

**AN INQUIRY INTO THE DISPUTABLE POSITION OF IMAGINATION  
IN KANT'S PHILOSOPHY**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
OF  
THE MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY**

**BY  
MÜGE ATALA**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ART  
IN  
THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

**JANUARY 2012**

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences.

---

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık  
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

---

Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam  
Head of Department

This is to certify that I have read this thesis and that in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

---

Asst. Prof. Dr. Elif Çırakman  
Supervisor

**Examining Committee Members:**

Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam (METU, PHIL) \_\_\_\_\_

Asst. Prof. Dr. Elif Çırakman (METU, PHIL) \_\_\_\_\_

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çetin Türkyılmaz (H.Ü., PHIL) \_\_\_\_\_

**I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.**

Name, Last name : Müge ATALA

Signature :

## ABSTRACT

### AN INQUIRY INTO THE DISPUTABLE POSITION OF IMAGINATION IN KANT'S PHILOSOPHY

Atala, Müge

M.S., Department of Philosophy

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Elif Çırakman

January 2012, 115 pages

My thesis aims to delve into Immanuel Kant's formulation of the faculty of imagination in his *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. In relation to the *First Critique*, it specifically concerns the relation of the "mysterious" function of imagination to the object and its representation as one of the fundamental steps of the emergence or production of theoretical knowledge. As regards the *Third Critique*, it scrutinizes the relation of imagination to reflective, as opposed to determinative, judgment and seeks to specify its role in aesthetic appreciation and artistic creativity. The thesis first provides us with a background to Kant's philosophy, delineating the specific issues at hand and briefly introducing important Kantian fundamentals, along with imagination, by making use of secondary literature. It then views imagination as has been theorized throughout the history of philosophy up until the age of Enlightenment and examines Kant's two *Critiques* with a focus on imagination. Thirdly, it evaluates the aspects of Kantian imagination through the works of scholars whose differing interpretations are compared and disputed. Taking mainly the discussions of the previous chapter into account, the conclusion chapter constitutes my own interpretation of the disputes and possible solutions related to the imagination within the broader frame of Kantian philosophy.

**Keywords:** Kant, imagination, theoretical knowledge, aesthetic judgment, reason

## ÖZ

### KANT'IN FELSEFESİNDE İMGELEMİN TARTIŞMALI KONUMUNA YÖNELİK BİR İNCELEME

Atala, Müge

Yüksek Lisans, Felsefe Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yar. Doç. Dr. Elif Çırakman

Ocak 2012, 115 sayfa

Tezim, *Saf Aklın Eleştirisi* ve *Yargı Gücünün Eleştirisi* adlı yapıtlarında Immanuel Kant'ın imgelem yetisini formüle edişini araştırma konusu olarak belirlemiştir. *Saf Aklın Eleştirisi* bağlamında, teorik bilginin üretiminin ortaya çıkmasında temel adımlardan biri olarak imgelemin “gizemli” fonksiyonunun, nesneye ve nesnenin tasarımına ilişkisini ele alır. *Yargı Gücünün Eleştirisi* bağlamındaysa, imgelemin, belirleyici yargıya karşıt olarak düşünümsel yargıyla ilişkisini irdeler ve imgelemin rolünü estetik takdir ve sanatsal yaratıcılık anlamında belirlemeye çalışır. Tez, öncelikle bize Kant'ın felsefesinin bir arka planını sunar; bunu yaparken de belirli konuları niteler ve ikincil literatürü kullanarak imgelemlerle birlikte Kant'ın önemli temellerini takdim eder. Sonrasında, Aydınlanma Çağı'na kadar felsefe tarihinde kuramsallaştığı haliyle imgeleme bakar ve Kant'ın iki eleştirisini imgelem odaklı olmak üzere inceler. Üçüncü olarak Kant'ta imgelemin yönlerini, değişen yorumları kıyaslanıp karşılaştırılan uzmanların yapıtları vasıtasıyla değerlendirir. Bir önceki bölümde yer alan tartışmaları dikkate alan sonuç bölümü ise, Kant felsefesinin daha geniş çerçevesinde imgelemlerle ilgili uyumsuzluklar ve olası çözümlere yönelik kendi yorumlarımdan oluşur.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Kant, imgelem, teorik bilgi, estetik yargı, akıl

*To family and friends*

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

First and foremost I would like to thank my advisor, Elif ırakman, for her meticulous reading of my thesis and her prompt feedbacks, without which I would not be able to come up with the work you are holding in your hands or viewing online. Ahmet İnam from METU and etin Turkyılmaz from Hacettepe University were patient enough with going through and reflecting on my thesis – my thanks to both of them.

