

**THE PURE POSSIBILITY OF IMMANUEL KANT' S AESTHETICS**

A THESIS  
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July, 2006

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## ABSTRACT

### THE PURE POSSIBILITY OF IMMANUEL KANT' S AESTHETICS

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This study aims at evaluating the aesthetic views of Immanuel Kant. The experience of the beautiful and that of the sublime are discussed. The experience of the beautiful is analysed with respect to the faculties of imagination and understanding and the notion of *free play*. The experience of sublime is defined as the moment of facing the transcendental I as the original condition of all possible human experience.

**Key Words:** Beautiful, Imagination, Understanding, Free Play,  
Form, Sublime, Transcendental I.

## ÖZET

### IMMANUEL KANT ESTETİĞİNİN SAF OLANAĞI

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Grafik Tasarımı Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Yöneticisi: Yard. Doç. Dr. Mahmut Mutman

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Bu tez Immanuel Kant'ın estetik görüşlerini değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmada güzel ve yücenin deneyimlenmesi araştırılmaktadır. Güzelin deneyimlenmesi tasarım ve anlak fakülteleri ile bunlar arasında geçen özgür oyun bağlamında incelenmekte, Yücenin deneyimlenimi ise tüm olası deneyin orjinal koşulu olarak Aşkısıl ben ile karşı karşıya kalma anı olarak tanımlanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Güzel, Tasarım Fakültesi, Anlak, ,özgür Oyun,

Biçim, Yüce, Aşkısıl Ben.

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The motivations behind this study lie in life- long fascination with philosophy. After 4 years of being a philosophy student, my interest in Kantian philosophy become an vital urge to comprehend Kantian aesthetics and its position in the whole Kantian system. I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to attend the classes that were related in this way or the other with the subject of this thesis.

It is my duty here to apologise to every person in history, who has ever thought and produced about Kantian aesthetics, for not being able to have found their work in time for this thesis.

I owe gratitude to my all jury members, who have been extremely patient and friendly towards me. I also thank my family and recent friends from graduate program who have supported me at right times. Last of all I, would like to thank my great advisor for his patient and kind attitude towards me. I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to meet him.

As for the content of this study, I would like to declare to those who require such a demand of status that the conclusions and the statements drawn upon Kantian aesthetics are not truth- claims but only an alternative reading of a philosophy student pulled off to better understand her eternal interest.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

CPR: *Critique of Pure Reason* (The first critique).

CPrR: *Critique of Practical Reason* (The second critique)

CJ: *Critique of Judgement* (The third critique)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study aims to understand the position of the *Critique of Judgement*<sup>1</sup> in Immanuel Kant's philosophy with respect to the experiences of the beautiful and the sublime. What takes place in the experience of the beautiful? What are the functions of the faculties of imagination and understanding in this experience? Do these CJ the faculties transcend their functions that are given in the first critique, *Critique of Pure Reason*<sup>2</sup> when they are transferred to, or employed in the context of CJ? What are the implications of the experience of sublime with respect to Kantian philosophy? Is sublime actually an aesthetic experience? How does it have a subjective universal character?

These questions prove to have complex answers within Kantian philosophy. It is very important to state that this study is just an attempt of understanding Kantian aesthetics. It starts with the fundamental issues of the whole Kantian philosophy, since any attempt to deal with this philosophy necessarily deals with both the metaphysical and the moral aspects of the whole Kantian system. However, this study concerns the third critique and the first critique, since I try to relate the moment of sublime to facing the transcendental I as the very condition of all subjectivity. Thus, the moral subject and the sublime moment is ignored for I believe that the moral destination of the subject which appears in the moment of sublime would be the topic of another study. Therefore, I will not go into the details of the modality of sublime which relates the subject to the moral feeling. Instead of this I will focus on

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<sup>1</sup> Here after CJ.

the functions of the faculties; imagination, understanding and reason both in the experience of the beautiful and that of sublime. Therefore, first I will give a brief outline of the Kantian system and then will discuss Kantian aesthetics. I will particularly focus on Kant's views concerning the experience of the beautiful and the sublime, especially the logical implications of both the experience of the beautiful and the moment of the sublime.

I intend to examine the CJ by examining several notions of Kantian philosophy. In the first chapter I will mention the notions of thing-in-itself, space and time, *a priori* and lastly that of universality and necessity. This chapter is a guide to understand my claims on aesthetics and consists of the key terms of Kant's first critique, CPR.

In the second chapter the general bearings of Kantian aesthetics will be introduced. I will examine the experience of beautiful and the characteristics of the judgement of taste which is a judgement about the object beautiful. I will focus on the notion of *free play* in which the faculties of imagination and understanding is brought into an accord. I will examine especially the position of imagination, the notion of the form of the object of the experience of the beautiful and the notion of the accordance of the faculties, imagination and understanding. Then, I will further my analysis into the experience of sublime. I will give a brief summary of the account of the Kantian sublime.

In the third chapter by a simple assumption that for a judgement of taste we need at least a subject and an object of experience, I will write on the notion of the "I" and

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<sup>2</sup> Here after CPR.

on that of object, then on the feeling of pleasure and displeasure which needs a detailed analysis of the notion of finality and the final end. Then, I will examine the concept of subjective universality with respect to three different occurrences in Kant's philosophy. The last part of the thesis will be the possible implications of the sublime moment. I will try to justify that the moment of sublime, by the failure of imagination's giving the representation of the greatness it experiences, leads the subject to feel desperate and overwhelmed but then also to feel empowered with the awareness of his own power as the producer of his own knowledge or even of his own world in the Kantian sense. I claim that the Kantian in sublime experience subject faces the original condition of all his possible experience which is named "transcendental self" in Kantian philosophy. Relying on this, I will claim that the "experience" of sublime is both subjective (in the sense of being personal) and also universal, since the subject faces the very possibility of all his experience. In other words, I will claim that the moment of the sublime is the moment of the subject's facing his own power to cognize (in the sense of being the self to experience the nature) or even to act free (in the sense of being a moral self) by facing the original condition of all the possible experience, the transcendental self.

### **1. 1. Copernican Revolution**

Immanuel Kant, one of the important names of 18th century, claimed to have made a Copernican revolution in philosophy. Before Copernic, people believed that the earth did not move. Copernic suggested that the earth is also moving like other planets. Kant contends that the older philosophy was like the pre-Copernican astronomy. It regarded our minds as mere mirrors that passively reflect the things existing outside. Kant claimed that the objects of our knowledge are not things as they are but they are

manufactured products in the making of which our minds play a part. In other words, human mind is just like a *fabric* that operates on the raw sense data that is given by our senses and which is- according to Kant- a chaotic mass though pre-Kantians regarded it as the “one”.

This claim implied a sharp distinction between knower and knowledge and led to a dualism of subject and object<sup>3</sup>. Now for Kant what we know is just what *appears* to us. In other words, human knowledge is limited to its capacity and the subject is never able to know the things as they are, by Kantian terminology, the *things-in-themselves*. We only know to the extent that our capacity lets us. This notion yields to the distinction of *noumenon* and *phenomenon*. Noumenon is thing-*in-itself*, that is what we are unable to know as it is and phenomenon is the *appearance* of the thing as it appear to us, in other words how thing as it *appears* to us. By stating this Kant made an important shift in the spirit of the philosophy in the sense that he is no more concerned about ontology which is a branch of philosophy dealing with being, but instead he directed philosophy to epistemology which means philosophy of knowledge or theory of knowledge. Now we are confronted with a new philosophical understanding, which takes the subject as the center by contending that it constructs the knowledge. This was a breakpoint in philosophy because this fundamental idea not only altered the way of philosophy but ended the traditional thinking; Kant claimed to give up ontology by starting a critique in epistemology, which meant that his philosophy is not concerned with whether things *are* but it is a search for giving

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<sup>3</sup> This dualism is felt in the works of late medieval philosophers and finally evolves in Descartes' s system in full. The philosopher separates body and mind so sharply that are defined as two distinct substances they had to be reconciled only by God's power. By Kant this dualism is brought to an end.

the conditions of all possible experience<sup>4</sup>. He wrote: “ontology ...must...give place to the modest title of a mere Analytic of Pure Understanding” (CPR 267 A247). He claims that this is possible, since we, as human beings, share the same structure of mind.

Kant defines his philosophy as a transcendental philosophy. He warns us that it is not transcendent but transcendental. The very reason of this contention is an attempt to give the conditions of human experience. The concept transcendent is used to indicate some entity or existence or condition that is beyond knowledge or which can be grasped only by some power such as intellectual intuition. Kant was after an inquiry of pure reason; thus such kind of investigation required the reason and its powers. This was not an examination of a thing, which is beyond us but of the very structure of mind. As a result, we have three great works investigating the conditions of nature and its laws, the conditions of free will and that of judgement of taste or aesthetics.

According to Kant all knowledge starts with experience but it does not arise from experience (*Prolegomena* 41). Thus, there are two sources of human knowledge, namely sensibility and understanding. These are the fundamental faculties of human mind. As a subject, human mind operates on raw sense data given by *sensation*, which is responsible of perceiving and supplying a manifold to the faculty of understanding. This is the faculty of intuitions; sensory states and modifications.

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<sup>4</sup> Obviously, the underlying assumption was that we all share the same structure of mind.

Then, we have a higher faculty which is the other source namely *understanding* the faculty of concepts<sup>5</sup>. Kant writes:

Understanding is the origin of the universal order of nature, in that it comprehends all appearances under its own laws and thereby produces, in an *a priori* manner, experience (as to its form), by means of which whatever is to be known only by experience is necessarily subjected to its laws (Ibid. 69).

This faculty of understanding is where the *manifold* that is received by sensation is subsumed under some pure concepts, which are called categories. They are tools of understanding in synthesizing<sup>6</sup> the manifold given by sensation into a meaningful whole such as a concept of an object. There are twelve categories, which govern the raw material coming from the sensibility. For instance, in the principle that “a straight line is the shortest distance between two points” presupposed that “line” falls under a concept of magnitude, which has its place only in understanding and it serves to “determine the intuition (of the line) with regard to their quantity, that is, plurality. Kant writes about categories that they are “mere logical functions, can represent a thing in general but not give by themselves alone a determinate concept of anything” (ibid. 80). Here we see that understanding’s principles and concepts have their confirmation in experience. But every experience is unique and the sense of wholeness cannot be a single intuition received by sensation but it is rather beyond the possible experience. At this point we are introduced to the highest faculty; *Reason*. It is responsible for higher topics of human mind and it has its own *ideas* like the idea of God, the idea of world and any of this kind which expands the

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<sup>5</sup> This notion of two faculties indicates- for philosophy at least- that Kant is somewhere between empiricists and idealists. Since experience is the beginning of the process of knowledge but not the only source.

<sup>6</sup> By synthesis Kant means the “act of putting different representations together, or grasping what is manifold in them in one [act of] knowledge” (CPR 111 B103).

sensible knowledge. They aim at completeness of principles and they are the collective unity of all possible experience and so they are transcendent (*Prolegomena* 76). They do not have their object in any given experience.

Kant clearly states that his critical philosophy is a transcendental philosophy which is “the system of all principles of pure reason” (ibid. 60). Philosophically, his position is quite separate from mainstream flow of thought. In other words, Kant is not after validating or proving the existence of things. Ontology is abandoned to epistemology. Kant does not ask about the natural philosophy but is concerned with the understanding. His inquiry is somehow internal in the sense that he takes nature as the object of all possible experience. This leads to the notion that the *objective validity* is nothing else than *necessary universality*. In other words, the conditions of our experience are at the same time the universal and necessary laws of nature that can be known *a priori*. This is the solution of the question “how is the pure science of nature possible?” For Kant is not concerned about “what is” but “how it is possible”, one is not supposed to know “how the external thing is” but he is to know “how its experience is possible” or “what are the necessary conditions that make it possible?” All in all, according to Kant we must not seek the universal laws of nature in nature by means of experience, but conversely must seek nature as to its universal conformity to law, in the conditions of the possibility of experience, which lies in our sensibility and in our understanding (*Prolegomena* 66). It is because for Kant nature is the “existent of things”, “not a thing-in-itself but something synthetically constructed” (ibid. 44). Similarly, Kant attempted to verify that the basic principles of modern science correspond to the fundamental principles of our conceptual scheme, which is responsible for determining any possibility of experience. In other

words, he featured the physical world as being made necessary by the *a priori* principles of our understanding.

The second critique, *Critique of Practical Reason*<sup>7</sup>, deals with the laws of freedom, in other words ethical behavior of man. Kant holds that the deterministic laws of physics can be brought into harmony with the unconditional commands of morality. He contends that “the practical concept of freedom is based on the transcendental idea of freedom” (CPR 465 A533/B561). “The denial of transcendental freedom must... involve the elimination of all practical freedom” (CPR 465 A534/B562). This means that the human subject acts freely and his moral actions are not determined by a cause or the agent’s events that he initiates are not subjected to a chain of cause. Even when we have the principle that “every event must have a cause” there is the *independence of will* or *power of self-determination*. What Kant means is that our actions are subjected to the causal chain or they are *affected* by sensuous impulses since our action, which is the result of our will, is empirical and determined. However, from the transcendental viewpoint of agent it is a free action.

## **1. 2. The Notion of the *Thing-in itself***

For Kant any attempt of traditional metaphysics trying to understand the thing-in-itself is useless, since without the structure of understanding, nothing is meaningful to a subject. Now if we are to enter the world of noumena with understanding, then we have phenomena<sup>8</sup> or appearances. If we go without the aim of understanding, than nothing is meaningful. Thus, any kind of inquiry should be done within the

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<sup>7</sup> Here after CPrR.

<sup>8</sup> Phenomena are called the appearances that are thought as the objects with respect to the unity of the categories (CPR 265 A249).

awareness of the limit of the knowing subject. In other words, any application of the concepts of the understanding beyond its field is ridiculous. One cannot use the concepts of understanding in order to understand or know the world of the thing-in-itself because understanding works with predicates when it deals with the thing-in-itself and it is a failure to think the predicate as the thing itself.

