative understanding. In the case of the sublime, the reference is to subjective bases as they are purposive in relation to moral feeling, namely against sensibility but at the same time, and within the very same subject, for the purposes of practical reason (CJ., p. 127.).

In the sublime, judgment refers imagination directly to reason, with no intervention of concepts.

So, because the feeling of the beautiful results from a form, which is a limitation, its affinity lies with understanding. On the other hand, the affinity of the sublime lies with reason and it is based on formlessness. However, in both cases the concept remains "indeterminate"; in taste, a form arouses activity that is not determinate in effect. This

activity is the activity of understanding, which is the activity of determining. This activity if it were to succeed in determining the given, would produce only a "concept" not a "beautiful concept", i.e. instead of the pleasure of taste we would have objective knowledge. In the case of the sublime, on the other hand, the formlessness that is involved immediately suggests a concept of speculative reason, i.e. an idea for which there is no presentation. Kant is implying that understanding as a limiting operation is not opposed to reason as unlimited. The concept of the limit itself is an idea of speculative reason. In order for the categories of understanding to operate through determination or through limitation (schema, form) the ideas of reason have to supply the limitation to a representation. Thus, the limiting is a method, an act, not an opposite of that which is limited. This is why reason is a necessary ingredient in the production of any knowledge, be it discursive or non-discursive. In this production imagination plays the fundamental role, demonstrated in the discussion of the notion of comprehension. Are there any "objects" in nature that might be said to represent the sublime formlessness? Kant entertains the idea of the monstrous, an object which by its size nullifies the purposes that constitutes its concept, because it exceeds its final limit to be such an object. Or, perhaps, the colossal, a mere presentation of a concept that is too large. However, does not this "too large" have to be an empirical

approximation to something? One might think of totality as "big" or "colossal" but there is always the problem of a comparative standard, i.e. a standard outside of what is measured. The infinite must be given in totality, it cannot need a standard outside itself: reason always "demands comprehension in one intuition" and "makes us think of the infinite as given in its totality" (CJ., p.111).

Thus, the sublime is introduced in the *Critique of Judgment* as a state of mind elicited by the presentation of boundlessness or the infinite. Its characteristic feature, according to Kant, is a "movement of the mind" whose subjective purposiveness is referred by the imagination either to the faculty of cognition or to the faculty of desire (CJ., p.100). The analytic of the sublime is therefore divided into two sections: 1. the mathematical sublime, which is related to cognitive faculties and represented in terms of magnitude, and 2. the dynamic sublime, which is related to the faculty of desire and represented in terms of might or power.

The sublime demands the grasp of totality. In a key passage Kant explains that the sublime has to be comprehended "directly". It has to be perceived the "way poets do" as "merely in terms of what manifests itself to the eye" (*wie die Dichter es tun nach dem, was der Augenschein zeigt*" (CJ., p.130, KU., p.196):

> When we call the sight of the starry sky *sublime*, we must not base our judgment

> upon any concept of worlds that are inhabited by rational beings, and then [conceive of] the bright dots that we see occupying the space above us as being these worlds's suns, moved in orbits prescribed for them with great purposiveness; but we must base our judgment regarding it merely on how we see it, as a vast vault encompassing everything, and merely under this presentation may we posit the sublimity that a pure aesthetic judgment attributes to this object. In the same way, when we judge the sight of the ocean we must not do so on the basis of how we *think* it, enriched with all sorts of knowledge which we possess (but which is not contained in the direct intuition), e.g., a vast realm of aquatic creatures, or as the great reservoir supplying the water for the vapours that impregnate the air with clouds for the benefit of the eland, or again as an element that, while separating continents from one another, yet made possible the greatest communication among them; for all such judgments will be teleological. Instead we must be able to view the ocean as poets do merely in terms of what manifests itself to the eye--e.g. if we observe it while it is calm, as a clear mirror of water bounded only by the sky; or, it is turbulent, as being like an abyss threatening to engulf everything -- and yet find it sublime....

We have already given some thought to this vision of totality, but, let us follow closely the argument in the text where Kant discusses the comprehension of magnitude as totality.

This argument in a sense supplants the one in the *First Critique* ("Transcendental Judgment in General", "Analogies of Experience", see especially the discussion of

"Anticipation" -- *prolexis* [CPR., A 167]). Although this argument does not negate what is argued there in crucial respects it shows that the previous exposition is incomplete. There the estimation of magnitude is numerical. According to this argument, in order to get a determinate concept of how large something is, we must use numbers, whose unity is a quantitative measure (*Mass*). Thus all logical estimation of magnitude is mathematical. However, the act of imagination must accompany the unity of the numerical series that progresses to infinity, i.e. it must be possible to grasp (*fassen*) the unity directly in one intuition. Thus, Kant says, in the end, all estimation of the magnitude of objects of nature is ultimately only "visually estimated" (*Nach dem Augenmasse) (ibid.)*, and this he calls aesthetic estimation. Imagination, thus, is revealed to be a function of judgment as well as a faculty of sense and therefore is capable of establishing a measure for itself. Kant's discussion of the mathematically sublime concerns magnitude in general, and thus points to the aesthetic element in the judgement of magnitude. He argues that the objective mathematical measurement of magnitude by means of a number must ultimately presuppose an aesthetic estimate of magnitude. If numbers themselves are defined mathematically in terms of a unit, that unit itself cannot in turn be defined numerically. Hence, intuitive form is absolute and sensuous and "presents magnitude absolutely" i.e. categorically -- prior to any comparison. I shall

further discuss this argument as presented in the *Third Critique*.

This argument hinges upon the distinction between apprehension and comprehension. In addition to the immediate apprehension (*Fassung*) of the fundamental measure in intuition, there must be distinguished two activities of the imagination necessary for mathematical measurements: apprehension (*Auffasung*) and comprehension (*Zusamenfassung*). The imagination can use the fundamental measure as a unit to generate a numerical sequence where each added unit is apprehended successively. Or, as it proceeds numerically, the imagination can also construct more encompassing units of measure, as for example, comprehending 1000 as one unit. This second operation of the imagination, which is called aesthetic comprehension, "*comprehensio aesthetica*", allows us to move from a simple fundamental measure to a more encompassing measure. However, this is not an unlimited process, for as apprehension advances "it loses as much on the one side as it gains on the other" (CJ., p.108). In the aesthetic estimation of magnitude we <u>feel</u> the effort that imagination makes to encompass (*begreifen*) progression. We feel pain that signals failure (CJ., p.112). Imagination has no limit if it is a matter of apprehending, but insofar as it has to reproduce the previous parts as it arrives at the succeeding ones, it does have a limit to its simultaneous comprehension. Faced with immensity, imagination experiences the inadequacy of this

maximum, and "in its fruitless efforts to extend this limit, recoils upon itself (*ibid.*).

Imaginative apprehension is identified with the mathematical estimation of magnitude and imaginative comprehension with its aesthetic estimation. According to Kant, mathematical apprehension can go on ad infinitum, but for aesthetic comprehension there is a maximum beyond which it cannot go (*ibid.*). When the imagination's capacity to intuit simultaneously a series of units reaches a limit, aesthetic comprehension encounters the immeasurable that triggers the feeling of the sublime. This maximum, "if it is judged as the absolute measure" brings with it the idea of the sublime and produces the emotion (of inadequacy) which no mathematical estimation it its magnitude by means of numbers can bring about, because with every new unit there is a new "hope" that the mind can reach the unity (the analogy that one might use here is the equation of money with power, however, as Kant shows magnitude and power are "different" measures -- one mathematical, the other dynamic); the self does not experience a sense of failure or hopelessness by not approximating the absolute measure. A mechanical operation of adding up dissipates this hopeless feeling; the future moment can be seen as the same as a previous moment. There is no experience of *horror vacui* that is brought by this kind of an indeterminacy of the future moment.[19] Thus, the subject is

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[19] *Anthropology*, p.102.

relieved of the emotional strain.

Thus it must be clear now, that the sublime, as the absolutely great, is "great beyond all comparison" and can be projected only insofar as we remain conscious of the absolute fundamental measure that underlies numerical measurement, conscious of the aesthetic measure. This is a condition of the immeasurable in the sublime.

Thus, apprehension can be described as an advancement or progression, so that to apprehend a magnitude is to grasp it part by part in a temporal secession. The comprehension of a magnitude involves the more difficult task of grasping or judging magnitude as a whole. Thus Kant asks whether comprehension is possible when we are looking at something massive, such as a pyramid: "If one gets too close, then the eye needs some time to complete the apprehension from the base to the peak, but during that time some of the earlier parts are invariably extinguished in the imagination before it had apprehended the later ones, and hence the comprehension is never complete" (CJ., p.108).