Özlem Ünlü, Barış Yıldırım, Burcu Başaran and Onur Aktaş are some of my friends from METU who have been very supportive of me during the whole process in many ways. Their sole presence made many things much smoother for me. Most important, they assisted me in laughing at life, which is not mere means but the whole end for me.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family for being so understanding and helpful to me.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ .....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	vii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY .....	7
2.1. Kant’s Time: The Age of Enlightenment .....	7
2.2. Kant’s Problem: Impasses of Enlightenment .....	9
<b>2.3.</b> Kant’s Concern: Possibility of Objective Knowledge .....	14
2.4. Kant’s Solution: Possibility of Synthetic <i>A Priori</i> Knowledge .....	19
2.5. Kant’s Philosophy: Transcendental Idealism .....	23
2.6. Kant’s “Imagination”: From Intuiting to Understanding .....	27
3. THE ROLE OF IMAGINATION IN KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY .....	29
3.1. Imagination: Brief Historical Background .....	29
3.1.1. Imagination until Kant .....	29
3.1.2. Kant’s Imagination .....	36
3.2. Imagination in the <i>First Critique</i> .....	37
3.2.1. Imagination: An Introduction .....	38
3.2.2. Imagination: Productive and Reproductive .....	40
3.2.3. Imagination: Empirical and Transcendental .....	43
3.2.4. Imagination and Transcendental Schemata .....	46
3.2.5. Schematism and Time .....	49
3.3. Imagination in the <i>Third Critique</i> .....	51
3.3.1. The Power of Judgment .....	51
3.3.2. Imagination and the Beautiful .....	53
3.3.3. Imagination and the Sublime .....	58
3.3.4. The Significance of Imagination in the Transcendental Deduction of the <i>Third Critique</i> .....	62
3.3.5. Creative Imagination .....	63

4. RE-THINKING IMAGINATION: FRAMING THE DISPUTES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS .....	67
4.1. The Nature of Imagination in the <i>First Critique</i> .....	68
4.1.1. Imagination and Synthesis .....	68
4.1.2. Imagination and Schematism .....	82
4.2. Imagination and Judgment .....	88
4.2.1. Judgment: Determinative and Reflexive .....	89
4.2.2. The Role of Imagination in Aesthetic Judgment .....	97
4.3. Imagination's Input in Kant's Transcendental Philosophy .....	103
5. CONCLUSION.....	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	113
APPENDIX.....	115

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

My thesis aims to delve into Immanuel Kant's formulation of the faculty of imagination in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, particularly its intermediary function between the two faculties, namely, sensibility and understanding, and his *Critique of the Power of Judgment* to the extent that it sheds light to the disputes related to the subject at hand. In relation to the *First Critique*, it specifically concerns the relation of the "mysterious" function of imagination to the object and its representation as one of the fundamental steps of the emergence or production of theoretical knowledge. Crudely put, the motivating question could be formulated as follows: What aspect of and how does imagination govern the representation of a theoretically possible object? As regards the *Third Critique*, it scrutinizes the relation of imagination to reflective, as opposed to determinative, judgment and seeks to specify its role in aesthetic appreciation and artistic creativity. How does imagination assist in the formation of reflective judgment, and what consequences does its involvement entail with respect to the Kantian philosophy as a whole? Asking the aforementioned questions, my thesis then can be said to constitute an attempt to draw, or perhaps redraw, the "limits and scope" of imagination as regards the attainment of theoretical knowledge and the exhibition of aesthetic appreciation and artistic creativity. This way, I am hoping to shed more light into the workings and significance of Kantian philosophy on the whole.