The claim that the thing-in-itself causes phenomenon is not equivalent to the claim that noumenon causes phenomenon in time. This kind of causal relation cannot be spatial or temporal, since causality can be noticed merely among the appearances. Thus, the phrase “non-effective in time” is meaningless. This can be put in another way: There is no possibility of non-existence of the thing-in-itself or for it not to be. The notion “possibility” of experience is in human mind. The possibility does not belong to the world of the thing-in-itself (*Prolegomena* 52).

The ‘thing’ at issue with the thing-in-itself’ is a concept without an object, a mere shell of an object without content, without reality, indeed without as such being genuinely possible (CPR 12).

By the expression “without reality”, one should understand that Kant is not after giving an ontological postulation of thing-in-itself. It is neither possible -since being possible involves being contingent- nor real since reality implies existence or in Kantian words “reality is that determination which can be thought only through an affirmative judgement” (CPR 264 A246).

The concept of a noumenon is necessary to prevent sensible intuition from being extended to things-in-themselves, and

thus to limit the objective validity of sensible knowledge (CPR 271 A253).

Kant seems to use the concept of noumenon as a convenience. This concept implies the active power of the faculty of understanding or it emphasizes the distinction between the knower and its object. Kant also writes:

The concept of a noumenon is thus a merely limiting concept, the function of which is to curb the pretensions of sensibility; and it is therefore only of negative employment (CPR 272 B311).

In my opinion, thing-in-itself does not have to be a “border”, because the concept of border reminds the notion of “beyond”, thus when Hegel reads the concept of thing-in-itself as the one side of the border, he meant two realms separated by a border. However, Kant does not postulate two worlds or realms. He obviously does not presuppose a world that is unreachable by subject. This kind of contention supposes an existence beyond both subject and thing-in-itself. This kind of view requires an *intelligible intuition*; something like God’s vision. Kant writes:

If by ‘noumenon’ we mean a thing so far as it is *not an object of our sensible intuition*, and so abstract from our mode of intuiting it, this is a noumenon in the *negative* sense of the term. But if we understand by it an object of a *non-sensible intuition*, we thereby presuppose a special mode of intuition, namely, the intellectual, which is not that we possess, and of which we cannot comprehend even the possibility. This would be ‘noumenon’ in the positive sense of the term (CPR 268 B307).

At this point what Kant states is that the concept of *noumenon* does not represent anything or it does not affirm any positive thing beyond the subject or its faculties. The *noumenon* is just a title, since it indicates the impossibility of applying

categories to something beyond the field of sensibility. We cannot have any *synthetic a priori* principle outside the field of experience.

If we intuited things as they were this would mean that understanding would be nothing more than “principles which enable us to expose the appearance”. Categories would be useless, then we would be supposed to reflect the things as they are. However, Kant writes that the sensibility is limited by understanding so it does not concern with things-in-themselves but only with how they appear (CPR 251). Although he writes “noumena ...the title of an unknown something” he insists that he does not attribute any positive existence to noumenon.

Kant was aware that sensible intuition might not be the only possible intuition but he stated that at least it is so for us. Thus, he never neglected the possibility of any kind of intuition that can know the things-in-themselves. He seemed to have accepted an agnostic position in this sense, so admitted that the possibility of a noumenon’s being “not a mere form of the concept” is still an open question.

In my opinion Kant is not after speculating a relation between thing-in-itself and appearance because he does not start with the external world or noumena. He tries to give the conditions of all possible experience. Thus, the world of things-in-themselves is not postulated either ontologically or epistemologically. This idea evolves from the basic assumption that every appearance should be an appearance of something that does appear. In other words, if appearances are representations then there must be a represented. In this sense the absence of the represented is not the

issue, since such would be an ontological kind of claim with which Kant is not concerned.

According to Kant the thought of noumena arises from the understanding's operation by the given in sensibility. This is because of the fact that understanding limits the sensibility in such a way that sensibility does not deal with things-in-themselves but only with the mode of their appearance. Moreover, the concept of appearance corresponds to something since it does not subsist on its own, or since it cannot be anything outside of our mode of representation. Thus, we see that appearance indicates a relation to something "immediate than sensible and the object would thus be a noumenon in the positive sense" (CPR 269 B308).

The existence of geometry and maths quite clearly refutes the contention that we merely reflect things. At least up to this point Kant is right to claim the existence of some faculties for human mind. This contention of faculties whatever quality they have leads us to the claim that if we as thinking beings do not reflect the external world, then we may not be able to know things as they are. This is the Kantian view that claims that because our faculty of understanding limits the sensibility to the appearances, we do not know things-in-themselves. It is obvious that this restriction is necessary if we consider the *aprioristic* account of the notion of time and space in Kantian philosophy.

In my opinion, what causes the distinction of noumena and phenomena is the notion of space and time by their being *a priori* and subjective (meaning their residing in subject). Therefore, the criticism of Kantian philosophy over the postulation of an

unknown entity such as the thing-in-itself is invalid, since the separation of the two is immediately caused by placing space and time in the subject as forms of sensibility or in other words filters of experience. They govern all possible experience; therefore, the a priori intuitions; space and time frame subject's intuition. This notion culminates in the distinction of things as they are and their appearances as the only objects of experience. The domain of noumena is empty for us. Kant writes:

...[w]e have an understanding which problematically extends further, but we have no intuition, indeed not even the concept of a possible intuition, through which objects outside the field of sensibility can be given, and through which the understanding can be employed assertorically beyond that field (CPR 272 A255).

### 1. 3. The Notion of *A priori*

With respect to the conditions of human experience Kant uses the term *a priori*. His philosophy deals with the *a priori* conditions of human knowledge. This term is used as an adjective of many terms such as concept, intuition, proposition or judgement<sup>9</sup> in Kant's works. *A priori* is used to indicate that something is not derived from experience, in other words, not empirical, but it is applied to experience. In Kantian philosophy empirical has its source in experience or in Kantian words in *a posteriori*. However, *a priori* is absolutely free from the experience.

As to the *a priori* knowledge, Kant writes that it is entitled as "pure" when it does not carry anything empirical. Pure *a priori* concepts do not entail anything empirical but they serve as the conditions of possible experience. This, actually, enables them

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<sup>9</sup> According to Kant judgement is a *union of representations in one consciousness*.

to have objective reality. The pure concepts of understanding are categories by which alone we can think of any object. They are the *forms* of our thought and *a priori* conditions of an empirical object (CPR 129 A96). They are the elements of understanding and raw sense data is subsumed under them so as to be meaningful. They are grouped into four titles: quantity, quality, relation and modality.

Kant also defines them as logical functions which unite *a priori* the manifold given in intuition (CPR 266 B306). This presupposes that each representation is not absolutely different to others. In other words, knowledge arises by the comparison and connection of various representations. Thus, it is defined as a whole on the ground of which there is a synthesis. This synthesis of a threefold nature consists of *apprehension* of representations as alterations of our mind in intuition, *reproduction* of them in imagination and *recognition* of them in a concept (CPR 129 A97-8). In the end of this process the manifold given in intuition is synthesized and united in one consciousness, then we have a concept of an object.

As for propositions, *a priori* means that propositions which are *a priori* have application on sensation or better on the material given by sensation. Similarly, for the *a priori* concepts, “cause” may be a good example. “Every event must have a cause” is an *a priori* principle of Kantian philosophy. Kant states that “whenever an event is observed, it is always referred to some antecedent, which it follows according to a universal rule” (ibid. 44). Here it is important to notice that the term is epistemological, which means that it can be applied to knowledge of facts, but not to facts. The term *a priori* is used for judgements also. Charlie Broad makes this point more clear:

...(T)he ordinary use of *a priori* as applied to judgements is this. One of *p* is *a priori* if and only if one can see that *p* is necessary. One may come to recognize that *p* is necessary either *directly* through inspecting its terms and reflecting on them or *indirectly* by showing that *p* follows in accordance with the principles of formal logic, from other propositions each which one can see by direct inspection to be necessary (3).

We also know that if a judgement is not derived from experience and if it has no exception as alternative, then this judgement is *a priori* and has strict universality (*Prolegomena* 44). From this point necessity and universality are assigned by Kant as the certain criteria for *a priori* knowledge.

As to *a priori* judgements, we see synthetic and analytic judgements, the notion of which Kant makes distinct. A famous instance of analytical judgement is “All bachelors are unmarried.” To be unmarried is a characteristic and necessity for being a bachelor meaning that the concept of bachelor contains to be unmarried. It would be contradictory to think a married bachelor. All these suggest that analytical judgements in the form of “all A’s are B’s “ are necessarily *a priori*. They are *explicative*; they add nothing to the content of knowledge and depend upon the law of contradiction. Since in analytic judgements merely the concept of subject is analysed, they are *a priori* even the concepts are empirical.

Synthetic judgements are *expansive*. In other words, they increase the given knowledge. Judgements of experience and that of mathematics are two kinds of synthetic judgements. Kant gives an instance from arithmetic: According to Kant the addition  $7+5=12$  is synthetic *a priori* because the concept of twelve does not necessarily follow from the addition of  $7+5$ . Thus, we have both *a priori* and an

expansive judgement in this addition. It expands our knowledge but it is not depended apply to experience. This notion of *synthetic a priori* is accepted as a threshold in philosophy. It entailed the kind of judgement that constructed the main problematic of Kantian philosophy. Mathematical judgements are the best example of synthetic a priori judgements in the sense that they are not derived from experience but they are certainly applicable to experience.

#### **1. 4. Space and Time**

The *aprioristic* account of space and time by which Kant rejected the *relativist* account of Leibniz and the *absolutist* account of Newton has a great importance in his system. In *Transcendental Aesthetic* of the *Critique of Pure Reason* the philosopher gives the metaphysical and transcendental expositions of space and time. They are mentioned as,

1. Forms of appearances
2. Forms of sensibility and,
3. Pure intuitions

To begin with, space and time are forms of appearances since whatever is *given* to us is given under these conditions. As being the conditions of the possibility of appearances, space and time are presupposed, in experience. Anything given to us is given in spatial and temporal order. Thus, space and time are necessarily imposed on appearances by human mind.

Secondly, they are the forms of sensibility whose matter is sensation. Thus, space and time govern what appears. As being forms of sensibility, they have subjective reality and they have their ground in the subject. They make all the relations especially particular relations possible.

Lastly, space and time are pure intuitions since they cannot be derived from relations of things. They are not *a priori* concepts because such concepts are general and involve a plurality of empirical instances e.g. the concepts of the motion or the alteration whereas space and time do not carry any empirical knowledge about the objects but they are *a priori* intuitions and are themselves the content of pure intuition and can only be known by *a priori* intuition. As being pure intuitions they help us to construct mathematics, geometry that takes space as basis and arithmetic which needs time to construct its judgements.

In the *metaphysical exposition* of space Kant writes:

Space is not an empirical concept which has been derived from outer experience. For in order that certain sensations be referred to something...in another region of space from that in which I find myself... the representation of space must be presupposed...(It must also be presupposed) in order that I may be able to represent (certain sensations) as being not only different but as indifferent places. Therefore, the representation of space cannot be empirically obtained from the relations of outer appearances. On the contrary, this outer experience is itself possible at all only through the representation (CPR 68 B38/A23).

For the transcendental exposition of space Kant writes that it does not represent any property of *things-in-themselves*, nor does it represent them in their relation to one

another. Moreover, space is a necessary *a priori* form of intuition, which underlies all outer intuitions. It is the form of all appearances of outer sense (CPR 71 A26/ B42).

As for the feature of space Kant states that it is not a “*compositum* but a *totum*”, which means that its parts can be conceived through the whole. Different spaces cannot be successive but only simultaneous, since there is one space.

Space is given by Kant as the basis of geometry whose propositions are *synthetic a priori*<sup>10</sup> and has apodictic certainty. Both geometry, whose propositions are *synthetic a priori*, and sensibility takes space as basis; so according to Kant, their propositions should coincide with the external object of our world of sense.

As for time and its metaphysical exposition Kant writes that it is not derived from experience, so is not an empirical concept. According to Kant, since time is presupposed as underlined in our perception, both *coexistence* and *succession* is possible. Only due to the presupposition of time a lot of things are represented as “existing at one and the same time (simultaneously) or at different times (successively)” (CPR 74 B46/A31). Thus, time has three main aspects that are duration, succession and simultaneity (co-existence). These three temporal concepts have their application in physical world in the sense that duration applies to substance, succession to causation and simultaneity to reciprocal interaction.

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<sup>10</sup> The proposition “Two straight lines cannot enclose a space and with them alone no figure is possible” is *synthetic a priori* because this proposition can be derived neither from the concept of two

Moreover, it has only one dimension; different times are not simultaneous but successive. It is “not discursive, but a pure form of sensible intuition” and the “original representation, *time* must... be given as unlimited” (CPR 75 B47/A32).

As for the question of why we represent things in a temporal order but not in several sequences, Kant’s answer would be that we conceive of all events as involving objects and those objects last through the change. Therefore, a single object may be involved in many events, and this is the reason we conceive of these events as all belonging to a single sequence: the history of that object.

About the *empirical reality* and *transcendental ideality* of these two concepts, Kant asserts that space and time have their *objective validity* with respect to appearances, which we take as objects of our senses. As a result, they are empirically real, if we consider the world of appearances, as being the conditions of space and time have absolute reality, that is they do not belong to the things absolutely, since the properties of *things-in-themselves* can never be given to us through senses. This is *transcendental ideality* of space and time. If we think of those abstracted from the subjective conditions of sensible intuition, they are nothing but ideal (CPR 80 B56/B58). Moreover, they are the sources of *a priori* synthetic knowledge. When they are together, they are the pure forms of all sensible intuition and make synthetic *a priori* propositions possible.

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straight lines nor from that of two, so requires an *a priori* intuition. Otherwise, it is not possible to

## 1. 5. The Transcendental Philosophy

The term transcendental refers one of the major notions of philosophy. When Kant claimed to have a transcendental philosophy he meant:

[t]he idea of a science for which the critique of pure reason has to lay down the complete architectonic plan. That is to say, it has no guarantee, as following from principles, the completeness and certainty of the structure in all its parts. It is the system of all principles of pure reason (CPR 60 B27).