This example concurs with one used in the *First Critique* (CPR., A 102) which demonstrates the need for a synthesis of reproduction and the temporal spread of the process that constitutes experience. Kant argued that if the first parts of a line cannot be reproduced as we advance to succeeding ones, then the complete representation cannot be obtained. But for this reproduction we need to be able to

recognise that all the different parts of the line belong to one total unit. This recognition of unity requires a conceptual synthesis through a concept of number.

In the analytic of the sublime Kant refers back to this numerical unity that is obtained by the synthesis of recognition as "*comprehensio logica*". This logical, mathematical comprehension can proceed "without an end", without "hindrance". It is true that the "*comprehensio aesthetica*" where the imagination unites several representations in one intuition still conforms to the synthetic conditions established by the unity of apperception and the categories, however, there is a major difference: "The mind listens to the voice of reason within itself", and extends the synthetic conditions beyond the application of empirical concepts. This act cuts short the mathematical progression to "*das Unendliche*" by revealing that which foregrounds this unity. By "listening to the voice of reason" one can gradually come to "see" the aesthetic unity, without putting the numbers together to infinity. Thus with this important point Kant comes to the end of this argument -- the sublime is not a mathematical progression to infinity, but the aesthetic comprehension of totality that underlies any such progression, although its end too is the infinite. In short, it reveals the supersensible.[20]

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[20] Paul Crowther's argument is that the feeling of sublimity takes place when an object appears, object that cannot be grasped as a "phenomenal totality" by imagination

It is clear now that time plays a major role in this synthesis, as it is a synthesising force per se. However, let us look at the special position that time holds here -- the mind "withdraws" from it. What happens to it when reason deploys imagination? Kant sets apart the imagination that is involved in understanding and the function of imagination in

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but whose unity is nevetheless rationally comprehensible. He is mainly interested in the mathematical sublime as it revises the analysis of the perceptual apprehension and comprehension of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. In the final analysis, according to Crowther, comprehension of totality is possible because imagination is inadequate to the task, which gives reason the power to posit the unity: "...imagination simply proves inadequate to reason's demand that it present the object's phenomenal unity in a simple whole of intuition. This in itself evidences the superiority of our rational and supersensible being, and brings about, therefore, the emotional delight of the sublime." Paul Crowther, *The Kantian Sublime: From Morality to Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p.104. My analysis is based on the idea that there is the fundamental similarity between the effords of imagination and that of reason in the sublime (not the complete break-down of the imaginative faculty that give reason freedom to legislate as according to Crowther) which enables the mind to reach the idea of aesthetic unity. Lyotard gives an articulation to this idea. Both imagination and reason exceed their own potentialities and thus subvert their "natural" determinations: "Seen in critical terms, the Analytic of the Sublime finds its "legitimacy" in a principle that is expounded by critical thought and that motivates it: a principle of thinking's getting carried away. As it is expounded and deduced in its thematic, sublime feeling is analyzed as a double defiance. Imagination at the limit of *what* it can present does violence to itself in order to present *that* it can no longer present. Reason, for its part, seeks, unreasonably, to violate the interdict it imposes on itself and which is strictly critical, the interdict that prohibits if from finding objects corresponding to its concepts in sensible intuition. In thses two aspects, thinking defies its own finitude, as if fascinated by its own excessiveness. It is this desire for limitlessness that it feels in the sublime "state": happiness and unhappiness." (Lyotard, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime*, p.55).

reflection. Time is the key in understanding this difference. The comprehension of aesthetic unity functions through the principle of time that is not successive aggregation of nows but is "regressive". Let us give a closer look at Kant's argument.

In understanding, the imagination too, participates in determination and functions discursively: it needs a progressive, linear form of time in order to run through the units of sense one by one. In the analytic of the sublime, Kant expands the role of the imagination by considering it in relation to reason, which functions, as we saw above, through the principle of unity. Whereas the understanding is the faculty of finite knowledge based on experience, reason strives to comprehend the infinite itself. The mere ability to think the sublime "shows a faculty of mind surpassing every standard of sense". The imagination, of course, cannot encompass the infinite, yet in relation to the mathematical sublime it is forced to strive for a kind of completeness that calls for a reorganisation of its relation to time.

To summarise: the nature of aesthetic comprehension is most fully revealed when the imagination reaches its maximum, i.e. when it encounters the "absolutely great" as the idea of reason. The imagination, in an unexpected reversal of its normal operation, undergoes a "regress" which suspends the progressive sequences of apprehension in inner sense and makes possible the intuition of coexistence. Kant writes:

> Measuring (as [a way of] apprehending) a space is at the same time describing it, and hence it is an objective movement in the imagination and a progression. On the other hand, comprehending a multiplicity in a unity (of intuition rather than thought), and hence comprehending in one instant what is apprehended successively, is a regression that in turn cancels the condition of time in the imagination's progression and makes *simultaneity* intuitable. (CJ., p.116).

Hence, (since temporal succession is a condition of the inner sense and of an intuition) this is a subjective movement of imagination which does the violence to the inner sense, and this violence must be the more significant the larger the equation is the imagination comprehends in one intuition. Therefore, the effort to take up into a single apprehension is a way of presenting which, subjectively considered is contrapurposive, but which objectively is needed to estimate magnitude and hence is purposive. And yet this same violence that the imagination inflicts on the subject is still judged purposive for the *"whole vocation"* of the mind. This regress that annihilates the "condition of time", "violates the inner sense" and makes apparent that the sublime experience is not determined by the same "flow" of time as "experience as such". In the *First Critique* a link between imagination and a progressive form of time was shown to be necessary for making objective and determinate judgments about nature. However, the mathematical determination of nature is not at issue when it comes to aesthetic judgment as a mode of

reflective judgment. It does not require the numerical progression of time that is based on the spatial analogy of a measurable line. The temporal determinacy is not necessary for aesthetic consciousness in the way that it is for cognitive consciousness. It can give a unity to what comes under it, without resorting to the temporal determination. It is simply "different" -- we have gone through this argument already. However, how can we understand the claim that the imagination in fact violates inner sense and annihilates both the conditions of time and the linear form of time?

The imaginative regress is said to be a "comprehension in an instant (*Augenblick*)" of what is successively apprehended. It involves presenting (*Darstellen*), not representing (*Vorstellen*), (which is based on the successive ordering of what is given to sense as a linear manifold in experience). The *Darstellung* presents "the starry sky" and "the ocean", as Kant says, as we "merely see them". If we approach them cognitively, and think of them as populated with living creatures, then no feeling of sublimity will be aroused. We must regard them "merely by what strikes the eye (*Augenschien*)." We have already seen, that with this appeal to the "eye" Kant signifies the comprehension of aesthetic unity (as in the *First Critique* where eye estimates the manifold). This simultaneous aesthetic presentation involves a loss of determinacy, as it is not cognised but felt. The "symptom" of this indeterminacy is "agitation" felt

which announces the sublime. So, this presentation is held together by aesthetic and not successive temporal unity. This is the essence of this "aesthetic picture" of nature.

Aesthetic pleasure in beauty consists in the play of the two cognitive faculties -- understanding and imagination. In the sublime, the play involves reason and imagination. It involves displeasure, as the imagination recognises that it is incapable of comprehending absolute greatness, and pleasure, insofar as this recognition serves the purpose of disclosing the power of reason that is derived from the same subject. This displeasure and this pleasure exist simultaneously (*zugleich*) in the feeling of the sublime. It is characterised as an *Erschütterung*, a convulsive movement or violent feeling that shakes us. It takes the appearance of a convulsive motion because what is involved is a kind of quickly alternating repulsion and attraction.

At first glance, it might appear that Kant is defining displeasure and pleasure in the sublime as successive rather than simultaneous, and this could be said to result in a "negative pleasure". But is this truly a "conflict" where one feeling must win over another? If so, it is a winning that brings the subject literally "to his or her senses" by pointing to the "supersensible destination" and provides a purpose (*telos*, destination) for this vision. What is presented to us? Once this presentation is achieved does it mean that in this representation the upheaval of the senses is

over and "the progress of time" restored? Put another way, is the reaction of the subject a "mistake", is it a type of "misrecognition" that gives way to insight? When all is said and done what does one really see?