Imagination plays a pivotal role throughout the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Judgment* in differing ways. In the *First Critique*, imagination comes to the fore as a controversial capacity of the human mind in its effort to cognize the workings of the natural world. Studying its function illuminates that of understanding, the capacity that constitutes the main faculty of the *First Critique*, to a considerable extent. It thus gives important clues regarding Kant's articulation of the possibility of knowledge while at the same time pointing at the possible areas of dispute that this articulation entails. In the *Third Critique*, imagination appears as a major component of aesthetic judgment, which is one of the two types of reflective judgment, along with understanding and reason. Examining imagination in this context not only reveals more about the various functions of the understanding in particular; it also contributes to a better grasp of the difference between determinative and reflective judgments and the necessity of this differentiation within the Kantian system. For these reasons, scrutinizing the role of imagination in these two *Critiques* is highly helpful in terms of gaining insight into the Kantian philosophy on the whole.

In light of these considerations, my thesis comprises three chapters plus a conclusive chapter besides the introduction. The second chapter examines Kant's point of departure; i.e., what motivated Kant to devise a philosophical system, and what were the hardships to which he tried to come up with solutions? It provides us with a background to Kant's philosophy, delineating the specific issues at hand and briefly introducing important Kantian fundamentals, along with imagination, mainly by making use of secondary literature. All major philosophical doctrines comprise a response to the preceding ones, and Kant's philosophy is not an exception. Hume's argument pertaining to the baselessness of the so-termed necessary connection

between seemingly connected events in nature is apparently *the* doctrine that has triggered Kant to come up with a strong, subsistent system; however, the issue at hand is not restricted to an answer to Humean skepticism. In an age when human reasoning has revealed itself to be a capability that can come to terms with the workings of the nature and appropriate them for its own benefit, there are a number of arguments which, being related to mind and nature, nevertheless harbour problems. These arguments either clash with one another while seeming credible by themselves or contain contradictions within themselves. Scholars such as W.T. Jones, Karl Ameriks, and Frederick Beiser expound these predominant debates that furnish the Enlightenment thinking and inform Kant's concerns to a considerable extent. Along with Hume's skeptical approach, these debates include the conflict between the rationalists and the empiricists regarding the link between the subject and the object; between criticism and explanation as two capabilities that the Enlightenment project, so to speak, simultaneously brings forth; and between the determinist stance of Newton regarding the physical world on the one hand and the rather indeterminist stance of Rousseau regarding the practical sphere of deeds and actions. In a way, Kant's system constitutes a consolidation, a lawful synthesis of these contradictory intellectual tendencies that predominated the age of Enlightenment. Taking these tendencies into consideration, Kant formulates certain key questions that he bases his whole response on, the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge being one of these key questions – it is at the same time his solution to the possibility of objective knowledge – that specifically treat the dead-end knot put forth by Hume. While laying out the main issues as a general framework of Kantian system and not delving into its components in much detail, which would exceed the bounds of this thesis, the second chapter gives an overall

idea about Kant's major concerns and briefly introduces the Kantian faculty of imagination within this framework that pertains to Kant's theory of knowledge in a nutshell.

Upon a preliminary introduction to Kantian imagination, the third chapter first views imagination as has been theorized throughout the history of philosophy up until the age of Enlightenment<sup>1</sup> and then scrutinizes Kant's two *Critiques* again with a focus on imagination. Viewing the history of imagination and locating its role in the philosophies of the preceding eras is especially revealing in terms of discerning certain major ideational differences between these philosophies in their treatment of imagination as well as accentuating the significance of Kantian imagination vis-à-vis those of his predecessors. This is especially important as regards the emphasis on the productive role of imagination in attaining knowledge in Kantian philosophy in the face of the theories that assign a rather mimetic role to the imagination. Establishing the theoretical distinction of Kantian imagination, the chapter then proceeds with the workings of the imagination as formulated in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. It relies chiefly on Kant's own writings and highlights the most crucial aspects of imagination in its relation to other faculties that make up Kant's system. In the *First Critique*, imagination is positioned in the highly controversial "passageway" between sensibility and understanding, two faculties that play a significant role in the attainment of objective knowledge. Informed by this pivotal issue, the chapter examines the faculty of imagination with respect to its dichotomous functions and modes, namely, productive/reproductive and empirical/transcendental. This way the imagination's part in the possibility of objective knowledge, together with its involvement in synthesis and schemata as two