Kant continues the paragraph by claiming that CPR cannot be called transcendental philosophy by itself. Whole of the *a priori* knowledge is needed. The completeness of all human knowledge is possible by giving the functions of *a priori* concepts and exhibiting them as the “principles of synthesis” and by examining the concepts of morality which has no place in transcendental philosophy because the concepts of morality “ must necessarily be brought into the concept of duty...(CPR A15 B29). Kant concludes that transcendental philosophy is a philosophy of pure and speculative kind of reason. Practical realm consists of empirical events. Thus, although morality’s primary concepts and highest principles are *a priori*, it does not concern transcendental philosophy.

Therefore, a transcendental kind of philosophy deals with the principles and concepts *a priori* of the human knowledge. It traces back the pure concepts to their first occurrence and their taking place in the understanding. They are distinguished from all sensibility.

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produce universally valid propositions.

Kant also claims that transcendental philosophy proceeds according to a single principle. As to this principle, pure concepts are placed in the understanding and constitute a systematic whole.

A privilege is given to the transcendental philosophy as its concepts are necessarily related to objects *a priori* and the “objective validity of which cannot therefore be demonstrated *a posteriori*” (CPR 179 B175). This fact supplies transcendental philosophy an advantage over sciences such as mathematics.

## 2. KANTIAN AESTHETICS

### 2.1. General Bearings of *Critique of Judgement*

The term *Aesthetics* is known to be used first by Baumgarten. Thus Kant began his inquiry first by differentiating his position from Baumgarten. He saw aesthetics as a kind of truth that is different from the one that is taught by sciences. Aesthetics was a truth because it belongs to the world we live, to the '*life-world*' in as Bowie's words (a term borrowed from Husserl) According to Bowie:

Baumgarten sees empirical perception in the '*life-world*' as an inherent part of the truth of our relationship to the world, hence his insistence upon including aesthetics as a constitutive part of philosophy. The problem of the meaning of this world does not arise, because our aesthetic pleasure in it suffices to fill played by metaphysics, even when the principle of the aesthetic, the particular, points to problems to come. What happens -for Baumgarten this is evidently unthinkable- if there is no centre from which to organise the endless multiplicity, if this particular pleasurable moment has no connection with any other? (Bowie 5).

Unlike Baumgarten, Kant is known to handle aesthetics as a separate realm than metaphysics. He treats aesthetics independently from theoretical and practical (ethical) realms. However, the position of aesthetics is such that it stands –at least Kant wants it to stand- as a bridge between the two realms, namely understanding and reason. In the faculty of aesthetic realm, judgement makes the transition possible. Heinz Heimsoeth writes that Kant is the first to make a systematic aesthetic of *idealism* and he does not present it by bringing the question of beauty in nature or in works of art but instead he investigates the feeling of pleasure and displeasure in

the experience of the beautiful and he examines the structure of this experience (Heimsoeth 166).

Treating aesthetics as belonging to an independent realm, Kant started a very critical debate which is developed in the 'project of modernity' (Bowie 8). It was the principle of subjectivity Kant had to face in the third critique (*Critique of Judgement*) when he was examining the mechanism of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. His notion that we all share the same structure of mind brought inevitably the question of multiplicity of taste in the third critique. The subject of the first critique (*Critique of Pure Reason*) was responsible from the construction of the object of human knowledge, *a priori* conditions of which were given in the universal structure of human mind.

With respect to the difficulty of theorizing subjectivity it is a well-known fact that in philosophy, before the 'project of modernity', there are many ways suggested, as Bowie argues, which focused on the reason's grounding itself in subjectivity. According to him subjectivity is treated as an issue of philosophy for a long time. Subjectivity is thought to be the truth that can be found in self-consciousness of the single ego. Subjectification of being resulted in "an aesthetics based on subjectivity" which "has no way of articulating the truth in works of art that goes beyond their reception at a particular time" (9). According to Habermas (cited from Bowie), by the end of 'project of modernity' subjectivity led to the intersubjective communication in post-modernity. Kant, however, argued the intersubjective validity of the aesthetic pleasure relying on the idea that aesthetic pleasure arises from the free play of the cognitive faculties (Bowie 9).

In the second critique (CPrR) Kant opened a space for *free will* and thus moral actions of his subject by contending that as a rational being man uses his own reason as legislator and applies it to his own moral principle. This means that moral law is not *given* to him but it comes from the very structure of the human mind. Thus, subject of moral realm is *autonomous*. In other words, the moral obligations come from *inside* rather than *outside* or nature. If moral actions are empirical however, this does not mean that the moral actions are not exposed to the causal chain.

Indeed, this is a very important point because the notion of our moral decisions being free from this causal chain, yet arising from the so mentioned universal structure of our minds, needs serious explanation. Kant asserts that we and thus all kinds of our actions are subjected to the principle of *cause*. However, our moral decisions are free or *autonomous* before they are performed. They are subjected to the laws of nature as to their conclusions or actions. Hence, the existence of the subject opens to the *autonomous* world of ethics as free from the sensible world. This is the inevitable truth of being subjects or thinking beings.

The principle of subjectivity emerges again in the third critique and this time the concept of the multiplicity of taste dependent of subjectivity becomes a crucial point to be clarified in Kantian system because Kant seems insufficient to explain or, better to say, to expose *subjectivity*. The difficulty lies in that we each experience the same object whose sensation is exposed to the same process of the faculty of sensibility, however, one may find it beautiful while others may not. The very notion of universal structure becomes a problem here again in explaining the variety of taste. The feeling of pleasure and displeasure which is central to the notion of beauty

seems not to be subjected to the laws of nature but instead as being the result of a *free play* of the two faculties, namely imagination and understanding<sup>11</sup>,

### **2. 1. 1. The Position of the *Critique of Judgement***

When we come to the third critique, the *Critique of Judgement*, we see that Kant attempts to reconcile the laws of freedom and that of the nature. Thus, CJ operates as a bridge between the first and the second critiques. In CJ what Kant tries to do is to combine all the interests of human mind under a notion he calls “reflective judgement”. By this notion he is after a kind of experience or data that will show that “nature; theoretical reason and intelligible world; practical reason coincide” (Heimsoeth 153). We are reminded here of Kant’s assumption about human cognition: it is composed only of three broad realms—understanding, judgement and reason; and the three faculties that correspond to them, the thinking faculty, faculty of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, and the faculty of desire.

According to Kant, beautiful and sublime belong to a new realm called the “Aesthetik”. The pleasure of evaluating a work of art is no doubt is in practical reason. Now in this new world we have feelings that cause just trouble when thought of in practical realm. We are confronted with the judgement of taste or the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. Judgement of taste is synthetic, according to Kant, since it surpasses the concept as well as the intuition of the object. It is added to that intuition as a predicate. It is also *a priori*, for it concerns the agreement of everyone. Thus, Kant claims that if the judgement of taste is synthetic *a priori*, then the CJ has the

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<sup>11</sup> This notion of co-operation of reason and understanding indicates an attempt of reconciling the *autonom* and *heteronom* understanding not as fused but as co-existed.

same problem of transcendental philosophy that asks the possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgements (CJ 288-9).

Therefore the third critique tries to define beauty and analyze the aesthetic judgement. It analyses aesthetic judgement because it is not a judgement of understanding, but a judgement which is out of the scope of both theoretical and practical reason and which is a judgement about “beautiful”, since for Kant beautiful and sublime carry a formal principle that activates the harmony in us. Aesthetic judgement, thus, is in the realm of aesthetics and not a determinant but a reflective judgement. It is not determinant because of its undefinable nature in the sense that it is being subjective and contingent. This nature makes us think only in the form of reflective judgement.

Kant has his right to claim a subjective universality of aesthetic judgements. This is because of two important reasons. First of all, even in CPR he opens a space for freedom, which will appear in CPrR and will construct the fundamentals of morality by stating that the human mind have some Ideas which would deceive him unless examined carefully, and also by stating that human mind has a tendency to grasp the world in *totality*. Now when we turn to CJ we see that it is positioned somewhere between the two critiques. The universality of the aesthetic claim comes from the relation to CPR whereas the subjectivity of it comes from CPrR. However, as we will examine the idea of subjective universality we will notice that it is not unproblematic as viewed by Kant.

## 2. 2. Characteristics of Judgement of Taste

In the third critique we meet with a new faculty: Judgement. Just as the understanding's concepts and reason's ideas, judgement has its own principle; finality.

Thus, according to Kant, the finality *of nature* is called a "subjective principle", since it is "neither a concept of nature nor a concept of freedom" when thought in transcendental sense (CJ 184). This principle is responsible for the accordance of the "representation of the object in Reflection" with the conditions universally valid. He writes that:

When the form of the object (as opposed to the matter of its representation, as sensation) is, in the mere act of reflecting upon it, without regard to any concept to be obtained from it, estimated as the ground of a pleasure in the representation of such an Object, then this pleasure is also judged to be combined necessarily with the representation of it, and so not merely for the Subject apprehending this form, but for all in general who pass judgement. The object is then called beautiful; and the faculty of judging by means of such a pleasure (and also with universal validity) is called taste (CJ 190).

Moreover, Kant claims the subjective universality of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure.

... [o]ne who feels pleasure in simple reflection on the form of an object, without having any concept in mind, rightly lays claim to the agreement of every one, although this judgement is empirical and a singular judgement. For the ground of this pleasure is found in the universal, though subjective, condition of reflexive judgements, namely the final harmony of an object (be it a product of nature or of art) with the mutual relation of the faculties of cognition, (imagination and understanding,) which are requisite for every empirical cognition. (CJ 191).

The above mentioned mutual and compulsory relation (in the sense of cognizing any object) turns out to have a possibility of not developing when we come to the experience of the beautiful. In the realm of knowledge, we had no chance of not having one of the two sides, so we feel that the experience of beautiful does not belong to the realm of cognition. Thus, the feeling of pleasure and displeasure does not arise from sensation or representation of the object but from the representation of the object in reflection which accords with the universally valid *a priori* conditions or the faculties of the subject. However, this accordance is not necessary but contingent. The notion of contingency seems to explain the reason why an object is found beautiful by some while not by others.<sup>12</sup> However, the unity of imagination and understanding does not seem to be contingent in the sense that at least understanding is regulated according to some *a priori* principles which means whether imagination exposes a random behavior, we know that understanding carries a definite representation of the object which is supplied by the synthesis of the manifold or the multiple experiences of the object.

In CPR Kant writes that imagination is one of the three subjective sources of the knowledge of things<sup>13</sup>. It represents appearances in association (and reproduction). It has *productive* and *reproductive* synthesis. The former is *a priori* whereas the latter rests on empirical grounds. The former, “the principle of the necessary unity of pure (productive) synthesis of imagination” is both prior to apperception and is the ground of the possibility of all knowledge (CPR 143 A118). Kant continues by writing that

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<sup>12</sup> However, the same object’s being found beautiful at once but not at another time by the same subject does not seem to have a proper explanation.

<sup>13</sup> The other two are sense and apperception. Imagination connects the given by sense with the inner sense.

imagination gains a transcendental character when it is directed to the *a priori* association of the manifold.

The manifold of *purely spatial* elements and that of *purely temporal* elements which are given by sensation, are synthesized in an intuition which is ascribed to a faculty called *imagination*. Synthesis is “the mere result of the power of imagination, a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge whatsoever, but of which we are scarcely ever conscious” (CPR 112 A78).

Now imagination is probably the faculty which rides freely among the representations supplied by understanding. Moreover, during this ride it produces some new representations based on the ready made representations of the understanding. When a representation produced by the power of imagination accords with that which is given by understanding, the feeling of pleasure arises, then the object is claimed to be beautiful.

At this point I think the event of *free play*, that is Kant’s contention of its taking place between the two faculties, is a result of some unknown and untheorizable functions of the two faculties. It is because Kant gives the whole structure of the faculty of understanding as determinant. As for that of imagination, he writes:

Imagination...is able...to recall the signs for concepts, but also to reproduce the image and the shape of an object out of countless number of others of a different, or even of the very same kind (CJ 234).

Relying on these, I think, the notion of *free play*, in the sense of being free, correspond merely to the faculty of imagination, since it has its ability to play with the representations given by understanding. The judgement of understanding is determinant thus necessary and definite whereas imagination finds itself in reflection. As a result, the notion of accordance is not the accordance of the two faculties, but that of their representations. What is contingent is this relation of accordance which is simply an estimate prior to any concept. When this estimate is proved in the concept then we have the feeling of pleasure.

### **2. 2. 1. The Analysis of the Beautiful**

According to Kant, beauty is not a perceived feature of objects in the world, taste colour and shape are. So experiencing something as beautiful does not consist in perceiving a quality of the object. Rather it is a matter of your deriving a *disinterested* pleasure from the perceived *form* of the object- the form considered in abstraction from the nature of the object that manifests it, from the kind of object you are perceiving or the concept under which you perceive it (and so from what the function of the object is or what the object is intended to be).

First of all, it follows from a *disinterested* pleasure taken from the perceived *form* of the object. By *disinterested* what Kant means is that when we call something beautiful, we are not interested in its function, its nature which makes the object that object or concept under which we perceive the object. Our calling something beautiful is not a judgement of knowledge but that of taste. In other words, according to Kant beauty is not a perceived feature of objects in the world, as colour and shape

are, so our experiencing something as beautiful does not consist in our perceiving a quality of the object.

The second principle of aesthetic judgement is that the feeling of pleasure which determines the judgement of taste is free from any purpose. Kant uses “final without an end” or “purposive without purpose”. They mean that the feeling of pleasure is a kind of pleasure that we feel without any purpose or without thinking anything about the object that we call beautiful.