If the idea of the supersensible destination is identified with the moral purposiveness of the sublime, then the sublime must be the highest manifestation of this idea. In dealing with immensity, which reduces our imagination to impotence, we attribute such immensity to a natural object, that is, to sensible nature. But in reality it is reason which forces us to unite the immensity of the sensible world into a whole. This whole is the Idea of the sensible, as it has a supersensible as *substratum* and it is reason that has pushed imagination to the limit of its power. So it would be true to say that this relationship is a conflictual relation rather than one of accord for it signifies a contradiction experienced between the demands of reason and the power of the imagination. This is why the imagination appears to lose its freedom and the feeling of the sublime seems to involve pain rather than pleasure. When imagination is confronted with its limits by something which goes beyond it, imagination then leap frogs over its own limit by representing to itself the inaccessibility of the rational idea, and by making this very inaccessibility something which is present in sensible nature. "... though imagination, no doubt, finds nothing beyond the sensible world to which it can lay hold, still this thrusting

aside of the sensible barriers gives it a feeling of being unbounded; and that removal is thus a presentation of the infinite. As such it can never be anything more than a negative presentation..." (CJ., p. 290)

The subject becomes the focus of the supersensible and it is where imagination finds its unlimited power. But nothing is explained if we merely say that the supersensible reveals itself through the sensible sign of "sacrifice and deprivation" (*Aufopferung* and *Beraubung*). Although, "literally and logically" (*Buchstäblich genommen, und logisch betrachtet*) (CJ., p.127, KU., p. 193) ideas cannot be exhibited (*dargestellt*) there is still something presented here. This "something" is important. "The starry sky" as an accompaniment of "the moral law within" -- is a "picture" of the law, its aesthetic image. Further, this image is only an oblique one but nevertheless it qualifies the sense of the "unrepresentable". In this regress of the senses is imagination given simply free rein? Is it this freedom over time that is the sign of the supersensible?

The temporality of the supersensible, the fact, that the law is not so much the unseeable, as unforeseeable -- (*Unabsehliche*) is the key in understanding what Kant means here:

> The real object of a pure and unconditioned intellectual liking is the moral law in its might...This might actually reveals itself aesthetically only through sacrifice (which is a deprivation -- through one that serves

> our inner freedom -- in return for which it reveals in us an unfathomable depth of this supersensible power, whose consequences extend beyond what we can foresee. Hence considered from the aesthetic side (i.e. in reference to sensibility), the liking is negative...).(CJ., p.131).

Now, it has become clear how Kant connects contrariness to the inner sense and the presentation of the supersensible. Time (inner sense) itself becomes defined subjectively through pleasure and pain and this subjectivity determines a presentation. Further, this subjective determination of time (alternation of pleasure and pain that acts as cause and effect) collapses the conceptual determination (that must be carried through by succession of time) and reveals nature in all its indeterminacy -- which is, paradoxically, also its most essential revelation: it is finitude itself and, at the same time, the transcendental.

In order to further illustrate this point I would like to turn to the *Anthropology* where Kant gives a more thorough look at feelings as a subjective measure of time and also as that "motor" which gives force to a body, i.e. the force that is its live-force that must precedes the will to act. He describes the simultaneity of pleasure and pain as a condition of coexistence of the pair of opposites that constitutes the *Lebensgef*ühl and thus links this discussion to the sublime in the *Third Critique*. The pair pleasure/pain

operate through a subtle dialectic. Kant gives an overall primacy to pleasure since it promotes the *Lebensgefühl*. However, it is pain that is a life principle by a simple fact that it makes the subject acutely aware of time, of its own finitude, of the fact that it is a living being.

According to this notion, pain *(Unlust)* always precedes pleasure: "In conformity with the relation of cause and effect", he confirms. Pain is an experience of loss: "Enjoyment and pain are opposed to each other not as profit *(Erwerb)* and lack of profit *(Mangel)* (+ and 0), but as profit and loss (= and -): that is, one is opposed to the other not merely as its *contradictory (contradictorie s. logice oppositum)* but also as its *contrary (contrarie s. realiter oppositum)*".[21] We can understand, then, that the experience of the beautiful and the sublime are predicated on the continuous play of the antagonism between pleasure and pain: "*So pain must precede any enjoyment:* pain always comes first"[22] Because "*no enjoyment can follow directly upon another*: between one and the other, pain must intervene" (*ibid.*). This constitutes a state of health. "Slight inhibition of the vital force alternate with slight advancement of it, and this constitutes the state of health. We mistakenly think that in a state of health we feel continuous well-being; but, in fact, it consists in agreeable

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[21] *Anthropology*, p. 113.

[22] *Anthropology*, p. 99.

feelings whose succession is only intermittent (with pain always intervening between them). Pain is the spur of activity, and it is in activity, above all, that we feel our life: without pain, inertia would set in" (*ibid.*). To illustrate this point, Kant cites a saying: "The end of love's pains is the end of love itself."

Thus, the alteration of pleasure and pain is the condition of "the feeling of life" in us, of the attunement of the senses where even solitude becomes a kind of a company for us, the *Lebensgefühl*. Kant uses a peculiar example of smoking. The movement from need to a pure pleasure without need is what tobacco symbolises for Kant. Unlike eating, it is a "disinterested consumption", "unnecessary", "symbolic introduction of non-alimentary product into the mouth.[23] This is why Kant claims it is a kind of company. As such it marks a "different time" which is measured by alteration of pleasure and pain: "Tobacco at first involves a disagreeable sensation. But just because nature removes this pain at once (by secreting mucus from the palate or nose), the use of tobacco, becomes a kind of company, by constantly re-awakening sensations and even thoughts -- even if these are only fleeting" (*ibid.*).

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[23] See Derrida's discussion of tobacco as a symbol in the economic cycle of exchange -- as a "link" between natural need and the symbolic consumption where "nothing natural remains", i.e. work of mourning, etc. J. Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money,* translated by P. Kamuf, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p.112ff.

Although pain always precedes pleasure, there is, nevertheless an overall priority to pleasure. Pleasure is wider than pain because pleasure appears so central to the life force, but it is the fact of interchange of feelings that makes one conscious of the flow of as we are carried from one state into another. This interchange of feelings do not have to be induced by direct influence on the palate (like in smoking): visual stimulation also, according to Kant, gives impetus to imagination and marks (punctuates) time. We can "reel" through time as fast or as slow as we please; as for a traveller for whom distances seem shorter if the route he has to travel is scenic. We are carried along incessantly in the current of time and in the change of sensation connected with it and there is an intensification of the sense of time due to the awareness of the future state. Kant says:

> We can also describe these feelings in terms of the effect that the sensation of our state produces on our mind. What directly (by the senses) prompts me to *leave* my state (to go out of it) is disagreeable to me - it pains me. What directly prompts me to *maintain* this state (to remain in it) is agreeable to me - it delights me. But we are carried along incessantly in the current of time and in the change of sensations connected with it. Although leaving one point in time and entering another is one and the same act (of change), there is still a temporal sequence in our thought and in consciousness of this change, in conformity with the relation of cause and effect.[24]

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[24] *Anthropology*, p.99.

In a word, time now is punctuated by the alteration of feelings and it is this punctuation which "measures" change. The substrate of this change and flux is the "sequence of time" (cause and effect). Time "drags us along" and the removal of once present pain makes us acutely aware of this. However, passing from one state into another is not "all joy". The removal of pain is the "motor" (force) behind this movement, however, no guarantee for the next "pleasurable" state. Kant's suggestion is important -- he locates the cause of the inner movement in the subject: it is not the pleasure of the next state that induces one to leave the current unpleasurable state; that cannot be, since the future state is indeterminate. It is the prospect of leaving the unpleasant state that compels us to leave this one. There is no *prolexis (anticipation)* of pleasure in this experience: all we can say about this state that it is "another one". Hence, what carries us forward is pain:

> So the question arises, whether it is the consciousness of *leaving* our present state or the prospect of *entering* a future state that awakens in us the sensation of enjoyment? In the first case the enjoyment is simply the removal of a pain -- something negative: in the second it would be presentiment of something agreeable, and so an increase of the state of pleasure-something positive. But we can already guess beforehand that only the first will happen: for time drags us from the present to the future (not visa-versa), and the cause of our

> agreeable feeling can be only that we are compelled to leave the present, though it is not specified into what other state we shall enter -- except that it is another one....[25]

The acute sense of the "drag" of time, the acceleration of the vital forces as "they are continuously promoted" if "raised above a certain level" can bring self-annihilation: "What could follow but swift death in the face of joy?"

The self is lifted from the necessary determination of time. The subjective experience of time is the necessary condition of work of mourning, of auto-affection, through which the self is able to "experience" the "other" time and its own finitude. This can turn out to be a "frightening burden" on the senses for those who are "attentive to time" and bring them to self-annihilation; the indeterminacy is a cause of anxiety -- the unbearable dread of uncertainty is also a realisation of one's own mortality. In "the regress of time" the mind cannot properly "anticipate the next moment". This arouses *horror vacui* as a presentiment of death:

> To feel alive, to enjoy ourselves, is the same as to feel ourselves constantly impelled to leave our present state (which must therefore be a pain that recurs just as often as the present). This explains why boredom is an oppressive, even a frightening burden for anyone who is attentive to his life and

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[25] *Anthropology*, p. 100.