---

<sup>1</sup> Regarding the history of imagination, the chapter consults Richard Kearney's 1988 work titled *The Wake of Imagination: Toward a Postmodern Culture* (London: Routledge).

major procedures appertaining to knowledge production, is elucidated. The chapter then scrutinizes the function of imagination in the *Third Critique*. The scrutiny in question is of paramount significance in terms of clarifying the difference between determinative judgment, which concerns the subject's attainment of objective knowledge and therefore is principal to the *First Critique*, and reflective judgment. In contrast with the claim of objectivity and determination that the former comprises, reflective judgment entails a subjective universality: it does not determine objects of knowledge but rather reflects on the form of the object without being interested in whether it exists or not. In this case, aesthetic judgment as one of the two types of reflective judgment is viewed closely, and the imagination's relation to the understanding and reason in judging an object to be beautiful or sublime is expounded. Imagination is thus examined in light of aesthetic appreciation and artistic creativity instead of its involvement in the determination of an object of knowledge.

The fourth chapter views the aspects of Kantian imagination expounded in the previous chapter through the works of scholars whose differing interpretations are compared and disputed. In other words, it seeks to identify the points of controversy regarding Kantian imagination as articulated by these scholars and to point out solutions to these points whenever possible. The chapter is divided into three parts: the first part treats the disputes related to the imagination in the *First Critique*, the second part undertakes the same task in relation to the *Third Critique*, and the third part endeavours to see the two distinct treatments in conjunction with one another. In the first part, disputes are classified as that which pertains to synthesis on the one hand and to schematism on the other. Regarding synthesis, a number of arguments related to the nature of imagination, i.e., whether the imagination is intuitive or

discursive, and to what extent the imagination is involved in knowledge production are compared – the “common root” thesis by Heidegger being one of these arguments. Regarding schematism, the workings of the imagination is further clarified as the nature and function of the transcendental schemata is disputed in detail. The second part classifies the disputes related to the *Third Critique* in two sections: reflective judgment as distinct from determinative judgment *and* the role of imagination specifically in aesthetic judgment. The third part then conjoins the fundamental aspects of the two groups of disputes with the intention of viewing them in the broader context of Kantian philosophy and this way demonstrating the significance of imagination regarding Kant’s project on the whole.

Finally, taking mainly the discussions of the fourth chapter into account, the conclusion chapter constitutes my own interpretation of the disputes and possible solutions related to the imagination within the broader frame of Kantian philosophy.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY

#### 2.1. Kant's Time: The Age of Enlightenment

Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in lack of understanding, but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. *Sapere Aude!* [dare to know] "Have courage to use your own understanding!"--that is the motto of Enlightenment.<sup>2</sup>

The citation above comprises the very first paragraph of, and at the same time a compact answer to, Immanuel Kant's renowned 1784 essay "What is Enlightenment?" Much as the essay pertains to his views on the use of reason and in various occupational posts among the society and its effectiveness in the socio-political domain, and has a rather down-to-earth style that does not demand expertise in philosophical terms, Kant's answer does allude to the core of the problem that he strives to solve with a convoluted system that revolutionizes Western metaphysical thought. That is to say, man is to use his own understanding to tackle with the nature, and to do this, he is not only to understand the nature that he is surrounded by, but also to understand human life, namely, himself. Only by being committed to the idea that he is his own shepherd can he free himself from the perils of divine intervention that none other than his own immaturity has entangled himself in for ages.