Kant warns us that aesthetic pleasure is different from good, because good is something that we feel pleasure by the concept and understanding. It is related to a concept. In other words, when we call something good, we know that thing or we have a concept about that thing. However, we feel pleasure out of formless lines those are drawn randomly. Thus, beautiful is the object of a feeling of pleasure which we do not hope any use or do not follow any purpose.

The third and the fourth features are universality and necessity of aesthetic judgements. Why do we insist that what we call beautiful should be seen as beautiful by others? According to Kant,

The *beautiful* is what pleases in the mere estimate formed of it (consequently not by intervention of any feeling of sense in accordance with a concept of understanding). From this it follows at once that it must please apart from all interest (CJ 91).

Thus, when we feel pleasure before a beautiful thing this cause of feeling of pleasure results from the *free play* of imagination and understanding. The judgement about the

beautiful is a judgement of taste but not a judgement of reason, in other words we have no chance of misunderstanding, thus this purposeless feeling should be universal and necessary for everyone.

### **2. 3. Sublime**

The notion of sublime is another fundamental issue of the Critique of Judgement Kant defines sublime as absolutely great. The experience of sublime is also defined as pleasing just like that of the beautiful. However, the beautiful and the sublime are quite different in many ways.

Firstly, the beautiful has the delight which is of quality, whereas the sublime has that of which is coupled with quantity. Secondly, the beautiful is a “presentation of an indeterminate concept of understanding” while the sublime as that of an “indeterminate concept of reason” (CJ 91).

Therefore, just as the aesthetic judgement in its estimate of the beautiful refers the imagination in its free play to the *understanding*, to bring out its agreement with the *concepts* of the latter in general (apart from their determination): so in its estimate of a thing as sublime it refers that faculty to *reason* to bring out its subjective accord with *ideas* of reason (indeterminately indicated), i.e. to induce a temper of mind conformable to that which the influence of definite (practical) ideas would produce upon feeling, and in common accord with it (CJ 256).

Another important distinction which follows from the relations of the cognitive faculties, the imagination and the understanding is that the beautiful evokes a positive pleasure as the result of the accordance of these faculties whereas the sublime causes a negative pleasure as the result of the conflict of the faculties in

question. The latter is defined as an emotion “ dead earnest in the affairs of the imagination” (CJ 245).

The beautiful represents a joyful and charming imagination while the sublime, an unpleasant shock. According to Kant aesthetic judgement upon sublime depends merely on the subjective play of mental powers (imagination and reason) as harmonious by virtue of their contrast. Thus, in the experience of the beautiful, imagination and understanding generate subjective finality of mental faculties, but in that of sublime, imagination and reason do so by their conflict.

Kant also writes that unlike the beautiful which results from an immediate, pre-conceptual relation to the form of the object, the sublime does not correspond to any sensuous form. Kant writes that the sublime is the "disposition of the soul evoked by a particular representation engaging the attention of the reflective judgement, and not the object" (CJ 97). It is a concern of the ideas of reason. Although they cannot be represented properly, the sublime “may be excited and called into the mind by that very inadequacy itself which does admit of sensuous presentation” (CJ 245).

Sublime has double mode as mathematical and dynamical. Pillow writes that this division is caused by the dual power of reason. Because reason has cognitive and practical aspects, imagination’s inability causes two distinct judgements of sublimity (71). The former is evoked when in comparison anything else is small. In other words, in the case of mathematical sublime everything in nature is infinitely small when compared to the greatness experienced. We know that Kantian philosophy claims that reason is after absolute totality. In such kind of sublime experience we

have also imagination which is compelled to process into *ad infinitum*. However, the inability of imagination to attain an estimation of the magnitude of the thing in order to accomplish this idea of totality that reason looks for, a feeling of supersensible faculty is evoked in us. Then we have mathematical sublime as “the mere capacity of Critique of Judgement thinking which evidences a faculty of mind transcending every standard of sense” (CJ 250).

Mathematical sublime involves an estimation of magnitude by numbers and a mere intuition. Numbers are the mathematical side and the mere intuition mentioned is aesthetic. In this sense the magnitude of the measure is mathematical but its estimation is aesthetic since "all estimation of magnitude of objects of nature is in the last resort aesthetic" (CJ 251). Thus, the reflection of mathematical sublime conveys the idea of sublime, not in the mathematical estimation of magnitudes, since in the former magnitude presented absolutely but in the aesthetic estimation since it is a relative kind of magnitude which is compared with a similar kind. It consists of two operations of the faculty of imagination: apprehension (*apprehensio*) and comprehension (*comprehensio aesthetica*) (CJ251). Kant writes that the former can process into *ad infinitum*:

[b]ut with the advance of apprehension comprehension becomes more difficult at every step and soon attains its maximum, and this is the aesthetically greatest fundamental measure for the estimation of magnitude. For if the apprehension has reached a point beyond which the representations of sensuous intuition in the case of the parts first apprehended begin to disappear from the imagination as this advances to the apprehension of yet others, as much, then, is lost at one end as is gained at the other, and for comprehension we get a maximum which the imagination cannot exceed (CJ 252).

Kant writes that we should not expect to find sublime in works of art but in things of nature or in rude nature because a pure judgement upon sublime does not involve an end which belongs to the object as its determining ground, then it is aesthetic and cannot be grasped neither by judgements of understanding nor by those of reason (CJ 253).

As we see mathematical sublime is evoked by a piece of nature which cannot be measured properly or in other words by which imagination fails to represent in a totality. It is inadequate to measure and represent the greatness in the experience since it is compelled to process infinity. The capacity of imagination is challenged by the piece of nature. For Kant when a magnitude compel our imagination to its limit, then for an aesthetic comprehension of that magnitude, a feeling of being restricted arises. Such a comprehension feels all aesthetic comprehension small (inadequate) that the object is grasped as sublime with such a feeling of pleasure (through) by means of a displeasure (CJ 108).

As for dynamical sublime Kant introduces a term “might” which is defined as a power superior to great hindrances and he continues that if in an aesthetic judgement nature is represented as a might which does not possess dominion over us, then we are confronted with dynamical sublime (CJ 260). The estimation of nature as dynamical sublime is a source of fear.

Bold, overhanging, and, as it were, threatening rocks, thunder-clouds piled up the vault of heaven, borne along with flashes and peals, volcanoes in all their violence of destruction, hurricanes leaving desolation in their track, the boundless ocean rising with rebellious force, the high waterfall of some of trifling moment in comparison with their might (CJ 261).

In dynamical sublime the subject resists to the nature but then realizes that it is useless to resist it. Then the might of it becomes attractive for the subject though it is at the same time fearful. Kant claims that, the objects called sublime trigger a power of resistance which supplies us with courage to compare ourselves by the omnipotence of nature.

It is also important to note that Kant defines the sublime as:

[A]n object (of nature) the representation of which determines the mind to regard the elevation of nature beyond our reach as equivalent to a presentation of ideas (CJ 119).

This equation of the sublime with the ideas means that it is in no way in the object but in the idea of a supersensible faculty whose existence is revealed by the inability of imagination in aesthetic estimate of the object which evokes the feeling of the sublime. Kant writes about the occurrence of this supersensible faculty:

But precisely because there is a striving in our imagination towards progress *ad infinitum*, while reason demands absolute totality, as a real idea, that same inability on the part of or faculty for the estimation of the magnitude of things of the world of sense to attain to this idea, is the awakening of a feeling of a supersensible faculty within us; and it is the use to which judgement naturally puts particular objects on behalf of this latter feeling, and not the object of sense, that is absolutely great, and every other contrasted employment is small (CJ 97).

With respect to the modality of sublime, Kant writes that “without the development of moral ideas, that which, thanks to preparatory culture, we call sublime merely strikes the untutored man as terrifying” (CJ 265). In this sense according to Kant what we call sublime is a power of mind which enables it to overcome hindrances of sensibility by means of moral principles (CJ 124).

Coleman writes that the finality of sublime lies in “our awareness of belonging to the realm of moral ends, or as being of intrinsic worth” (106). This moral feeling is defined as a native capacity by Kant. Thus, moral ideas assure the universality of sublime in the sense that Kant refers to a hypothetical man who remains unaffected of sublime:

[w]e say of man who remains unaffected in the presence of what we consider sublime, that he has no feeling” (CJ 265).

### 3. THE POSSIBILITY OF KANTIAN BEAUTY

#### 3. 1. On the Notion of the “I”

Any attempt to investigate aesthetic taste needs a notion of the subject. In Kantian understanding of aesthetics there seems to be problems about the account of feeling of pleasure and displeasure which is regarded as the basis of experiencing beautiful and sublime. The question is how Kantian system can give the explanation of the individual taste. Since according to Kant, the universal and necessary conditions of all our experience are at the same time the laws of nature, we have no other chance than experiencing the same things as phenomena. Therefore, one expects people to find the same thing as beautiful. Obviously, Kant is aware of this fact and gives his account around the notion of *subjective universality*. In my opinion this notion should be traced back to the first critique (CPR); to the notion of the *self* as well as the *idea* of freedom which is one of the ideas of Reason<sup>14</sup>. A detailed analysis of these two concepts may lead to a better understanding of Kant’s aesthetic view or may conclude in a complete refutation of it.

To begin with, the idea of self in Kant is highly complicated. The philosopher writes about self and self-consciousness in CPR; in *Transcendental Deduction B*:

Just as for knowledge of an *object distinct from me* I require, beside the thought of an object in general [viz. The category of thinghood], an intuition by which I can determine that general concept, so for *knowledge of myself* I require beside the thought of myself an intuition of the manifold in me, by

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<sup>14</sup>Reason is the highest faculty of human mind as to thought and it has some concepts that are called *Ideas* responsible of some thoughts such as the first cause or the completion of all the experience.

which I determine this thought... I exist as an intelligence which is conscious solely of its *power of combining*. But, in respect of the manifold which it has to combine, I am subjected to a limiting condition...viz. that this combination can be made intuitable to me only according to relations of *time*... Such an intelligence therefore can know itself only as it appears to itself in respect of an intuition... which cannot be supplied by the understanding itself (169 B158-9).

According to the passage I have no single intuition corresponding to the idea of “me”, so the understanding is not able to give me the thought of “me”. It is because this kind of thought of oneself needs the many intuitions that are received in different times. In other words, a manifold of intuitions related to me is required to have an idea of “me”<sup>15</sup>

According to Kant by a faculty called *inner sense* or *empirical apperception* we are provided raw data or a manifold of one’s states. Various registers of one’s individual activities are supplied by this faculty but these stay as such until *transcendental apperception* synthesizes<sup>16</sup> them. Then we have the knowledge of one’s own states. This division of apperception into two is needed in order to indicate, on the one hand, the existence of one’s states as changing by the time and being different from each other, in other words “consciousness of self according to the determinations of our state in inner perception”, and on the other hand, the “original unchangeable consciousness” which is called *transcendental apperception*. This kind of apperception is given as responsible from even the unity of space and time as the *a priori* conditions of all our experience. Kant writes:

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<sup>15</sup> Obviously, this notion of intuitions of oneself in different periods indicates the function of memory that is rarely mentioned in Kantian philosophy.

The original and necessary consciousness of the identity of the self is thus at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances according to concepts... (*Transcendental Deduction B*, §14<sup>3</sup> 136-7 A108).

This point deserves more attention when we review the whole Kantian philosophy in the sense that up to this point we had space and time as the governors of our experience but now we see that they have their own transcendental condition which is *transcendental apperception*. This claim leads us to the following conclusions:

(1) The idea of self is obtained by a *synthesis* of the variety of a subject's various actions. According to this claim, the actions related to the subject's own states occurring respectively the time  $t^1$ ,  $t^2$  and  $t^3$  belong to the *empirical self*. This means that in the mentioned times we have three different states of one's own which are successively received and then kept in memory. In each of these experiences we have only a subject but as to the awareness of their belonging to the same subject, and this means the action of uniting apperception transcendently is something done by *transcendental apperception*, and this kind of self is the *transcendental self* of one's own. Now what is done by *transcendental self* to the manifold of our states related to our *selves* is similar to the construction of the concept of an object. Since Kant claims that the concept of an object is constructed when the manifold of the representations belonging to that object are gathered or synthesized, or in other words the concept of object is the "formal unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of representations" (*Transcendental Deduction B*, §14<sup>3</sup> 135 A105). The idea of self is thus constructed by *transcendental self* in the same way a concept of

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<sup>16</sup> By *synthesis* Kant means "act of putting different representations together, and of grasping what is manifold in them in one [act of] knowledge."

object is. Indeed, each of our representations of the object is accompanied necessarily by an “I”. Now, is this “I” both an *empirical self* in the sense that I can also, in inner sense, have the awareness of an “I” experiencing that object at the time *t* and also the *transcendental self* in the sense that, as quoted above, it enables space and time to be the conditions of all our experience? Actually we could tend to think that *transcendental self* is just like the ideas of reason and it seeks a completion of several representations of empirical self, but Kant does not mention about transcendental self as belonging to the faculty of Reason.

(2) *Transcendental self* is, again, the transcendental condition of *a priori intuitions*, namely space and time. Since space and time are the very conditions of all our experience in the sense that without them things would not *appear* as such, *transcendental self* is an ultimate transcendental condition of a priori conditions of experience.

(3) Keeping the above remark in mind we should try to think on the very basis of *subjective universality* which is a crucial point in *Critique of Judgement*. This principle is given as the ground of one’s own taste being both personal and universal. Now, since *transcendental self* seems to be given as the ultimate transcendental condition of all possible experience it is also pre-assumed in reflexive judgement which is the judgement of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure.