> to time (any cultivated man). This pressure, this impulse to leave whatever point of time we are in and pass into the following one, tends to accelerate, and it can grow to the point where a man decides to end his life: for the voluptuous man has tried every form of enjoyment and there is no longer anything new to him. As a Parisian said of Lord Mordaunt: "The English hang themselves to pass the time). The void of sensations we perceive in ourselves arouses horror (*horror vacui*) and, as it were, the presentiment of a slow death, which we find more painful than having fate cut the thread of life quickly.[26]

Pain marks this anticipation; nevertheless, however frightful the next moment, in its indeterminacy it also holds a promise of the future, it liberates. It is the "next moment", as we become acutely aware of the racking effects of "this one", that compels us to "move on", to continue. It puts us back into the "flow of time".

However, let us dwell on this moment of pain. Unbounded imagination, suspended in its own indeterminacy, is in "opposition (*Widerstand*) to the interest of the senses." Life, in its highest moment of self-awareness (which is a free-play of the faculties, the activity of imagination and feeling of life promoted) turns out to be nothing but the anticipation of death (*horror vacui*). In the "blink of an eye" (*Augenblick*) determinations become suspended: we come to a realisation that "liveliness" of imagination does not live this life but merely reproduces it mechanically in memory,

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[26] *Anthropology,* p. 102.

"solitude" becomes "sociability" (ex. of smoking). What we otherwise hold as opposites assume similarity: that which arouses disgust becomes beautiful. Not framed, clothed, the sublime instead of being worthy of admiration can appear as abhorrent.[27] This undecidability will always mark the subjective apprehension of the sensuous.[28] Kant remarks that sex, which arouses disgust, shares with beauty the quality of being unspeakable -- just like beauty, it is shrouded by silence:[29] "one always chooses against science the risk of silence".[30]

The sublime nature in its mundane splendour is not "purposive" (we do not regard it as a means to an end), not "clothed", but in its rawness it simply is what it is -- familiar: "starry sky", "storm", "ocean" etc. Why is this "unpurposiveness" so disturbing (painful, perturbing)? What further meaning can there be ascribed to this expression of nature? There indeed cannot be a thing determined by two contradictory concepts. Taken as such, it would be indeterminate. This is the *Unheimlich* quality of the sublime. This indeterminacy also marks the "time of the work of

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[27] *Anthropology*, p. 111.

[28] See, Derrida, "Economimesis", *Diacritics II*,2. (Summer, 1981), pp. 3-25.

[29] Kant, *Eine Vorlesung über Ethik*, (P. Menzer, 1924), p. 215.

[30] A. Philonenko, "Note sur les concepts de souillure et de pureté dans l'idéalisme allemand," *Les Etudes Philosophiques* (1972), p. 492.

mourning", the subjective time of the sublime. This is the time felt. In the state of auto-affection the ticking of a clock resounds like the loudest of death knells. In a note Kant received from his friend Maria Charlotta Jacobi (12 june 1762) inviting him to a secret rendezvous in her garden, one line reads "my watch will be wound up -- sorry for this reminder."[31] A raw prompting indeed "for anyone who is attentive to life and his time". Finitude ("a truly painful reminder"), announces itself through the facticity of banality of life. It is also the violent reminder of the law: *la prose du monde est décidément bien puissante*".[32] If so, the attention to the moment, to the *Augenblick*, to the unadulterated "here and now" is also the revelation of the transcendental. Here the "other vision", the "other eye" as Kant says, becomes important. Nature as sublime, as "poets see it", is nature in its totality -- this totality, however, is unforseeble (it violates the senses; does it also blind?): *"dass die Natur wenigstens eine Spur zeige, oder Wink gebe..."* Thus this mystery (*Geheimnis*) of nature is also the law (*Geheiss*). It reveals itself to the "I" in "the presentiment of the slow death" as the unfathomable depth of life; this is the feeling evoked in the *Lebensgef*ühl.[33]

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[31] "dann wird auch meine Uhr aufgezogen werden, verzeihen Sie mir diese erinnerung..." (my translation). *Kants Werke*, bd. 9., p. 31.

[32] Philonenko, *ibid*.

[33] *Anthropology*, p. 102.

2. Aesthetics and representation: grounding of the Kantian system

The sublime points to the impossibility of representing the aesthetic identification. Within the systematic concerns of the Third Critique which requires the Übergang from the sensible to the supersensible identification must establish the link between these two domains without presupposing the representational adequation between them. As we saw in the above discussion, instead of represenation it is auto-affection that is the "sign", the given, (as an agitation -- feeling of pleasure and displeasure). This feeling does not represent anything, i.e. it is not conceptually framed "phenomenon" of the mind, but is the state of mind itself, the state of reflection. The feelings hence become the matter as well as the form of the mind, so to speak -- the operation as well as the substance of reflection.

By placing aesthetics in the center of the systematic philosophy Kant broke away from the traditional metaphysics and marked a new direction for the systematic philosophy.

It was in the eighteenth century that aesthetics in philosophical undertakings begins to assume (to quote Cassirer) "original and substantial significance".[34] Certain

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[34] Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, translated by C.A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p.275.

"aesthetic" topics such as melancholy, the sublime, moods, taste etc. moved to the center of philosophical inquiry.[35] However, with Kant in a more fundamental way, aesthetics becomes the condition of the possibility of the unity of reason, the very core of the system, and of the philosophical enterprise as such. Kant's immediate successors carried this notion further: with them art and the aesthetic principle become a sort of monument to the achievements of reason. Lukacs comments: "Fichte did indeed provide a succinct programmatic account of the use to which this principle was to be put. What was for transcendental philosophy a highly problematic postulate with which to explain the world, becomes in art a perfect achievement: it proves that this postulate of the transcendental philosophers is necessarily anchored in the structure of the human consciousness".[36]

As we have already seen, in the *Third Critique* Kant's discussion of the whole chain of topics -- art, truth, nature, organism, biology and system -- is bound by the single notion of aesthetic reflection. And this, in turn, is treated in conjunction with the notion of representation. It was this aesthetic aspect of Kant's philosophy that had the most decisive influence on the age: to quote Cohen: "The classics

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[35] Odo Marquard, "Kant und die Wende zur Ästhetik", *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung,* 16, 1962, p. 231ff.

[36] George Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*, translated by R. Livingstone, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), p. 137ff.

of our literature and poetry are influenced by the Kantian aesthetics."[37] In Goethe's estimation Kant's single and most important philosophical discovery was that he posited the closeness of art and nature. [38]

Neither these correlations nor the introduction of aesthetics into philosophical discourse is new. What is new is that these questions in Kant become inseparable from the grounding question of philosophy, which in the *Third Critique* turn out to be questions of aesthetic and of representation, life, and physiology.

As we have seen, the *Third Critique* has two distinct but parallel agendae. First, it inaugurates aesthetics as a more or less distinct area of philosophical speculation, and second, as the third and the final part of the system, it promises to bring into relation what up till then was regarded in the Kantian philosophy as two separate realms: the realm of experience and the realm of moral ends. The schism between these two realms is absolute and categorical: in it is embodied the opposition between necessity and freedom and

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[37]"[*M*]*it Kants Aesthetik sind die Classiker unsere Litteratur und Dichtung verbunden*", (my translation), Hermann Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Aesthetik*, p.334.

[38] "*Es ist ein grenzenloses Verdienst unsres Kant um die Welt, und ich darf auch sagen: um mich, dass er in seiner "Kritik der Urteilskraft" Kunst und Natur nebeneinander stellt und beiden das Recht zugesteht, aus grossen Principien zwecklos zu handeln.*" Letter to Zelter from 29 January 1830, *Briefwechsel, Goethe Zelter,* Auswahl, Vorwort und Kommentar von Werner Pfister, Artemis Verlag Zürich und München, 1987. p. 318.

their correlates nature and history, speculative and moral discourse, "is" and "ought" etc. In the architectonic of the system, these pairs of opposites gather around two categories: phenomena and noumena.

This theme takes us back to Plato himself. It is with him that we see this particular dichotomy evolve into the issue of representation. This is well illustrated in the *Republic* where the question of *mimesis* is raised.