The age of Enlightenment promoted a whole set of interrelated novelties that marked the intellectual ethos of the era. Perhaps the most predominant of these ideas,

---

<sup>2</sup> Kant, "What is Enlightenment?", 1784. < <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/kant.html> >

as Kant's essay explicitly emphasizes, is the supremacy of the human thinking, making its appearance on the stage as the engine that runs the world matters. Reason was the capability with which the human mind was endowed, constituting a power that emancipates the human mind from the nature and the supernatural. The power of reason was confirmed with the progress of sciences, which ultimately shaped the way nature, or universe, was considered: a structure ordered by the planned principles of sciences. It was neither an animistic organism nor an unfathomable territory with an arbitrary livelihood or unpredictably complicated rules. Even when the idea of God as a divine power was not dismissed *per se*, the supremacy of reason simultaneously fostered the possibility of conceiving the universe as a secular entity whose throne reason was authorized to claim.

In his account on the "mood" of the Enlightenment, W.T. Jones defines the first two centuries, namely, the seventeenth and the eighteenth, primarily as "optimistic" as a result of the progress achieved in the sciences and, thus, the control of the once unpredictable universe.<sup>3</sup> Universe was in tandem with the human mind in that they were both rational, which made it possible for the latter to discover the rules of the former and act accordingly.<sup>4</sup> The extent of the reach of this optimism and the leading Enlightenment ideas among the various strata of the societies, to which the age of Enlightenment is alluded, is a question that falls out of the focus of most of the evaluative texts concerning the era. Jones does touch upon this aspect, however, when he mentions the consequences of what was supposed to lead to the affluence of individuals and societies, such as the appearance of "urban slums" in the nineteenth century. In his words, the enlightened man of the preceding two centuries "had been

---

<sup>3</sup> W. T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy: Kant and the 19th Century*, 1969, 1

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 9

self-confident and self-assured [...]. In contrast, the new man of the nineteenth century was uneasy, anxious, alienated, and introspective.”<sup>5</sup>

In an attempt to emphasize substantially the transformation from the optimistic mood of the Enlightenment to that of pessimism, Jones further cites Dostoyevsky’s *Notes from Underground* to describe the type of man that emerged as the outcome of the perils of the Industrial Revolution. Accordingly, the “underground man” is one who sees consciousness as a disease and nature as a “stone wall” that is totally indifferent to what one thinks.<sup>6</sup> He is attentive to the fact that Kant wrote his *First Critique* around a hundred years earlier than Dostoyevsky wrote his short story. He keeps to his claim, nevertheless, that Kant was aware of what was evolving into the appearance of the underground man, and that his critique is apparently informed by the pessimism-laden developments. Hume’s skepticism, Jones argues, is one of the most prominent of these developments that emerged as a significant threat to the legacy of Enlightenment. It is also the very teaching that Kant viewed as a grave danger and vigorously sought to abolish.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2. Kant’s Problem: Impasses of Enlightenment

[...] [T]here is nothing in a number of instances, different from every single instance, which is supposed to be exactly similar; except only, that after a repetition of similar instances, the mind is carried by habit, upon the appearance of one event, to expect its usual attendant, and to believe, that it will exist. This connexion [*sic*], therefore, which we *feel* in the mind, this customary transition of the imagination from one object to its usual attendant, is the sentiment or impression, from which we form the idea of power or necessary connexion. Nothing farther is in the case.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 9-10

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 10-11

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 12

<sup>8</sup> David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding: A Critical Edition*, ed. Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000, 59

This is how Scottish philosopher David Hume formulates, in his 1748 book *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, what he views to be a habit, a mere belief, namely, the element of causality that is supposed to be inherent to events that occur one after another in time. The emergence of such a bold claim that the human mind indeed resorts to “customary thinking” under the guise of rationality, in an era in traditional values are replaced by the principles and applications of modern science and technologies, amounts to more than a merely curious event in the course of the Western metaphysics. How come such a skeptical stance was arrived at in the midst of scientific and social progress? And what were the impasses evolving around this major issue? This part of the chapter scrutinizes the problematic of skepticism along with other problems related to it by viewing the analyses conducted in a number of works on Kant and German Idealism.