This indicates actually both the impossibility and the possibility of Kantian aesthetics in the sense that there can be no room for individual taste, if, as the ultimate ground, we all have a *transcendental self* and if Kant thinks this self as a

unity, we would be determined by a higher kind of self in us. On the other hand, if Kant thinks that this self is a kind of pure principle which supplies to one more than being the transcendental condition and the synthesis of one's empirical selves in a consciousness, then this would give us a hope of giving an account of personal tastes in the sense that it would be responsible for the free play that takes place between the faculties of imagination and understanding and which culminates in an aesthetic judgement. Since, *transcendental self* unites all empirical selves in one consciousness, it would be possible for a Kantian to claim that, because of the variety of experiences of a person, the united selves may be unique by contending that we are all experiencing different times and places and so on. Thus, what is united possibly differs from other united selves. Then we would have a subjective ground for the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. Or from another aspect we can read this as follows: Transcendental apperception's being the ground of space and time and enabling them to operate can mean that even in the *Critique of Pure Reason* we have the ultimate subjective condition. Indeed one may contend that it is quite normal to have a subjective ground since in Kantian philosophy the subject constructs the knowledge, but it should be reminded that Kant in CPR tries to determine the universal and necessary conditions of all human experience at least. However, the notion of *transcendental apperception* contends that it is the very ground of all even the *a priori intuitions*, space and time. But again we should notice that all I claim are reflections since Kant does not give a detailed account of *transcendental self* and its relation to aesthetic pleasure. In the CPR he only deals with the universal and necessary conditions of human cognition which according to him does not involve any aspect related to aesthetics.

### 3. 2. The Notion of Object

The faculty of understanding with its principles and concepts *a priori* operate in an empirical and in a transcendental manner. A transcendental employment of a concept indicates its application to things *in general* whereas its empirical employment of it is its application solely to *appearances*. Kant claims that this latter use requires a *logical form* of the concept and also an object that would supply the content of the concept. A concept without an object corresponding to it would be just an empty logical function. Thus, in order for understanding to operate in an empirical sense we need empirical objects, or appearances as objects of experience (CPR A239). Thus, we confront two senses of the concept of the object in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*:

- 1) as appearances
- 2) as transcendental object= X.

The former occurrence of the object indicates that appearances are the only objects of our experience, since we do not know things as they are. Objects in this sense are immediately given and each corresponds to representations. Kant writes:

When a judgement agrees with an object, all judgements concerning the same object must likewise agree among themselves. And when we have a judgement having universal validity, it refers also to a characteristic of object (*Prolegomena* 46).

This means that the judgement of perception which requires only the logical connection of perception in a thinking subject and the judgement of experience that

requires pure concepts in order to provide the objective validity by agreeing among themselves. Thus, the connection of the representations of object is determined by this relation and the judgement upon the object is objective.

A subject's primary characteristic is its being a thinking being. Thus, the notion of a thinking being directly relates to the notion of object. Subject is not something which merely perceives. This fundamental claim leads to the construction of object.

Kant reminds us that since our representations are made to be referred to some object by understanding, we have a transcendental object X which serve for the unity of manifold in sensible intuition. This unity enables understanding to combine the manifold into the concept of an object (CPR A250). It is important to note that this transcendental object in question is not independent of sensibility because in that case we would not be able to think it. However, we see that Kant claims transcendental object, not being empirical, has thus not been intuited. Moreover, it cannot change and is always one. It is "what can alone confer upon all our empirical concepts in general relation to an object, that is objective reality" (CPR A109). Therefore, by saying that it is not independent of sensibility Kant does not mean that it entails a certain intuition. It is the concept of an object which represents the appearances *in general*. It does not correspond to a single appearance but is thought through the manifold of the appearances (CPR A251). This notion of transcendental object is determined by the categories of understanding and it is the object to which appearance in general is related by subject, thus, it is the "completely indeterminate thought of *something* in general (CPR A253).

The notion of object is a requisite for us in order to analyze the notion of the free play of the faculties; understanding and imagination, since it is a reflection on the form of the object. We see that in CPR the object occurs as appearances or objects of experience and as the transcendental object standing for the representation of not a single appearance but of appearances in general.

### **3. 3. The Notion of Finality**

In Kantian philosophy the faculty of reason and its concept of freedom is accepted to have an influence on nature. The action, a result of the subject's free will and determination, occurs as a phenomenon, since in the end it appears as a sensible, empirical event. However, the realm of nature and the faculty of understanding does not have an effect on free will. Kant clearly states that any reciprocal relation between the two realms is rejected.<sup>17</sup> Since, Kant claims that reason is absolutely free from any determination of understanding, he places judgement as a bridge which enables the transition from understanding to reason. This new faculty suggests a spontaneous and *free play* which bodies a link between the mentioned two realms. By faculty of judgement Kant is able to claim that our desire is connected with the concept of nature only in an intelligible way which means our moral actions are not determined but are still related to the nature. Besides the fact that our actions which are the results of our desire are in the end subjected to the laws of nature when they occur as phenomena, our faculty of reason has some harmony of a spontaneous and contingent kind that takes place in our faculty of judgement.

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<sup>17</sup> Kant's rejection of any kind of reciprocal relation comes from the idea that nature may effect subject's free will, in other words, nature may determine one's desire. This may culminate in determination of subject's freedom, which in the end means that one has no free will.

Finality as being the concept of judgement plays a crucial role in this contingent harmony. It falls under the natural concepts when it is considered as theoretical finality and regulates the cognition of an object's various representations given by sensation whereas it becomes a constitutive principle when we are only interested in the *form* of the object and the feeling of pleasure and displeasure arising from this (merely *form* based) kind of experience of an object. Thus, we see that this twofold character of finality enables judgement to link the two faculties not by a theorizable but a spontaneous and contingent kind of mediation.

Kant makes a distinction between principles and by claiming that there are two types of principles namely transcendental and metaphysical. According to him, under the *transcendental principle* we represent the universal condition of all possible experience such as "every event must have a cause" whereas metaphysical principle is defined as somehow referring to an *external* cause, thus it contains the principle "every event must have an *external* cause".

This distinction gains importance when we come to the principle of *formal finality of nature* which occurs in the third critique. This principle is of a transcendental kind and it is defined as the knowledge of nature which is determined by Kant "by a manifold of particular laws" (CJ 182). In each of our cognition we tend to think some empirical laws for the sake of understanding but we know that these individual laws are the manifold and they are contingent. Kant calls this cognition of the unity of laws as *finality of nature*.

In order to get a closely connected whole out of experience we need the *transcendental concept of finality of nature*. This concept supplies us with the convenience in reflection and supports a systematic unity among the empirical laws that arouse from our various experiences. Kant indicates that this unity is not of a kind whose existence is possible. In other words, since the finality of nature makes reflection operate effectively, it is subjective and contingent, thus it does not have an existence of a provable kind.

In order to operate effectively understanding has to set a meaningful or linked experience of given perceptions, thus we have to evaluate endless possible states with multiple empirical laws. The multiplicity of empirical laws result from the very structure of understanding in the sense that for each possible experience (let's say the experiences in time  $t^1$ ,  $t^2$ , and  $t^3$ ), we apply the *pure categories* of understanding where we confront with causality or "every event must have a cause" as a transcendental principle or the concept of substance in order to make meaningful pieces of our experience. Thus, this means that we have at least three possible empirical laws, or three *nexus* corresponding to our experiences that took place in  $t^1$ ,  $t^2$ , and  $t^3$ . This means we possess a manifold of empirical laws resulted from the operation of understanding by subsuming what is given by sensation under some pure concepts. In this sense, finality of nature represents this manifold of contingent empirical laws. Moreover, it is *a priori* and has its place in understanding. In this sense it indicates a tendency of subject's co-existence of many independent sets of experiences.

At this point Kant also writes about the *law of specification of nature* which is an *a priori* principle for the possibility of nature. It is a subjective principle attributed to subject and prescribes a law to itself which he calls *heautonomy* just for the sake of reflection that divides nature's products into species and supplies an explanation, so an interpretation. Thus, this *principle of law of specification* makes judgement to reflect a natural order which is not cognized *a priori* in nature but makes nature cognized by understanding in a meaningful order.

Back to the principle of finality, it is of reflective judgement and only by this principle we may investigate empirical laws which are contingent in their nature and which are different from the nature's universal laws. Thus, one may claim this principle makes the variety of empirical laws possible and supplies a unity or better a whole of them, so understanding is able to grasp the knowledge to operate on. This principle is the ground of variety of empirical laws which supply particular states and finally fall under some universal laws of nature but also of those which, on their own, do not have an objective reality in the way that universal laws of nature have. The latter according to Kant arises from *spontaneity* and any kind of origin is presupposed as their origin. It is understandable that in order to grasp any kind of empirical nexus we have to form a temporary (system of) whole. Thus, what the principle of finality of nature gives us is a system of empirical laws.

Now let us look at the connection of the notion of finality with the feeling of pleasure in order to understand the roots of the theory of beautiful. In order to do this the feeling of pleasure needs to be traced back to the nature. Since, for Kant an aesthetic judgement has its universality besides its subjective character, he gives an account of

universal subjectivity of the aesthetic judgement. However, it is not a point that I will focus on now. The point of this argument is to indicate the relation of the idea of the beautiful to nature but it is important to remind that Kant does not contend that beauty is a quality of external object. Here what I want to examine is the position of the feeling of pleasure in nature. For Kant constructs his third critique as the bridge between the two realms; the nature and the realm of freedom.

Kant claims that every aim which is accomplished causes a feeling of pleasure. Therefore, the feeling of pleasure has its *a priori* ground and it becomes valid for all men. However, Kant notes that this kind of pleasure should not be confused by the pleasure of the faculty of desire. In other words, with the practical world. Moreover, one may ask whether we have the feeling of pleasure when our perceptions are subsumed under the universal concepts of nature (the categories) to which Kant's answer would be negative in the sense that subsuming the manifold given by sensation under the pure concepts (again the categories) is the ultimate and necessary aim of understanding which means that it is not counted as an aim but as the natural attitude of understanding. This means that the raw material's (given by sensation) falling under the categories cannot be separated from understanding as its aim. In this case the feeling of pleasure is so fused by simple cognition, according to Kant, that it no longer attracts attention. However, when it comes to the accordance of empirical laws of nature with the universal laws of nature, a feeling of pleasure is admitted to emerge just because it means that the manifold of various empirical laws are assessed and some are in accordance with the universal laws of nature. Conversely, the cognizance of the possibility of uniting the particular empirical laws with universal empirical laws would be a displeasing feeling for the subject. Since this would mean

that a subjective specification of particular laws would not enable the particular empirical laws in question to go beyond subjectivity or to gain verification in the name of universality.

Kant goes further by contending that the pleasure or displeasure is connected with the subjective side of representation of any object. Here space is given as the subjective condition of the sense perception of external things. One should remember that space as the *form* of outer intuitions has both subjective and objective character since besides having its ground in the subject it enables phenomena to appear *as such*. It is important to note that because it is the *a priori* form of all our experience, space is not an element of sensation of external things but still it has its place in the employment of cognizing the external objects.

By stating that although both space and sensation are counted as subjective sides of perception of external things, they are both necessary conditions of all possible human cognition, Kant opens a place for pleasure or displeasure as being the subjective side of a representation. He claims that they can never become an “element of cognition” (CJ 189).

As for the finality of a thing Kant writes that finality is prior to any cognition related to object and thus it has a subjective quality. Here the claim gets more complicated since Kant writes:

Hence we only apply the term ‘final’ to the object on account of its pleasure: and this representation itself is an aesthetic representation of the finality-The only question is whether such a representation of finality exists at all.(CJ 189)

From the quotation above, it is inferred that any representation of an object with which a feeling of pleasure arises immediately is prior to a cognition of the object and this kind of representation does not take part among those which would be united and would thus give us the concept of the object. Therefore, the finality of an aesthetic kind belongs to the subjective representation of the object. In the paragraph which follows the quotation above, Kant continues his word by stating that the pleasure, which arises before any cognition of the object, results from the “conformity of the object to the cognitive faculties brought into play in the reflective judgement” (189). This is expressed as the subjective formal finality of the object.<sup>18</sup>

The ground of pleasure lies in the form of the object which is the object of reflection in general, or in other words, the pleasure does not arise from any sensation of the object. The representation of the object in this general reflection accords with the faculties of subject but this accordance is of a contingent kind. Kant further states that:

....it gives rise to a representation of finality on the part of the object in respect of the cognitive faculties of the subject (CJ 190).

Kant in the eighth part of the *Critique of Judgement* continues by stating that we confront two types of finality in an object. The *finality of the form of the object* can represent the harmony of the form of the object in *apprehension* or it may represent a harmony between the form of the object and a concept which includes the ground of this form. The former kind results in the feeling of pleasure whereas the latter refers

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<sup>18</sup> The concept *formal* indicates the formal character of the experience, meaning that this subjective kind of formal finality of the object is related to an immediate relation only to the form of the object.

to a determinate cognition of the object under a given concept. Thus, in the latter kind of finality understanding operates and an intuition corresponding to the concept is checked out.

Now relying on this, Kant makes the distinction between *teleological* and *aesthetic* judgements. The first one is the “*faculty of estimating the real finality*” and the second is the “*faculty of estimating formal finality*”. For the former, we need some particular experiences and they should be united under the concept containing a form which corresponds to the form of the object. In this kind of finality we work with concepts and we deal with a harmony with the concepts, whereas in aesthetic judgement feeling is the criteria. By Kant’s words, aesthetic judgement is a “special faculty of estimating according to a rule, but not according to concepts” (CJ 194).

The notion of the “principle of nature’s formal finality for our cognitive faculties in its particular (empirical) laws -a principle without which understanding could not feel itself at home in nature” (CJ 193) is understandable when metaphysical aspect (of Kantian philosophy) is concerned but Kant writes:

...the transcendental principle by which finality of nature, in its subjective reference to our cognitive faculties, is represented in the form of a thing as a principle of its estimation...(194)

When the content of transcendental is concerned for the Kantian philosophy, it is important to note that Kant writes the above mentioned transcendental principle

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This is just the *apprehension* of the form.

leaves a space for aesthetic judgement to decide by feeling about the harmony of the form of the object with our subjective faculty.

With respect to the relation of the three broad realms, understanding, judgement and reason Kant writes that:

Understanding, by the possibility of its supplying *a priori* laws for nature, furnishes a proof of the fact that nature is cognized by us only as phenomenon, and in so doing points to its having a supersensible substrate; but this substrate it leaves is quite *undetermined*. Judgement by the *a priori* principle of estimation of nature according to its possible particular laws provides this supersensible substrate (within as well as without us) with *determinability through the intellectual faculty*. But reason gives determination to the same *a priori* by its practical law (CJ 196).