In the *Republic* Plato discusses the relation of art to truth in connection with "imitation, viewed as a whole" (595c).[39] Why this word "imitation"? Plato's reasoning is that what is at stake is truth and its "sensible visibility" of ideas, i.e. their manifestation in the phenomena. Juxtaposed to one another here are the *phainomenon* and *on tei aletheiai*. The *phainomenon* is self-showing, making manifest -- making present, but, more important for this discussion, it is also "semblance", "appearance", "show".

Plato discusses different tropes (i.e. the modes of presenting something), he assumes that the tropes dull and obscure the idea (*physis*) since the ideas are by essence inimitable. Therefore, if the idea is actually imitated, represented, there must ensue a gradation of reality. The distance from the idea and its pure visibility defines also

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[39] Plato, *Collected Dialogues*, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, (Princeton: New Jersey, 1961). In this reading I will be following Heidegger's interpretation of the Platonic dialogue. Heidegger M., *Nietzsche*. pp. 171-187.

the essence of the *mimesis*: every single being which is "properly real", manifests itself in three modes of outward appearance. Accordingly, it can be traced back to three ways of self-showing or being produced. And each of these productions have their producers: god, craftsman and artist each producing according to a different trope.

A craftsman can manufacture and bring forth the idea in its usability. A painter, however, is further removed from reality because what he produces is a different representation of the idea. He is not a *demiourgos* (like the craftsman) but *mimetes* (a copier). He does not even produce things that are useful or usable. And finally, he produces *phantasmata* (598b), i.e. images that are seen only from certain viewpoint, from one perspective. Therefore, what is represented this way is not really fully disclosed. "So, then, art stands far removed from truth".

Thus, there is a hierarchy of disclosure. There is a path from immediacy to transcendence: "but of course not for the dull eyed".

With Kant the shift from Platonism is complete. First, the break between transcendence and immanence is total and categorical. The veil of Isis (the goddess of nature) cannot be lifted, nor can it be made thin (*dünne*).[40] Kant's

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[40] Immanuel Kant, "On the Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy", p. 67. See also, CRP., A 312 to A 320. For the analysis of Kant's relation to Plato and Platonism see also Jacques Derrida, "On the Newly Arisen Apocalyptic Tone in Philosophy", p. 137ff., in *Raising the Tone of Philosophy,*

philosophy is no longer ontology. It is (centered on) critique. Kant is interested in defining the limits of the faculties that constitute our consciousness and action, and additionally, the modes in which being can be present to us. The phenomenal world is not intrinsic being and yet knowledge is solely concerned with this phenomenality. It is this that defines the sensible world. To see something beyond the limits of the sensible is to fall victim to delusion (*Schwärmerei*). We can know only what appears. To be more precise, phenomena are representations because appearances (phenomena) are all that we have produced -- they are entities of our own manufacture as well as the objects of cognition. This essence defines the appearances -- they are the productions of mind: mere representations. Kant's answer to the question of the ground of our cognition will be: we know things in the world, because we have produced them, not in regard to their existence, but in relation to their form. Thus, our concepts are valid only in the realm of possible experience. Outside it they are empty and without objective meaning. What appears is already a construction. It cannot be what is given to us as a pure form of sensibility.

First, neither appearances nor representations make visible what they are re-presenting, nor point to anything outside themselves, and, therefore, one might say, in Plato's

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edited by Peter Fenves, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993, and *The Post Card,* translated by Alan Bass, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987).

sense, instead of revealing they conceal and obscure. The thing-in-itself remains invisible and indiscernible for us. To attempt to get from the sensible to the supersensible is nothing short of insanity, delusion -- *Wahnsinn, Verstimmung*. It is to "dream according to principles (rave with reason)"; the most shortsighted error of thinking. It is also a well used tool of demagogues: to keep in check the unbounded horizon of the supersensible they supply "images and childish devises" in order "to relieve every subject of the trouble, yet also of the ability, to expand his soul's forces beyond the barriers that one can choose to set for him so as to reduce him to mere passivity and so make him more pliable (CJ. p. 275)."

Second, by relating *physis* -- nature (Platonic *eidos*)-- and art Kant not only transforms the notion of art but also gives an altogether different meaning to the notion of representation and *mimesis*. If the break between noumenon and phenomenon is total, then the representation of the supersensible cannot be an imitation. On the contrary, Kant argues, in the case of art, there is an analogy,[41] likeness, between art and nature; an analogous principle is operative in both. If *physis* is "emerging" (and this emerging must be taken

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[41] The term analogy (Kant makes use of this term from the *First Critique* on -- "Analogies of Experience") is used in the manner fashionable in mathematical discourse of his time as the universal expression for any kind of proportion. See on this Cassirer Ernst, *Kant's Life and Thought,* translated by James Haden, (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. 182.

as the underlying principle of nature) then, by analogy, art, too, is not a mere production in the sense of manufacturing a copy of something else, but rather a setting forth in the similar original sense as nature sets forth or "emerges".[42] The vehicle of presenting the supersensible, its material manifestation is a "sign" . Analogy is this sign. How can we know when we are in the presence of such a sign?[43] The operative principle of Kantian *mimesis* is fundamentally different from that of the Platonic *mimesis*. It is not based on adequation, approximation and copying. The analogy lies in the *Aufbau* of both art and *physis*. The structure of this "emerging" (of the production) of both is the structure of an organism. Technic according to which this organisation comes to be is the shared principle of both art (*techne)* and nature (*physis*). Both these "products" possess the architectonic structure. It is their "architectural" *Aufbau* that

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[42] Inimitability had become an issue in German philosophy so much so that, in a paradoxical way it even encompassed the notion of imitation itself -- that is, of "inimitable imitation" to which Winckelmann gave an expression: "*Der einzige Weg für uns, gross, ja, wenn es möglich ist, unnachahmlich zu werden, ist die Nachahmung der Alten*" (the only way for us to become great or, if this be possible, inimitable, is to imitate the ancients) Winchelmann, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst*, ed. Ludwig Uhlig (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam,1982), p. 4. The English translation is from *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Scupture*, translated by Elfriede Heyer and Roger C. Norton (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1987), p.5.

[43] Martine Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), p. 58ff.

distinguish them, the *arche* and *telos* that govern the construction of their structure. This law of production is not present in the mechanical organisation of a system.

The substrate, the ground, on which this structure rests is indemonstrable. "The ground of the existence of objects", the supersensible, cannot be deduced discursively.[44] However, it is also *augenscheinlich:* between something mechanical and organic, between an architectonic organisation and a merely mechanical one there lies the difference of this *arche* -- the difference of that invisible. What better example could there be for this "architectural" organism than the human being itself? Not to be able to tell the difference between an automaton and a human, however uncanny the resemblance between them might be, is indeed a sign of *Verstimmung*. The key in this difference is the supersensible: Kant maintains that without presupposing it "man would be a marionette or an automaton like Vaucanson's, fabricated and wound up by the Supreme Artist; self-consciousness would indeed make him a thinking automaton..."[45]

With this simple "fact of life" (*gleichsam Factum*) the transcendental ground of life is posited by Kant.

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[44] Henry E. Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.58 ff.

[45] *Critique of Practical Reason,* p. 104.

3. The sublimation of the senses: taste and reflection

> How could it have happened that modern languages, especially, have come to designate the power of aesthetic judgment by a term (*gustus, sapor*) that refers merely to a certain sense organ (the inside of the mouth) and to the way we use this organ to distinguish, as well as to choose, things we can enjoy?...
>
> It is even more curious that *sapor*, skill in testing by sense whether I myself enjoy an object (not whether my choice of it is universally valid), was raised to the name for wisdom itself (*sapientia*), presumably because we need not reflect and experiment on an unconditionally necessary end, but take it into our soul immediately, as if by tasting something wholesome...
>
> -- Kant[46]

> One speaks of being sick of man only when one can no longer digest him and yet has one's stomach full of him. Misanthropy comes of an all too greedy love of man and "cannibalism"; but who asked you to swallow men like oysters, Prince Hamlet?...Man delights not me -no, nor woman neither...
>
> -- Nietzsche[47]

> ...one sees at the same time that a man can liberate these impulses in at least two different ways, in the brain or in the mouth, but that as

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[46] *Anthropology*, p.109.

[47] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, translated W. Kaufmann, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p.200.

> soon as these impulses become violent, he is obliged to resort to the bestial way of liberating them...the magisterial look of the face with a *closed mouth*, as beautiful as a safe.
>
> -- Bataille[48]

Along the entire length of the chain of the powers of the mind that Kant mobilises in order to describe the processes of thought and the life of the psyche, there takes place a transmutation of these powers. They progress from a merely impure and "pathological" to find their concretion as the pure -- universal -- and *a priori*. Their "purity" is determined by a type of relation that is established with an "object" or, more precisely, with a representation, as well as by their relations to each other.