As regards the arrival at skepticism, Jones briefly mentions the polarization between the rationalist and empiricist camps and its culmination into disappointment by the mid-eighteenth century in his account. He states that, on the one hand, the rationalists “pressed Descartes’s rationalistic bias to its logical conclusion,”<sup>9</sup> meaning that they insisted on the certainty of mathematics as the ultimately true knowledge. Their claim, however, ended up amounting to mere relations among propositions without a passageway from the mind to the material. To arrive at the material, they needed to make use of perception, yet this was impossible since they had discarded it as a misleading faculty. In the end, what they had at hand was speculation.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Jones, 1969, 15-16

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 15-16

The empiricists, on the other hand, tried to follow a reverse course, but they ended up in the same *cul-de-sac*. For them, what was more prominent than certainty, to which the rationalists tried to cling, was the empirical world, whose knowledge one could reach through the ideas that are formed in one's mind by the empirical world itself. Again, it was a play among ideas rather than a substantial link between the subject's mind and the objective world. The two camps found themselves in the "same skeptical dead end: The former were confined to tracing out implicatory relations among ideas; the latter, to recording relations of coexistence and succession among ideas."<sup>11</sup>

According to Jones's account, then, the two major antithetical movements that preceded German Idealism yielded a similar conflict that prevented them from rightfully establishing a system of knowledge. It could be argued that this is what Hume's stance derives its destructive power from: instead of seeking a solution to the impasse of skepticism, Hume grounded its acknowledgment.

The doctrine of skepticism does not only constitute an impasse that different philosophical camps end at, but itself seems to be an inevitable constituent of critical thinking, which is a fundamental legacy of the Enlightenment in general, as the evaluations of Karl Ameriks and Frederick Beiser suggest.<sup>12</sup> In his essay "Introduction: Interpreting German Idealism," Ameriks interprets the emerging skepticism as a "threat" to what he terms as the "whole project of a rational justification of any common knowledge" that appeared as a result of the intense self-

---

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 16

<sup>12</sup> Karl Ameriks, "Introduction: Interpreting German Idealism", *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 1-17; Frederic Beiser, "The Enlightenment and Idealism", *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 18-36.

criticism of modern philosophy.<sup>13</sup> In Frederick Beiser's words, the conflict that German Idealism on the whole sought to solve was that which took place between rational criticism and scientific naturalism: the former ends up in skepticism and the latter in materialism, neither of which is acceptable. "If skepticism undermines our common-sense beliefs in the reality of the external world, other minds, and even our own selves, materialism threatens the beliefs in freedom, immortality, and the *sui generis* status of the mind," Beiser writes in the introduction to his essay "The Enlightenment and Idealism."<sup>14</sup> The problem is that the Enlightenment project endows reason with two major capabilities: criticism and explanation. The second capability renders possible the evaluation of the universe in quantities, since it puts forth the idea of the efficient cause as that which leads to the effect that follows the former not only logically but temporarily as well, and which consequently makes it possible to quantify the impact that the efficient cause effects. But then there is the first capability, which tends to evaluate evidence as doubtful. This is where, Beiser asserts, the "crisis" lies: much as the Enlightenment relies on these two capabilities, it is not in the position to limit them in the name of avoiding skepticism or materialism, as it would then denote a dogmatic authoritarianism that does not indeed fully rely on reason (and what does reason stand for, if it is to be relied on partially?). What is worse, not only do the two arrive at unacceptable consequences, but they conflict each other.<sup>15</sup> In brief, both Ameriks and Beiser associate the element of criticism with doubt, which poses an obstruction on the way to the lawful establishment of a system of knowledge whose constituents are consistent with one another.