### **3. 3. 1. Finality in General**

Kant defines ‘an end’ as “the object of a concept so far as this concept is regarded as the cause of the object” (CJ 220). In other words, when we cannot think of an object itself or its cognition without a concept of it, then we see an end there. And Kant also defines finality as “the causality of a *concept* in respect of its *Object*. Thus, we have the concept as the source (cause) of the representation of the object (effect). This indicates the faculty of desire which operates merely through concepts. At this point Kant warns us that we can have a concept and its effect, i.e. the object as an end. In other words, we may have a representation of the object. However, we may also have another concept which is without an end, meaning that which rests on reflection and does not have a conformity to its object necessarily in cognition but in reflection. This is called finality i.e. finality can exist without an end. This existence of finality is called by Kant as the only foundation of the judgement of taste. In this kind of finality we see a very subjective character and according to Kant it is free from any

subjective or objective end. It is a mere form of finality, free from any concept. Thus, a concept is not presupposed as in the end. This finality which is related the form of the object enables the subject to get a delight from the object it confronts.

The objective finality of an object is the one "by means of which a reference of the manifold brought to a definite end, and hence only through a concept" (CJ 227). Thus, we see that the finality in which a concept is presupposed and actualized in the experience of the object is the objective finality. Kant writes that this kind of finality i.e. objective finality is not something external and internal according to the object. It means that it is not external to the object, so being not related to its *utility* it is not internal to the object, either. So it is not about the *perfection* of the object (CJ 227). However, still Kant warns us that in order to get closer to the objective finality we call a concept of an end and here such finality is an internal kind.

About the formal finality Coleman writes that:

Kant links the pleasure of aesthetic judgement to the great underlying theme of the *Critique of Judgement*: the purposiveness of the Nature. Aesthetic judgement 'alone contains a principle introduced by judgement completely *a priori* as the basis of its reflection upon nature. This is the principle of nature's formal finality for our cognitive faculties in its particular (empirical) laws-a principle without which understanding could not feel at home in nature.'<sup>19</sup> The pleasure of aesthetic judgement arises from estimating or reflecting upon the forms of objects, either of Nature or of art (7).

Another reflection on *finality* can be raised by relying on the formal (subjective) finality. I would like to present it as follows:

1. Applying to the very principal of Kantian philosophy, our object is in no doubt a phenomenon.
2. A phenomenon is at least passed from the *a priori intuitions*, space and time, since they govern all our experience.
3. Formal finality, as the result of a mere reflection on the form of the object, indicates that no concept is attributed to this thinking activity.
4. This leads to the claim that the judgement of taste which is given by the help of feeling of pleasure and displeasure is contingent in the sense that it is related just one of the representations, which are a manifold and named by formal finality, of the object in reflection. In other words the judgement of taste is just one of the subjective and multiple representations with respect to the nature of the object.
5. Thus, can we claim that this feeling of pleasure and displeasure is celebration of the thing-in-itself's entering our world, the world of phenomena? At this step we deal merely with the form of the object, we feel that it is strictly claimed to be subjective. Because neither imagination nor understanding is at work yet at this stage.
6. This brings us to the conclusion that we -at least at level of *a priori intuitions*- have a reference -of subjective kind- to the cognitive faculties. Kant does not refuse but on the contrary admits that kind of subjective reference but he does not give the details of this reference which is necessarily needed.

Back to the point of theorizing this kind of claim, one may assert that he avoids this exposition against the difficulty in question. However, his attempt of writing the *Critique of Judgement* needs an application of *a priori forms* of all possible

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<sup>19</sup> Critique of Aesthetic Judgement, introduction. Ak.V: 193; Meredith, p.35

experience, namely space and time at least when he writes on the *form* of the object. Since he tries to give the subjective and universal conditions of judgement of taste.

### 3. 4. Subjective Universality

In Kantian philosophy we can differentiate four different meanings of being a subject. The first and second meanings appear in the first critique CPR as the transcendental subject and empirical subject. The third is the moral subject appearing in the second critique CPrR. The last one is the universal subjectivity of the third critique CJ. As to the subjectivity we know that it has two meanings in Kantian philosophy. The first one implies that since we can only *know* the things appearing to us, our world has its own objectivity arising from the conditions which stand both as universal and necessary. Because of the very fundamental contention that we know only the things as they appear to us, the objectivity is also grounded on subjectivity. Thus, the subjective<sup>20</sup> conditions of experience are at the same time the universal and necessary conditions of all possible human experience.

With respect to the ordinary meaning of the term subjective as meaning *personal*, it occurs in *Critique of Judgement* as the adjective of the judgement of taste and refers to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. However, the judgement of taste is also announced to have a universal character; therefore, it is claimed to have a subjective universal communicability which is the mental state present in the free play of imagination and understanding and which exists apart from the presupposition of any concept (CJ 217). Kant continues by saying that this relation which is subjective and

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<sup>20</sup> Kant mentions the issue of subjectivity while he deals with the ideas of faculty of reason. Ideas of reason, since they are not dependent on experience, cannot be confirmed by experience; thus, the investigation of pure reason has to stay as subjective (*Prolegomena* 42).

appropriate for a general cognition must be valid for everyone and thus universal (CJ 218). He writes:

[f]ree play of the cognitive faculties attending a representation by which an object is given must admit of universal communication: because cognition, as a definition of the Object with which given representations (in any Subject whatever) are to accord, is the one and only representation which is valid for everyone (CJ 217).

Thus, estimation of the objects or the representation of them is prior to the pleasure and it is the basis of this pleasure. Then, the “universality of the subjective conditions of estimating objects forms the sole foundation of this universal subjective validity of the delight which we connect with the representation of the object that we call beautiful” (CJ 218).

It is important to note that Kant also gives two kinds of *finality* one of which is the “turn on subjective” and “rests on the pleasure immediately felt in mere reflection on the form of the object” (CJ 192). The other is an objective kind which has a concept “antecedently”. This enables Kant to argue for the *subjective universality* of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure in the sense that an immediate relation to the form of the object without using any concept represents the possibility of diverse tastes.

To sum up, the universality of the judgement of taste comes from the very conditions of all human experience in the sense that the faculties which are the sides of the *free play* are brought into accord in reflective judgement but although this *free play* does not deal with any concept (i.e. relates to the very conditions of experience), the

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judgement of taste carries a universality. Moreover, this purely subjective estimation of aesthetic judgement sustains its subjective character relying on the experience of the beautiful.

Kant writes that for every empirical cognition “the mutual relation of the faculty of cognition (imagination and understanding)” is required (CJ 192). Now this mutual and compulsory relation (in the sense of cognizing any object) turns out to have a possibility of not evolving when we come to the experience of beautiful. In the realm of knowledge, we had no chance of not having one of the two sides, so one’s more we see that experience of beautiful does not belong to the realm of cognition. Thus, the feeling of pleasure and displeasure does not arise from the sensation or representation of the object, but from the representation of the object in reflection which accords with the universally valid *a priori* conditions or the faculties of the subject. However, this accordance is not necessary but contingent. This notion of contingency seems to explain the reason why an object is found beautiful by some while not by others (However, the same object’s being found beautiful at once but not at another time by the subject does not seem to have a proper explanation).

As for the subjective universal character of the sublime we see that it does not depend on common sense. The universality of sublime comes from a noble feeling than the common sense. Since the sublime is related to the morality closely, its universality comes from the subject’s being a moral being and Kant claims that the man who claims not to feel the sublime is actually has no feelings. My suggestion the transcendental I as the very condition of all the subjectivity which is faced in the

moment of sublime seems to have its universal ground apodictically, since without this condition nothing would be possible in the case of a subject.

### **3. 5. On the Experience of the Beautiful**

In this section I want to examine the experience of the beautiful in detail so as to indicate the problems of the Kantian notion of beauty. Then I will focus on the sublime by using the conclusions drawn from the above-mentioned analysis. Kant is so hard to follow that I want to proceed by the help of many quoted sections in order to keep a systematic form in my exposition. My selection will be from the introduction of the *Critique of Judgement* since it has an overview and will enable me some convenience.

Since there are many concepts and notions in the *Critique of Judgement* for us to examine, it is better to begin with the fundamental notion of the critique: aesthetic judgement. A judgement of this kind is on the finality of the object<sup>21</sup> which is not dependent on any concept and which does not produce one of itself. As to the finality of the object, Kant writes that the term “final” is used for the object when its representation is immediately goes along with a feeling of pleasure. This feeling of pleasure arises from the accordance of the faculty of the imagination, the faculty of intuitions *a priori*, with understanding (faculty of concepts) by means of a given representation. This accordance is not of an intentional kind and it is realized by the reflective judgement which is essential for imagination to actualize its fundamental function, that is apprehension<sup>22</sup> of forms (CJ 190). We should remember that

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<sup>21</sup> All this section belongs to the 30th and 31st pages of Introduction of CJ. The reference is not given since I rearrange it for the sake of my aim.

<sup>22</sup> Apprehension is imagination’s immediate direction upon perceptions (CPR A120).

reflective judgements (which are the judgements of the faculty of Judgement) are opposed to determinant judgements which are precise and factual like laws of nature.

Now when the form of an object (in the sense of sensation opposed to the matter of the representation of the object) is reflected upon, without aiming at obtaining any concept from it, it constitutes the ground of the pleasure in the representation of the object. The pleasure in question is necessarily regarded as belonging to the representation of the object, thus the pleasure is not only for the subject in reflection but it is for all. This object is called 'beautiful' and the faculty which judges by means of the pleasure and with universal validity is called 'taste'. The ground of pleasure is with the conformity to law in the empirical employment of judgement in general which is the unity of imagination. By this conformity to the law the representation of the Object in reflection accords with the universally valid *a priori* conditions. This accordance is contingent and leads to a "representation of finality on the part of the object in respect of the cognitive faculty of the Subject" (CJ 190).

At this point I suggest that we need to examine the key terms in detail. Let me begin with the "form" of an object. What is the form of an object, as sensation, opposing to the matter of the representation of an object? If we suppose that the representation of an object carries form and matter, the former is given as sensation by Kant and the latter is left to be the concept of the object.

When we are talking about the form of the representation of the object, do we mean at the same time the form of an object? (Since we are concerned merely with the appearance of the object but not the thing-in-itself) The answer is probably positive.

Now if we think any representation of an object consisting of form and matter, then we have form. But this form by itself cannot lead us to the knowledge of the object. In fact what it entails is most probably the raw material filtered by space and time as *a priori* intuitions: appearance. Our acceptance of this notion makes the point of “reflecting upon the form of the representation of the object regardless of any concept” clear in the sense that when we are performing the action above we do not relate anything that would lead us to the knowledge of the object which belongs to the faculty of cognition. However, Kant writes that the reflective judgement, in which imagination is brought into accord with understanding, compares the forms that are apprehended by imagination and in this act the accord takes place. Now we know that as sensation, the form of the object, according to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, involves the manifold of appearances. However, if they are combined with consciousness we should call them perceptions. Now we know that the faculty of judgement accepts merely reflective judgement as its employee. Moreover, the reflective judgement is also fundamental for imagination in apprehension and since imagination is called apprehension when it is immediately directed upon perceptions, then we can infer that by sensation and so by the form Kant meant appearances combined in a consciousness and that are immediately directed upon.

To sum up, the *form* of the object is an important detail in discussing the Kantian aesthetics. It emphasizes that the experience of the beautiful necessarily belongs to the sensation since it has nothing to do with any concept of the understanding. Thus, it has an empirical character. The conclusion we derive from this section is that the form of an object would mean what is passed from *a priori* intuitions, space and time as the conditions of all our experience.

With respect to the free play we should remember again the imagination's capability given by Kant in order to play free. Until the third critique this faculty seems to reproduce appearances and produce *a priori* intuitions. However, these functions are not defined as independent of the understanding. Even in CJ Kant claims the imagination depends on the understanding and cannot be without it. Now it's better for us to trace back the imagination to CPR.

At the beginning of all experience we are given appearances. When they are combined with consciousness, perception arises. Since every appearance carries a manifold and since various perceptions occur in our minds as separately, they are not demanded to be gathered in one. Therefore, in us exists a faculty for synthesizing this manifold. This faculty is called imagination by Kant. When immediately directed upon perceptions it is called apprehension (CPR A120). This apprehension is not able to produce an image or to connect the impressions. These are accomplished by the reproductive faculty of imagination which forms the whole series of perceptions and it is in an empirical character. However, this whole should conform to a rule in order to give rise to the knowledge. This is supplied by the association of representations (CPR A121). As for the productive imagination we know that since the imagination is a faculty of *a priori* synthesis, it is productive. In both cases the synthesis of imagination has its power to connect the manifold only as it appears.

Kant also mentions about the transcendental function of imagination and a pure kind of imagination. The former indicates the relation of the faculty of the sensibility and the understanding; those which are defined by Kant as the two extremes. The transcendental function of the imagination enables subject to turn appearances into

knowledge by connecting the two. We see this function in recognition, reproduction, association and apprehension (CPR A125). Without this transcendental function of the imagination a unitary experience made up of concepts of objects would not be possible. Imagination by the transcendental synthesis also conditions the very possibility of all experience, since any experience requires the reproduction of appearances (CPR A101). As for the pure imagination Kant writes that it is the condition of all *a priori* knowledge, thus a fundamental faculty of human soul. This is because a pure apperception (the unchanging and enduring 'I') is immediately added to it in order to relate all the representations so as to be conscious of them (CPR A123).