In the discussion of the sublime we saw the route traversed by consciousness from the determination of the object through representation of the inner sense to the interiorisation of this object, that is, the trait that marked the disinterested reflection upon the object. The process that leads this transmutation of feelings from necessity to the realm of the practical is the work of mourning. This work marks the gradual sublimation of taste from the sensuous reflex (that provides gratification of needs) to the

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[48] Georges Bataille, "Mouth", in *Visions of Excess, Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, translated by Allan Stoekl, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 60.

reflective power of judgement. Thus, the path from the "mouth" -- direct sensual relation to an object to the intellectual power of judgment -- reflection on the object -- is the path that defines the transformation of the sensual into the transcendental (the sublimation that is at work in mourning). It is through this transformation that Kant arrives at the "unconditionally necessary end". We take this end "into our soul immediately, as if by tasting something wholesome...". Thus, it is through the work of identification that the "need" of gratification gets transformed into the "need" of the ethical. These two contradictory notions of need find their ground in the binary structure of the process of interiorisation that forms the subject.

In the *Anthropology* Kant gives a comprehensive account of taste and its relation to judgment. Taste is a reflex (*reflexus*).[49] At the initial stage the faculty of taste is a capacity to differentiate (*Wohlgeschmack*), for example, sweet from bitter, etc. At a higher stage it is an ability for appreciation, making distinctions: good/bad and so on.

Thus taste ascends from the mouth (reflex) to rational taste. In the latter universal validity must be

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[49] Reflective judgment has its origin in this reflex. This is why Kant draws a parallel between what animals can do instinctively and the reflective judgement that operates through transcendental principle, see CJ. p. 400, and also Max Horkheimer, *Kants Kritik der Urteilskraft,* (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1925), p. 19.

presupposed.

This might be illustrated as follows:[50]

1.Sensuous pleasure -(feeling of the beautiful)

2.Intellectual pleasure

1.coming either a). through the senses (enjoyment) or
b). imagination (taste)

2.coming either a). through concepts
b). Ideas.

Thus taste as a term for and a property of an organ -- the tongue, palate and throat -- by virtue of which this organ is affected in a specific way when certain substances present in food and drink are dissolved.[51] Taste as a sensuous power of judgment (*Beurteilung*) is a faculty by which one chooses, not merely for oneself according to sensations, but also according to a certain rule that one represents as valid for everyone. This rule can be empirical, whereby it can claim no universality, and, consequently, no necessity. However, in the *Third Critique* taste acquires transcendental status because its rule must have an *a priori* basis, and it demands necessity and therefore validity for everyone in judging an object with respect to a feeling of pleasure and

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[50] *Anthropology*, p. 108ff.

[51] ibid.

displeasure. In this judgment Kant says: "reason is secretly cooperating ..., though we cannot derive its judgement from rational principles and so cannot prove it. We could call it rational (*vernünftelnden*) taste, as distinguished from empirical taste, insofar as it is taste of the senses (1. *gustus reflectens, 2. reflexus*)" (*ibid.*).

Thus, taste holds its intermediary position between sensuousness and intellect insofar as it is neither one nor the other, due to the type of relation to the object that defines it. It is reflexive whether it puts an object in the mouth or "interiorises" it; this interiorisation defines a stage of reflection. How can we understand this intrinsic connection between the oral and the psychic, between metabolism and ideation, between the vital order and the order of imagination, between the sensuous and the intellectual?

In this connection there lies Kant's most important discovery, namely, that the sensuous and the rational do not contradict each other. The necessity of both lies in the nature of the human subject itself which is constituted through the process of introjection that defines twofold relation of the self and the other: 1. the relation of needs (the realm of necessity) and 2. equally primary, and, therefore, not in contradiction with the former, the identification with the other that forms the realm of the ethical. Thus, these two equally primary axes define necessity of both unconditional (ethical) and conditional

(phenomenal) realms.

In the aesthetic the self is presented as a "totality". Affectivity functions as the rational principle of this totality. The sublimation that must take place in the process of the configuration of the self does not involve the suppression of the sensuous, but instead, a recognition of the heterogenous structure of the self (that it is both sensuous and rational). Thus the totality must be understood as no more than a metaphor of this aesthetic self.

CONCLUSION: LANGUAGE

> It is quite true that major scientific works must incorporate art (and visa versa). So it is my conviction, that Kant's is the highest example of literary prose.
>
> -- Benjamin[1]

> The arts, even those based on sound, produce silence.
>
> -- Levinas[2]

Language is central to the discussion of the *sensus communis* for several reasons. As I have pointed out earlier, language appears at the very moment of mimetic identification -- within the community of "empty mouths" (Abraham and Torok). In this community (communication) the *aesthesis* is brought to bear upon language. Here, the emptiness marks the very possibility of speech and language as it constituted the nature of language itself as intrinsically metaphoric and symbolic. As the relation that is defined by interiorisation language belongs to the order of the other. In this respect Kant's "transcendental" language of the *als ob* can be understood as

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[1] *"Es ist durchaus wahr, dass in den grossen wissenschaftlichen Schöpfungen die Kunst mitumfasst sein muss (wie ungekehrt) und so ist es auch mein Überzeugung, dass Kants Prosa selbst einen limes der hohen Kunstprosa darstellt"* (My translation). Walter Benjamin, *Briefe I,* herausgegeben von Th. Adorno, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978), p. 150.

[2] Emmanuel Levinas, "Transcending Words: Concerning Word-Erasing", *Yale French Studies,* 81, (Yale University, 1992), p.148.

this aesthetic language.

The Kantian system revolves around two heterogeneous discourses. Understanding finds its articulation in a scientific discourse which gives expression to Kant's radical empiricism, for integrated in this discourse is all that can be said or made sense of, and, hence, be detached from the *hic et nunc* of that which is given in the perception of empirical existence. The transcendental realm, on the other hand, is a domain that falls outside this scientific discourse. The sensible intuition provides understanding with an object under a concept (a phenomenon) and thereby limits understanding only to this "given" and the spatio-temporal extension in which this "given" appears (it is this type of understanding that Kant calls discursive and conceptual). The non-sensible intuition, on the other hand, gives understanding which is "not like our own" the object that is called noumenon and which is outside of the spatio-temporal determination. This understanding is non-discursive in the sense that the categories do not determine in this domain.

What status can this noumenon have "for us", for an "intelligence that is like us"? For us, Kant's answer is, it could only be "ineffable" as it is excluded from the categorial discourse. Hence, from the point of view of the finite understanding, intuitive understanding has no discourse -- it is, in a way, mute. The question that critical philosophy needs to answer is the following: how can that

which falls outside theoretical discourse be comprehended? This question is taken up in the *Third Critique*.

In the aesthetic the gap between discourse and that which is inexpressible, the ineffable domain of the transcendental (silence) must be overcome. There must be found a new mode of expression for this encounter. At first glance, however, the project of the *Third Critique* raises some puzzling questions. Kant introduces several sets of concepts that seem to involve the pairing of apparent opposites: purposiveness without a purpose; disinterested interest; silent communication, etc.

Let us consider here a moment the strangeness of such undertaking. Walter Benjamin relates an anecdote about Kant which, according to him, conveys the sense of the *Third Critique*.[3] It tells of Kant being dumbfounded at the "rational behaviour" of swallows. He relates that during one hot and dry summer Kant had noticed that the swallows nesting above a shop front periodically threw their chicks down on the ground in order to save the remaining ones from starvation. Confronted with this "mystery" Kant is said to have exclaimed:

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[3] Benjamin calls this story "*Eine Geschichte, ohne die niemand die 'Kritik der Urteilskraft' versteht:"...sagte dann Kant: "Da stand mein Verstand stille, da war nichts dabei zu tun, als hinzufallen und anzubeten"; dies sagte er aber auf eine unbeschreibliche und noch viel weniger nachzuahmende Art. Die höhe Andacht, die auf seinem ehrwürdigen Gesichte glühte, der Ton der Stimme, das Falten seiner Hände, der Enthusiasmus, der diese Worte begleitete, alles war einzig*". See Walter Benjamin, "Miszellen", in *Gesammelte Schriften, Werkausgabe Edition*, Band II, herausgegeben von Tillman Rexroth, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), p.810.