In CJ, imagination occurs as the faculty which is responsible of the representation of the object beautiful, by referring to the subject and its feeling of pleasure and displeasure (CJ 203). We are also introduced with imagination's the *free conformity to law* of imagination in the third critique. Kant writes that if we think imagination as free in judgement of taste, then this means that it is not reproductive but productive and originates "arbitrary forms of possible intuitions" (CJ 240). It is not compelled to conform to a law but "it is only a conformity to law without a law and a subjective harmonizing of the imagination and understanding without an objective" (CJ 241). Here the law mentioned is the law of understanding and we are warned that imagination is not absolutely free or is not left to itself.<sup>23</sup>

Up to the section of genius, imagination is given as the faculty of recalling various representations as the faculty of intuition and connection of the manifold of intuitions

(CJ 143), thus its functions do not exceed the ones given in the CPR. Although in the latter case its freedom is mentioned as consisting in its operating without a concept. In this case imagination in its freedom accords with the latter in its conformity to law. However, as one of the faculties consisting of the genius it is defined as a productive faculty of cognition and as so being a powerful agent for creating a second nature by means of the given by actual nature (CJ 314). It is claimed to remodel experience by means of both laws based on analogy and the principle that have their seat in reason. This function of the imagination is responsible of our feeling freedom from the law of association that belongs to the *empirical employment* of the imagination. Thus, we get our material from nature in accordance with this law but we make it into something else that exceeds nature (CJ 314).<sup>24</sup>

Kant names *ideas* the representations resulted from this function of imagination. He gives the reason for giving this name as their attempt to reach something beyond the refinements of experience and thus their looking for approaching to a presentation of rational concepts or intellectual ideas in order to attain a similar kind of objective reality for these concepts (CJ 314). These objective realities implied to give a body to those aesthetic ideas in order for them to claim existence in reciprocal relation of the subject to the other subjects.

Since the issue of the experience of the beautiful is sensation, we deal with the empirical side of imagination that serves for sensibility in order to have the raw data

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<sup>23</sup> Addingly, this consisting with the free conformity to law of the understanding is called finality apart from end.

<sup>24</sup> This empirical employment of imagination implies the faculty of intuition and connection of the manifold of intuitions (CJ 143). Here we have two senses of freedom. The last one seems for freer than the one mentioned above.

as a manifold or as associated appearances. Its second function is transcendental and it enables the subject to turn these associated appearances taken from sensibility into Knowledge. Thus, it serves for the faculty of understanding. However, Kant does not seem to imply these two functions of imagination, which occur in CJ. He mentions imagination only as the faculty of *a priori* intuitions (CJ 190). In this case it seems that we are not concerned with empirical function, or with transcendental function, since the pleasure that arises is independent of any concept. However, the question is how and which intuitions *a priori* imagination can relate to the form of the object. Now we have the two faculties in reflective judgement one of which is the faculty of concepts while the other is the faculty of intuitions *a priori*. When we reflect merely on the form of the object, *a free play* takes place between the two, and as a result, a feeling of pleasure arises.

- (1) The form (of an object) is what is passed from *a priori* intuitions; space and time,
- (2) In reflective judgement imagination reflects upon the form,
- (3) And it is accorded with understanding.

In my opinion the form is subjected to the recalled registers of imagination by its free act. Since these registers are not free of understanding as knowledge of objects as belonging to the past experiences, then accordance can be explained as the imagination's free play not with understanding but with past registers that had been given by understanding, since imagination has a power to recall regardless of the time passed (CJ 234). This can also be proved by the very fact that understanding is determinant and is not given in CPR as even slightly free. Now if this view was acceptable then the question that would arise is whether the CJ can still be regarded

as a bridge. The answer would be positive, I think. It is because Kant did not need to place understanding as the side of a notion of free play in order to combine two distinct faculties of human cognition, namely understanding and reason. Kant could give a sign of the power of imagination to create new representations among the ones given by understanding and registered in memory. By means of such a claim imagination would still be dependent on understanding as Kant claimed and its being a “powerful agent for creating” or its producing a “second nature” would be confirmed in the CPR. Thus, most critics would not regard its “remodelling experience following the principles seated in reason” as *ad hoc*. However, Kant does not accept that the pleasure is related to the “mere apprehension (*apprehensio*) of the form of an object in intuition, apart from any reference it may have to a concept for the purpose of a definite cognition" (CJ 189). It is because Kant claims that if it is so then the representation refers to subject and not to the object and it is this which makes it difficult to give an account of subjective validity.

According to the section 31 of the *Critique of Judgement* we see that imagination can behave independently of the understanding’s concepts and this latter function of it belongs to the realm of reason which like imagination looks beyond the experience. Indeed it is not surprising to confront with imagination in the land of reason, since with its ideas Reason should somehow uses imagination simply in establishing the ideas such as the world which is a totality but not a single intuitive object. In the case of the aesthetic ideas, Kant claims that they lack bodies, thus, the objective reality is sought by ideas to give existence to these aesthetic ideas. This attempt to give existence to the aesthetic ideas refers to the understanding (as one of the sides of the free play which culminates in a feeling of pleasure and finally in the aesthetic

judgement) in the sense that the notion of existence needs a support of cognition in order to have an objective reality, if this is acceptable then the position of understanding as one side of the free play is affirmed: Kant wrote the third critique in order to link the two distinct realms, namely the understanding and the reason.

### **3. 6. On Sublime**

In this section I want to examine the mode of the subject in the moment of the sublime. From the side of the imagination sublime moment can be defined as a shortcut caused by being overloaded. In this moment imagination is so compelled to go beyond the bounds of the sensibility in order for itself to present the infinity that it is paralyzed. The subject is helpless and overwhelmed by nature, thus feels a negative pleasure. Kant defines this pleasure as "sterner stuff, more like respect, and deserves the name of "negative" pleasure (CJ 265). This respect seems as a result of the feeling of being overwhelmed by nature, since the subject goes through a fearful experience. This feeling is caused by some greatness compared to which everything else is small. The faculty of imagination finds itself inadequate to represent the magnitude or might of this greatness since it fails to measure it by the help of any past registers or representations. It is crucial to differentiate this moment (of the sublime) from an ordinary confusion of this cognitive faculty. In this case imagination is compelled by reason to present the idea of infinity which is evoked by a piece of nature. Thus, by including reason into the sublime moment, Kant places the sublime to a higher position than a simple cognition of the mind. In this moment reason interferes with the employment of imagination. Kant writes:

The proper mental mood for a feeling of the sublime postulates the mind's susceptibility for ideas, since it is precisely in the failure of nature to attain to these-and

consequently only under presupposition of this susceptibility and of the straining of the imagination to use the nature as a schema for ideas—that there is something forbidding to sensibility, but which, for all that, has an attraction for us, arising from the fact of its being a dominion which reason exercises over sensibility with a view to extending it to the requirements of its own realm (the practical) and letting it look out beyond itself into the infinite, which for it is an abyss (CJ 115).

Thus, the aesthetic judgement upon the sublime refers to the exercise of imagination as a means of reason. Now the best thing is to analyse the moment of the sublime in detail, since it promises more than a notion of a simple confusion.

To begin with, the feeling of the sublime is evoked by a piece of nature which cannot be represented in a proper sense because of its magnitude. This causes a shortcut in the faculty of imagination which is responsible from its representation. However, the question is: What kind of an object is not representable in Kantian system? Kant would answer by claiming that there cannot be such an object which is an object of an empirical experience and cannot be represented. Kant would claim this because the possibility of such a case would mean not having a phenomenon or an appearance of the thing that *appears* which is out of question for Kant. However, in the sublime moment we face such an object which evokes the idea of infinity with its magnitude or might by breaking the bound of the sensibility. In this case the bound of sensibility is transcended by imagination's failure to cognize the bounds of the object in order to represent it as a totality or in other words in order to make it a proper phenomenon. Kant writes that:

[I]magination can never reach beyond the sensible world but 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 (CJ 127).

Thus, reason interferes with the retarded cognition and compels imagination to have an idea of the infinity which according to Kant can be thought without contradiction. Parallel to the idea of infinity the sublime provokes a representation of *limitlessness* (CJ 91). Thus, the sublime, as stated in above sections, does not depend on a sensuous form. This implies that it is not a cognitive experience nor an aesthetic estimate. The reason is that in the case of an aesthetic estimate for instance in the experience of the beautiful, we know that there is a *free play* between the faculties of the imagination and the understanding upon the form of an object. This *free play* culminates in an aesthetic judgement which announces that the object as beautiful. However, in the case of the sublime when the object is announced to be the sublime, what is meant is its evoking the feeling of the sublime in the subject. In other words, we name objects as beautiful in its full meaning, since we relate at least to their form, but this is not the case with the sublime. Obviously, Kant is not against calling an object as sublime but this seems for the sake of nothing but convenience.

In the case of the beautiful as a result of an aesthetic estimate we have a presentation of an indeterminate concept of the understanding whereas in the sublime we have that of an indeterminate conclusion of reason (CJ 91).

In its being a conclusion of the faculty of reason which looks for the representation of totality, the sublime seems to be more than an aesthetic estimate. Moreover, we know that in the moment of the sublime imagination fails in the aesthetic estimation of the magnitude. The implications of this claim will be discussed later. For now I want to examine the claim which suggests that the sublime object is a thing in itself or a nature in itself. This claim is refused by Kant, however he writes:

[t]he objects called sublime trigger a power of resistance which supply us courage to compare ourselves by the omnipotence of nature (CJ 124),

This makes the above claim reasonable. First of all, it seems that Kant differentiates nature from the subject which is usually not the case within Kantian system, since nature is represented as a totality of the physical laws. This means that it is an idea but not a thing-in-itself to which an intuition corresponds, thus it is a product of our cognitive faculty but not a determined external intuition. Then what does it mean to have omnipotence for nature, since it is an idea? In this sense the nature in the sublime moment seems to be regarded as thing-in-itself even if this claim is refuted by Kant by reminding the fact that imagination cannot lay hold of that which is beyond the sensible world (CJ 127). However, we should notice that in the sublime moment imagination fails in the aesthetic estimate of the magnitude of the object appearing, so the subject is regarded to face a thing that cannot be represented in either a cognitive or an aesthetic representation. Kant attributes this kind of an experience to a supersensible faculty the employment of which is triggered by the idea of infinity the representation of which cannot be achieved by imagination. What I tried to do by analysing this claim is to go over the fundamental possibility upon the object called sublime. Although I do not agree with the claim that the object of the sublime is a thing-in-itself, still thinking that Kant fails to clear this point. His subject's resisting to that object or the interference of reason<sup>25</sup> leads one to think that the object confronted is a thing-in-itself.

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<sup>25</sup> When its direct relation to the things-in-themselves in free will is considered, reason's interference as compelling imagination for representing the greatness in the experience of sublime, leads to the claim above.

I do not think that the object or the piece of nature in the sublime moment is a thing-in-itself. Moreover, I do not think that this object has dominion over us since it is able to evoke the feeling of the sublime. It is because in the case of an ocean which is called sublime, we sure know that it is finite (otherwise it would be a total delusion), thus its magnitude reminds us the idea of infinity. However, we are also aware that we have boundaries for sensibility since our cognitive faculties have their own limits. This is clearly stated by Kant when he talks about the hierarchy between the three major faculties, respectively sensibility, understanding and reason. Thus, as the conclusion of this section I claim that what makes the moment of sublime crucial is not the greatness we face or the feeling of being overwhelmed.

Relying on this conclusion I want to analyse the negative pleasure felt in the moment of the sublime. Kant writes that the feeling of sublime is something more like respect but it is also fearful and stirring. This feeling is caused by the conflict between the faculty of imagination and reason about the representation of the idea of infinity. Its being negative may be interpreted as referring to the failure of the imagination, however, the pleasure seems to be thrilled by the magnitude or the might of the piece of nature confronted. This notion of negative pleasure indicates that the experience of sublime is in no way peaceful. I suggest that this negative pleasure is a break point in the experience of sublime. It indicates a pleasure coupled with a feeling of failure, or that of being transcended. However, in my opinion Kant would accept that this negative pleasure is such a feeling that it suggests somehow an addiction<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> The addictive character comes from empowering of the subject in the moment of sublime when he is able to grasp that he is in safe and can handle this greatness.

With respect to the conflict between the imagination and reason, again one should be reminded that it does not follow from a failure of imagination in its responsibilities but from the nature of imagination which cannot 'lay hold beyond the sensible world' (CJ 124). When the magnitude of an object transcends the capability of imagination, reason compels it to go further while imagination announces its incapability of representing an idea of infinity since it is impossible to reach an intuition of a totality. This notion of conflict and failure of imagination can be interpreted as a corruption or collapse of the subject. In other words, it cannot be regarded as the moment in which subject discovers a greatness over which no subject can rule, and may be shaking. The subject confronts something whose sensible representation is possible and whose ideal representation cannot be handled. This kind of experience is clearly of a soul-stirring kind. However, interpreting this moment as destructive in the sense of discovering the impossibility of being a subject does not seem to be the only possibility.

We know that Kant grounds the moment of sublime on failure of the imagination which is successful in the experience of the beautiful in accordance with the understanding. In the latter case imagination is one of the sides of a free play and has its freedom to conform to a law without a law. However, in the case of sublime imagination seems to be deprived of all its power and freedom, since it fails to represent and it is paralyzed in front of the greatness or the power of a piece of nature. Thus, in the case of sublime the subject feels himself beaten by the greatness of nature. Not surprisingly, in such a case the Kantian subject feels disappointed by living through a moment of inability. It seems that the imagination strives towards *ad infinitum* but is never able to grasp the absolute totality the reason is looking for. In

such a moment imagination is compelled to go beyond the service of sensibility, but all it is faced with is the limitation of sensibility and a feeling of inadequacy. Kant writes that:

The feeling of unattainability of the idea by means of imagination, is itself a presentation of the subjective finality of our mind in the employment of the imagination in the interests of the mind's supersensible province, and compels us subjectively to think nature itself in its totality as a presentation of something supersensible, without being able to effectuate this presentation objectively (CJ 119).

According to the paragraph above we have a supersensible faculty whose existence has been celebrated in other sections of the sublime. For instance, Kant writes that:

The sublime consists merely in the *relation* exhibited by the estimate of the serviceability of the sensible in the representation of nature for a possible supersensible employment (CJ 118).