"My understanding came to a standstill, there was nothing to say but fall on the ground and pray". And apparently, much about Kant's demeanour, the way he folded his hands, his enthusiasm that accompanied his words, spoke about the deep awe with which he regarded this event.[4] The anecdote, apart from being a telling illustration of Kant's thoughts on natural teleology, is notable in one other respect as well: it demonstrates the real problem with the "aesthetic language" of the *Third Critique*. At first, it is this awe or that which is awesome that seem to be the theme of the *Third Critique*. Should we interpret this "suspension of understanding" ("*Da stand mein Verstand stille*")[5] of which this story speaks, and of which the *Third Critique* gives multiple examples (conveyed in its contradictory notions), as a failure to articulate that which lies beyond conceptually explicable? To the extent to which the aesthetics is presented, in the most total metaphorical ambiguity, as being about silent communication, it seems that the *Third Critique* simply appropriates the mode

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[4] Compare this thought to one expressed in the *Critique of Pure Reason:* "This world presents to us so immeasurable a stage of variety, order, purposiveness, and beauty, as displayed alike in its infinite extent and in the unlimited divisibility of its parts, that even with such knowledge as our weak understanding can acquire of it, we are brought face to face with so many marvels immeasurably great, that all speech loses it force, all numbers their power to measure, our thoughts themselves all definiteness, and that our judgment of the whole resolves itself into an amazement which is speechless, and only the more eloquent on that account" (CPR., A 622/B 650).

[5] Walter Benjamin, "Miszellen", p.810.

of expression of the transcendental and posits the feelings as mute.[6] Does the *aesthesis* also (like the transcendental) lie "on the other side" of the expressible? The task of the *Third Critique*, however, is to mediate the discursive and the transcendental modes of expression. There is a cryptic entry in the *Reflexionen*: "...Dark representations are pregnant with the clear ones. Morals. Only if we could bring clearness to it. A midwife of thoughts. All acts of understanding and reason could take place in darkness...that Beauty must remain unsayable. We cannot always say what we are thinking..."[7] Kant will try to illuminate that inexpressible darker side of thought in this *Critique*, the side that is intrinsically linked to the relation of beauty and morality.

In the "Analytic of the Beautiful" Kant argued that the universal communicability of feelings proceeds without

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[6]Compare this thought to one expressed in *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*: "During the universal stillness of nature and the resting of the senses, the concealed cognitive capacity of immortal spirit speaks an unnamable language and gives many undeveloped concepts that can certainly be felt but cannot be described". See Immanuel Kant, *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*, translated by Stanley L. Jaki (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1981), p. 196.

[7]"*Das meister geschiet von Verstande in der Dunkelheit...Dunkle Vorstellungen sind prägnant von klaren. Moral. Nur Klarheit in dieselber zu bringen. Die Hebamme der Gedanken. Alle actus des Verstandes und Vernunft können in der Dunkelheit geschehen...Das die Schönheit musse unausprechlich seyn. Was wir denken können wir nicht immer sagen*" (my translation). Immanuel Kant, *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, XV. I, 65, Reflection 177.

concepts. By demonstrating that the feeling of beauty differs from the other affects, Kant meant to show that this feeling must be made "public" and that without such "publicity" there would be no feeling of beauty. The requirement that there be such an assenting, universal in principle, is constitutive of aesthetic judgment. The specificity of this communication defines beauty as such. This communication, according to Kant, is not defined by psychological and subjective or theoretical description in general. What gives a distinctive status to beauty is the universality deriving from what Kant calls the *sensus communis* or from an immediacy communicable through the affects. Without this type of "affective" consensus there would be no beauty. Out of this consensus, which must involve feelings, arises an aesthetic community. Assenting and unanimity is required within a regime which cannot "yet" be that of argumentation (this is the point made in the above discussion of *Streit*). The hypothesis of another type of community thus emerges and it is to this community that corresponds a communication that Kant calls silent.

It is possible to conceive of the idea of immediate communication of the aesthetic feelings as being silent. Kant, however, proposes an interpretation that is rather paradoxical: the argument about the universality of taste, according to him, indicates first, that feelings must fall within the range of universal comprehensibility (without concepts), and second that, feelings also mark "unstatable

instance of language". Thus not properly silent, yet exceeding available means of expression, feelings cannot be put into words, since they require a communication that is prior to putting anything into words. This defines the paradox of the mimetic language of the *sensus communis*. The *Critique* must bring together what has been sundered apart by our own conceptual apparatus -- sensuousness and universality, the privacy of taste and the universal agreement upon it. From Kant's idea of the silent communication it can be deduced that this new field requires an expression that is unlike any previously existing ones -- that is, a new idiom. A paradox that is found in the exigency to express what is inexpressible is perhaps best conveyed by Lyotard's concept of the differend:

> The differend is the unstable state...of language wherein something which must be able to be put into phrases cannot yet be. This state includes silence, which is negative phrase, but it also calls upon phrases which are in principle possible. This state is signalled by what one ordinarily calls a feeling: "One cannot find the words", etc. A lot of searching must be done to find new rules for forming and linking phrases that are able to express the differend disclosed by the feeling...(What is at stake in a literature, in a philosophy, in a politics perhaps, is to bear witness to differends by finding idioms for them).[8]

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[8] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Differend,* translated by Georges Van Den Abbeele, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 13.

The similarity between the differend and the Kantian notion of the "silent communication" seems to me to lie in the terminus (determination) that comes from without. In differend, Lyotard asserts, a silent announcement is made: "something 'asks' to be put into phrases".[9] This something is not merely a forgotten idea yet to be articulated, but it is something that "exceeds" the available means of expression. Therefore, the request expressed in the differend can be understood as a request not only to put into words what has not been spoken, but, in addition, to invent an idiom suited for expressing this inexpressible.

In this request, as we shall see, language enters into the sphere of the ethical. The demand transposes language into the universe where the relation between the I and the other is played out. This relation is marked by a certain incomprehensibility, because this obligation is "prior to any intellection". The immediacy, which marks the reception of the command, to put it in the Levinasian terms, is a gesture of "welcoming". How could this "welcoming" be expressed in language? For, taking place before conceptuality it must also take place before the language of conceptuality.

The obligation from the other forms the basis of the acceptance of the law -- one accepts the law before one accepts its "content". This "obliging oneself" is also a way

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[9] ibid.

of actualising the law, a type of a performative act.[10] It is prior to intellection, because in Kant, as well as in Levinas, the passage from the ethical phrase to the phrase of knowledge takes place only at the price of forgetting the former. Thus, not an event of knowledge but of feelings, the ethical destabilises knowledge so to speak. The addressee of the command is obligated although he or she does not "learn" anything -- the command does not inform. What type of language could express the moral law? Not the theoretical discourse, since the ethical and the theoretical are irreducible to each other.

It is the peculiarity of the ethical language that it does not need knowledge, it can be without knowledge, without message or transmission of information. The impossibility of the deduction of the law can be understood as one of the consequences of this irreducibility of the ethical order to that of the theoretical, and of their corresponding languages (discourses). This is best illustrated by Kant's moral imperative.

The Kantian categorical imperative implies the expression "You ought". This expression has a complex background. As MacIntyre points out,[11] "You ought" in general differs from the imperative mood of the verbs to which it is

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[10] Emmanuel Levinas, *Quatre lectures talmudiques,* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1968), 88a ff.

[11] MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics,* p.172.

attached in that the use of ought implies the ability of a speaker to back up this "ought" with a reason, whereas the use of a simple imperative does not carry any such implication. But this type of an imperative, for Kant, is only a hypothetical and not a categorical imperative: "you ought because it is right, good or simply because you are a soldier, a woman etc." This type of a command differs from "you ought" of the categorical imperative which is unbacked by reasoned argumentation. That is to say, it announces moral precepts in a vacuum insofar as its ends are concerned, and it addresses itself to just anyone (an indeterminate class of persons). To the question "Why ought I?" there is no reasoned response -- you just ought. In this way the categorical imperative is more like an imperative mood of any verb rather than a hypothetical imperative, with the difference that this injunction has no content. "Come!", "Eat!" tell you what to do. A categorical imperative, on the other hand, cannot be deduced from any "is" or even "good" or any other principle higher than its own. It commands. The inexplicability of the law, the impossibility of its theoretical deduction, is intrinsically bound to the problematic of language in Kant.

Kant exposits the deduction of the moral imperative in the *Second Critique:*

> ...the objective reality of the moral law can be proved through no deduction, through no exertion of the theoretical, speculative, or empirically supported

> reason; and, even if one were willing to renounce its apodeictic certainty, it could not be confirmed by any experience and thus proved a posteriori.[12]

"Nevertheless", he adds, "it (the moral law) is firmly established of itself".[13] The reality of it is a fact, albeit absolutely "inexplicable"[14]and "inscrutable" *(Unerforschlichen)*.[15] This fact of reason, Kant maintains, must be a sufficient proof of the moral law. However, from the point of view of theoretical reason the practical domain is absolutely unaccountable and inexplicable.