This faculty enables us to think nature-in-itself, not in an objective but subjective manner, as a totality. In other words, nature in its totality can only be presented as supersensible. The question that arises immediately is why Kant does not define nature as an idea of reason but as supersensible. All of the ideas of reason are actually supersensible or transcendental like world or God. It is quite obvious that Kant differentiates the moment of the sublime even from the employment of reason or its ideas. He equates the feeling of failure with the presentation of the subjective finality of our mind. When the subjective finality is at work, a feeling of intention in failure should be considered seriously.

Therefore, I suggest that we make the first reading a double reading of the sublime. The first reading admits the view that the sublime moment is a fatal stroke for the subject. The failure or inadequacy of imagination is shaking for Kantian subject who is a producer and the governor of his own world as that of appearances. However I also suggest a second reading: This moment of inadequacy leads to the moment of awareness in which the subject is able to face his capability. This moment is sharply different than *knowing* the faculties of mind or their functions. This moment presents an internal look into the subjectivity, which is not conditional, of the subject. The look mentioned is not an intellectual vision which enables one to go beyond himself or take an external reference point to vision all whatsoever. It is neither to present the cognitive faculties as a totality like in the case of ideas of reason. It is a moment of the subject's looking itself, its discovering the condition of the possibility of existence of the faculties of the mind. It is facing the pure or the transcendental condition of all possible experience. If one insists on defining this occurrence as an experience, then it should be known that no content could be suggested for such an experience. In it there cannot be any subject or object as distinctive. This moment is a moment of ceasing to be a subject in the proper sense, since the subject sees no use of the cognitive faculties which produces appearances or phenomena. This is the moment in which the bounds of sensibility are broken by the failure of imagination in presenting the idea of infinity. It is sure that the idea of infinity cannot be fully responsible for this soul-stirring moment. The subject of Kantian system should have met the delusions or inability of the faculties of both sensibility and imagination. Thus, the failure of imagination can be expected to be shocking but not to have a fatal effect for the subject. Besides, the unavoidable tendency of Kantian subject which is looking beyond the sensibility, implied from the very beginning the

impossibility of this opportunity. Thus, even the notion of the supersensible faculty as the subjective finality of the subject is nothing new and does not correspond to the unique experience of the sublime<sup>27</sup>.

Now I suggest that the moment of sublime should have carried further by Kant who definitely seemed to have felt the significance of the moment of the sublime but at the same time did not want to place the sublime outside of the *Critique of Judgement*. The second reading I mentioned above sees the moment of the sublime and the inadequacy grounding it as an opportunity to face the condition of all possible experience. Now we know that this condition of all possible experience corresponds to the transcendental I in the Kantian philosophy. Claiming that the moment of the sublime supplies the subject confronting this condition, namely the transcendental I, is not a result of being strictly attached to Kantian discourse. However, I believe that Kantian sublime is much more than being simply an aesthetic estimate. Now I suggest that the moment of the sublime might not be merely the moment in which the subject is collapsed or faced the fact of impossibility of constructing himself as a subject. The feeling of being overwhelmed by something external and ungraspable does not necessarily make the subject fall apart. The feeling of inadequacy involves a moment of failure but this moment of failure is at the same time the fundamental condition of experiencing the condition of all experience which is the subject's being a subject. In Kantian philosophy the transcendental condition of all possible experience is named the *transcendental I*. Now my view about the moment of sublime and its implications can be regarded as suggesting that the transcendental I as this condition. I am not in an attempt of doing so for the sake of being attached to

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<sup>27</sup> In the moment of sublime the moral subject seems to be at work. However, I suggest that it is the

Kantian philosophy, however such an interpretation seems arguable. I claim that the inadequacy which evokes the feeling of the sublime is the keystone of facing the primary condition of human experience. In the moment of the sublime the bounds of sensibility is beaten, then the subject faces this primary condition. We know that the faculty of cognition are out of work in this moment, so when I talk about a condition and its being experienced in the moment of sublime, it is obvious that by this condition nothing like space or time is meant. In the case of space and time one can argue about their subjective or objective existence, however, the condition suggested here is also the conditions of space and time. Therefore, it can be called as the original principle or the condition when compared to all the other conditions whatsoever. Then in this sense the notion of the transcendental I seems to entail this sense of being the original principle of all experience.

In the moment of the sublime the failure of getting a phenomenon from the experience of the object that evokes the feeling of the sublime may be read as subject's facing his own excess, his own border-without externalizing himself. In this moment the experience does not have a proper object, since the subject does not externalize himself. Thus, facing his own subjectivity (in the condition of all possibility) does not mean to view or experience all cognitive faculties and all elements whatsoever in a totality. The content of the experience (in the sublime moment) cannot be defined but only addressed.

Therefore, what I suggest as the "experiencing" the "transcendental I" as the condition of all subjectivity does not claim any empirical content for the moment

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transcendental self not the moral subject.

questioned. Moreover, this “experience” is not an ordinary kind. In other words this “experience” is not a cognitive or an aesthetic kind. This moment is the moment of revelation of the fundamental condition of all possible experience. Therefore, the name transcendental I is nothing but a convenience. It does not refer to an entity or a concept. It stands for an assumption resulted from the structure of the Kantian system which separates the subject from object and postulates the subject as the constructor of its own object as the object of experience.

Now, it seems that what is claimed for the moment of the sublime in the above section is a kind of experience which does not address an object or which does not have a content. This nature of the sublime suggests a glance of the self into himself. This look is of an internal kind. The subject passes through his own possibility to become a subject. This moment can be grasped by neither cognition nor aesthetic estimation in reflection. Both of these modes of thinking have their own object to act upon. However, in the moment of falling into his own subjective grounds, the subject does not have his object as the object of this moment. This moment is a moment in which the subject is deprived of all means of the mind.

At this point one may ask how such a moment is not destructive since the subject is well aware that the faculties are not able to operate or that they fail to conceive or estimate the sublime object. However, what I suggest is not a replacement of this idea with the notion of a renewal of the subject. On the contrary, I believe that this failure which disappoints the subject is the condition of subject’s facing his own subjectivity. Since the failure occurred in the aesthetic estimate of the magnitude of the sublime object, it seems that this special kind of failure, which should be

distinguished from any kind of ordinary confusion of the mind, is the condition of facing the core of the subjectivity in Kant. However, when this moment is read as facing the transcendental I as a condition, one should be aware of the problem that arises. In such a case we would have been understood to claim the existence of a condition of all conditions that is the transcendental I. For the sake of the moment it may be useful to keep this possibility in mind.

Back to the moment of awareness of himself as the producer of his world. This is a feeling like being a stranger in one's own territory. Therefore, this moment produces a negative pleasure. However, this is at the same time the moment of the awareness of power and the capacity of being the governor of the whole world of the subject. The subject passes through this possibility which he is always aware as a fact. Living through this fact is much more thrilling than any kind of experience. Thus, the subject is smashed by this capacity to rule. When the subject externalizes that moment the omnipotence of the subject has been celebrated, since he becomes conscious that up to that unique moment he was the center and the constructor of the world of appearances which is actually the only world for him. Thus, even in the moment of sublime the subject does not go beyond the bounds of sensibility but extends its consciousness to the very limits.

Now such a moment cannot be caused simply and absolutely by a piece of nature. What leads the subject to his own limit is not a thing-in-itself or a piece of nature but the effect of an appearance which challenges the measures of imagination, since Kant carefully warns us that the sublime is not in the object but in our mind (CJ 114).

The last part of my claim suggests that this moment of facing the very condition of the subject is an opportunity that implies an intention of the subject. It is a moment of pain coupled and ended with the satisfaction of the subject by confirming once again that he is the god of his world. It is an ironic mood of the subject in which he greets the thing that *appears* with fear and with Kant's words when we feel safe, then we resist to the omnipotence of nature. The intention mentioned above may be seen as the wish of the reason, which always has the tendency of going beyond all the experience.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As my last words I would like to make an overview of the issues that I deal in the CJ. What causes the feeling of pleasure or displeasure is not the matter or content of the object but the *form* of the object.

Necdet Bozkurt writes that the aesthetic idea is not one of ideas of reason such as “god”, “spirit”, “world” or “necessity” because it cannot be expressed as such by the language. It is not a concept of reason but the representation of imagination. It resembles the ideas of reason in the sense that they both have an intention or a tendency for totality which means that they both intend to go beyond the experience. Ideas of Aesthetic do not have concepts which express them as such, just like ideas of reason do not have a sensation or intuition that would correspond to them (Sanat ve Estetik Kuramlar127).

Bozkurt continues by stating that from a critical point of view Kant’s method in *Critique of Judgement* which depends upon *a priori* givens, does not satisfy those who want their aesthetics to be more psychological and more empirical, since it remains quite transcendental (CJ 130).

This critique indicates a neglected possibility of subjective universality because the subjective universality of an aesthetic judgement is opposed by most of the critics such as Charlie Broad and Paul Crowther since the question of the variety of tastes is asked by this above mentioned followers. Kantian aesthetics should be sought for the

pure possibility of subjective universality. This means that Kant's difficulty is not claiming a subjective universality for aesthetic judgements and failing to explain it. This difficulty arose when one demanded him to theorize the *free play* which takes place between imagination and understanding. Kant's failure seems not to emphasize or analyze the ideas of imagination which will enable him to explain the possibility of diversity of subjects having the same structure of mind. He should have differentiated between sensation and understanding or perceiving and conceiving in order to construct a theory of aesthetics. According to Kant, the subjective means belonging to the subject who shares the same structure with all human kind. Moreover, something subjective can be at the same time universal in Kantian system when it depends upon the sensation such as the experience of beautiful in which we have a relation of a pre-conceptual kind with the *form* of the object. This means that in the Kantian sense of the word we have no problem with subjective universality.

The problem arising is that Kantian system tries to explain or theorize or conceptualize even the land of freedom to the extent that it is let by language. Thus, up to the third critique, we seem to have a smooth theory but in the *Critique of Judgement*, we confront with a notion of *free play* which takes place between understanding and imagination. Most of the critics claim that Kant cannot give an explanation for this *free play*. It is obvious that no ultimate reason or rule can be given in order to explain the variety of tastes. Even Kant knew that, thus the notion of free play is not an *ad hoc* explanation. This criticism implies that Kant up to the *Critique of Judgement* did not realize that we do not have the same delight or taste. It does not seem reasonable. However, it seems that Kant fails to open a space for subject, since he writes very little, most of which remain too transcendental, on the

notion of the subject. It seems that we do not have a ground- for the endless possibilities of tastes- as subject, even though Kant writes on the reflective character of reason. It is because Kant does not push our knowledge of subject to its limit like he does for any other notion such as things-in themselves or ideas of reason. In my opinion Kantian system has a space for the aesthetics in the sense that it has ideas of reason and ideas of imagination both of which tend to go beyond the given experience. With the notion of reflective judgement and the addition of a theory of memory Kantian subject would be able to give the account for the diversity of taste.

With respect to the sublime, I think Kant should have focused on its implications *in* the subject. We know that Kant relates aesthetic judgement to understanding whereas for sublime he announces a supersensible faculty which is in charge of the representation of the idea of infinity. It is noteworthy that this supersensible faculty is not the reason itself. The feeling of this faculty evoked by the idea of infinity, in the representation of which imagination fails. The celebration of this supersensible faculty seems insufficient for its legitimization since Kant does not write much about it.

Another important point is actually indicated by Paul Crowther who writes:

...Kant links sublimity and morality rather too closely. In effect, he reduces the sublime to a kind of indirect moral experience (Kantian Sublime 166).

Kant gives this relation of moral ideas to the sublime in the modality of sublime and claims that the sublime is terrifying for the man whose moral ideas are not developed. He continues by stating that only the man who has no feeling can be

regardless of the sublime (CJ 265). Also Francis Coleman is another scholar who writes that the finality of the sublime is grounded in our being aware of the fact that we belong to the world of moral ends (CJ 106).

For me, the application to the morality should be read as addressing Kant's wish to imply the deep relation of the moment of the sublime and the moral subject. I believe that by attributing a great importance to the development of the moral ideas in the moment of the sublime Kant tried to imply this non-verbal relation.<sup>28</sup> I claimed that the subjectivity which is faced in the moment of sublime is the transcendental self as the original condition of all subjectivity in Kant. He seems to give the subject of the sublime as the moral subject and claims the moment of sublime as the final end of the subject's being a moral subject. However, I tried to justify that the sublime, which arises from the conflict of imagination and reason, leads subject to face his original subjectivity. I also claimed that unlike the beautiful the subjective universality of sublime does not depend on *sensus communis*. The moment is subjective in the sense of being personal and it is universal since it leads one to face the original condition of all subjectivity (transcendental I) which is necessarily universal. Thus, I claim that the universality of the sublime moment does not come from its relation to the moral character of the subject as having his moral destination but its leading to face this original condition in question.

I am well aware the fact one can read my claim as I announce the subject of the moment of sublime as the transcendental subject instead of the moral subject. However, this would be wrong since I do not claim that the moment of the sublime is

the moment of one's experiencing the transcendental I. The usage of the word "experience" should not be taken in its ordinary meaning in Kantian philosophy. In other words, the experience in question does not indicate a cognitive event. I used that word as a convenience. Thus, anyone interested in this study should be aware of the fact that the transcendental I of Kant is not a subject in proper sense but a condition. Now I cannot be suggesting an experience of a condition. What I argue for the moment of the sublime is the awareness of the subject's pure<sup>29</sup> possibility of being a subject. I think facing the original condition of all the possible experience cannot be represented in a cognitive or even in an aesthetic way. This "experience" does not have a content to be represented. It cannot be indicated or universally postulated but it can merely be addressed. Thus, the universal character of the moment of sublime comes from the very principal of being a subject.

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<sup>28</sup> Actually I do not know whether Kant was aware of the implications of the sublime but the close connection to the moral ideas seems to provide the ground that I need for my own claim.

<sup>29</sup> It is pure because an empirical possibility of being a subject would mean to be an empirical self.

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