Nevertheless, practical law expresses itself through obligation, it makes its presence felt in the "field of experience". Hence a transition is made that "defies all sense" *(ganz Widersinniges)*: "instead of this vainly sought deduction of the moral principle, however, something entirely different and unexpected appears".[16] The inscrutable character of the practical is irreducible to the mode of expression of the theoretical. Therefore, deduction in this field, should "mean" something utterly different. It must be thought through a new idiom, through metaphoric *(als ob)* language -- the aesthetic language of (silent) communication.

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[12] *Critique of Practical Reason*, p.47.

[13] *ibid.*, p. 48.

[14] *ibid.*, p. 44.

[15] *ibid., p.* 48.

[16] *ibid.*

It is in the *First Critique* that Kant lays the ground for this issue where he claims that the transcendental poses particular difficulties because it cannot be thought 'concretely': "...since whatever discoveries might be made in regard to these matters, we should not be able to make use of them in any helpful manner *in concreto*..." (CPR., A 798/B 826)... "Transcendental freedom is thus, as it would seem, contrary *(zuwider zu sein schein)* to the laws of nature, and therefore to all possible experience; and so remains a problem" (CPR., A 803/B 831). The noumenon, that "unknown something", the "left over of discourse" *(übrigen)* (CPR., A 255), can only be thought as a name, which is not a concept as such. As a name this *übrigen* is indeed a peculiar concept.

> None the less, if the concept of noumenon be taken in merely problematic sense, it is not only admissible, but as setting limits to sensibility is likewise indispensable. But in that case a noumenon is not for our understanding a special [kind of] object, namely, an *intelligible object*; the [sort of] understanding to which it might belong is itself a problem. For we cannot in the least represent to ourselves the possibility of an understanding which should know its object, not discursively through categories, but intuitively in a non-sensible intuition (CPR., B 312).

Finite understanding acquires through the noumenon *(übrigen)* a "negative extension". Through it understanding is able to reach beyond the sensible, and it itself limits sensibility by giving a "name" *(nennt)* to the noumena (things

themselves). "But in so doing it at the same time sets limits to itself, recognising that it cannot know these noumena through any of the categories, and that it must therefore think them only under the title *(Name)* of an unknown something" (CPR., *ibid.*). Thus, in its capacity to give a name to anything that cannot be comprehended under the categories understanding transcends its own categorial (conceptual) exigency.

The notion of the noumenon, (simply an "indispensable" or an "unavoidable" notion *[Unvermeindlich]* [CPR, A 256]) is given many names indeed in the *First Critique:* "Thing-in-itself", "something in general (*etwas überhaupt*)", "transcendental object=X", etc. The noumenon as this undefinable singularity can only be "named" not conceptualised.

It is this non-literal nature of discourse that constitutes the language of transcendental reason. (This is the language of the tribunal of pure reason within which the "tone" of argumentations are disputed). It is also aesthetic language of communication. Because silence (the mode of expression of the transcendental) has a special place in the production of metaphor as the transcendental governs the invention of a new idiom within language,[17] this

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[17] See, on the "law not yet determined" of a performative utterance, Jacques Derrida, "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority', in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice,* edited by Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson, (New York: Routledge, 1992).

precipitation of metaphor within language marks an intrinsically ethical character of language. The transcendental becomes expressed through a metaphor, a material singularity of a "word". It is this that is conveyed in the utterance of the categorical "ought" - a capacity of a word to command without obligating with its "content". The potency of an injunction, in this case, lies in the *aesthesis* of the annunciation as such.

The *aesthesis,* pleasure and pain, is uninterpretable or undecipherable. It remains suspended in the void of incomprehensibility and is indeed alien to what Baudrillard would call "the ecstasy of communication", that is to say, to a total transparency of the communicable.[18] To relegate it to silence, however, would be to subordinate it to the positive law which suppresses or excludes all that falls outside its jurisdiction. Metaphoric language of the *als ob* is essentially aesthetic language, the language of silent communication. In this sense, the communication of pleasure and pain is primarily an ethical task, since the aesthetic language is also the language of the law.

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[18] Jean Baudrillard, *The Ecstasy of Communication,* translated by B. and C. Schutze (New York: Semiotext(e), 1988), p.20.

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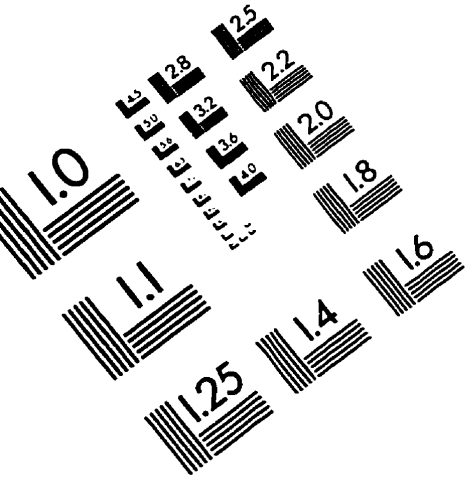
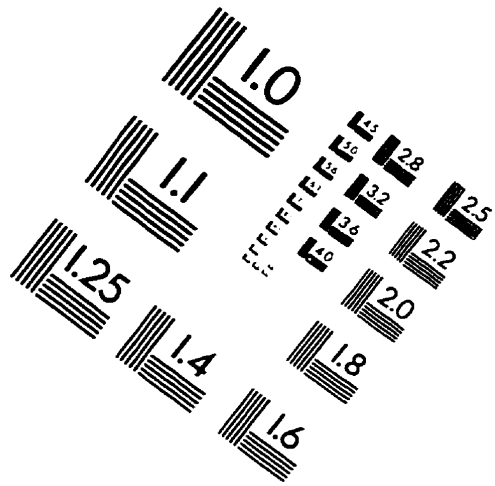
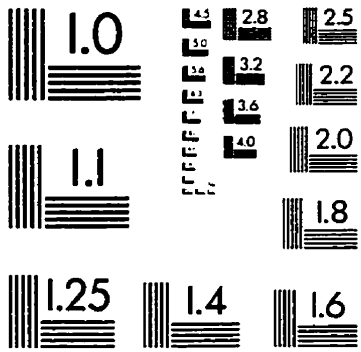
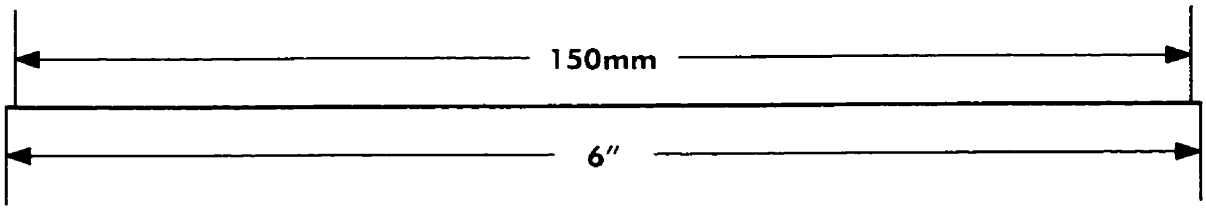
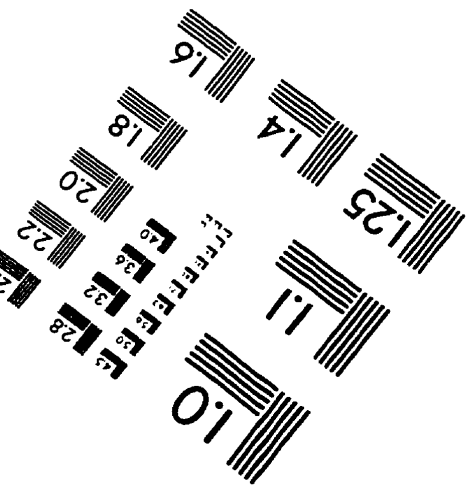
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)

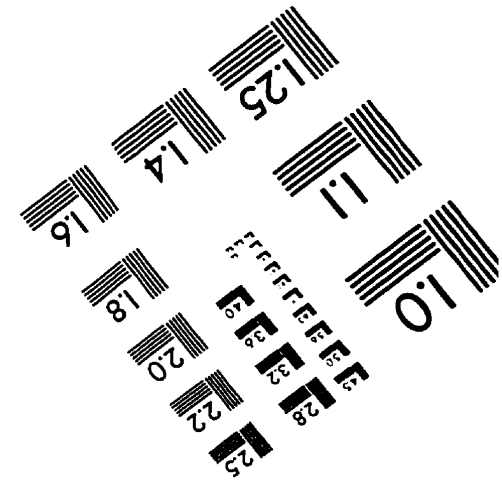












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