---

<sup>13</sup> Ameriks, 2000, 4

<sup>14</sup> Beiser, 2000, 18

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 19-21

Some of the skepticism-laden problematics that were raised with the dawn of new science are touched upon in Patricia Kitcher's account.<sup>16</sup> One of them pertains to the correspondence of mathematical formulae to real relations in the physical world. The proposal that one straight line connects any two points can either be an axiom based on other axioms, or attain acceptability because of our ways of defining the components of the proposal; in either case, the riddle of correspondence is not solved. Another one concerns the principles of modern science and their applicability: "[h]ow could we ever know that all bodies obey Newton's three laws of motion?" In other words, how are we to decide for the bodies that lie outside of our observation that they abide by these rules? Last but not least, what to say about the origins and the validity of the so-termed "eternal truths" such as the law of non-contradiction? Again Hume appears on the stage at this point, demonstrating the lack of necessity in accepting the law of causality as a fundamental principle of nature.<sup>17</sup>

As can be seen in the accounts of the scholars examined so far, the backdrop of German Idealism in general, and Kantian epistemology in particular, is heavily predominated by the skeptical dead-end that significantly invalidates the efforts of Kant's predecessors. Much as these scholars' ways of articulating the predicaments exhibit variety, there seems to be a common predicament that informs these accounts on the development of Kant's solution equally: crudely put, how is one to reach knowledge? To open the question up: how is one to tear the sheath of one's subjectivity out to reach the knowledge of the object? The knot seems almost inherent to the question; namely, moving beyond the subject is a risky business. In

---

<sup>16</sup> Patricia Kitcher, "Immanuel Kant", *The Blackwell Guide to the Modern Philosophers: From Descartes to Nietzsche*, ed. Steven M. Emmanuel, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2001, 223-258.

<sup>17</sup> Kitcher, 2001, 225-226

their accounts cited above, Ameriks and Beiser remind us that the Enlightenment project comprises a critical stance that raises doubts as regards the subject's means to reach knowledge. Moreover, what are claimed to lead to objective knowledge turn out to be ideas and definitions entertained by the mind within its boundaries – only to be shaded by a cloud of skepticism, as suggested in the accounts of Jones and Kitcher.

Another knot which is immediately linked to the major question pertains to the type of knowledge. What type(s) of knowledge is one to be after, and how is one to distinguish these types of knowledge, and knowledge from non-knowledge? There is the physical world on the one hand, and the human social praxes on the other, as Ameriks mentions. According to Ameriks, Kant is simultaneously intrigued by the physical theories of Newton and social theories of Rousseau. Exhibiting a deterministic interpretation, Newton's stance totally avoids the concepts of traditional metaphysics, i.e., the existence of God, freedom, and immortality, whereas Rousseau's stance, which views persons as free, equal, and practical beings, necessitates these concepts. At the conflicting juncture of the natural science of the former and the social science of the latter, Kant is to seek a solution.<sup>18</sup> However, as Beiser underlines, the ideas that concern our social practices are in jeopardy when what he terms as the scientific naturalist tendency moves beyond the realm of the physical universe.<sup>19</sup> In simple terms, the natural and the social realms are to be rightfully expounded without being conflated.

### **2.3. Kant's Concern: Possibility of Objective Knowledge**

---

<sup>18</sup> Ameriks, 2000, 4-5

<sup>19</sup> Beiser, 2000, 18

As propounded in the previous part, how Kant tackles with the doctrine of skepticism and related problems on his way to the lawful establishment of a system of knowledge is a pivotal question. This question can also be termed as the quest to find out about the possibility of objective knowledge, which is immanently linked to the question of how the subject is to attain the knowledge of the object. It is not merely the nature of the object that is the subject of inquiry here, but rather the subject's way of attaining knowledge. This aspect of the grand quest, as mentioned before, is accompanied by a critical stance: before judging the objective world, the subject first needs to turn to itself and judge its own means of finding out about this objective world. Despite the element of skepticism that it entails, the adoption of a critical stance, i.e., the reason's tribunal of itself in the lawful attainment of knowledge, will be displayed to be a crucial component of Kant's philosophy and of German Idealism on the whole.

As regards critical thinking in the sense of scrutinizing the subject before defining the object, Cartesian philosophy appears to be an important step and yet proves to be not critical enough. In line with the accounts examined so far, Roger Scruton likewise refers to the problem of objective knowledge, initiated by Descartes, as that which informed Kant's philosophy as the leading question.<sup>20</sup> Descartes's *cogito ergo sum*, however, did not constitute a convincing answer. In Scruton's words, "[i]t is true that, however skeptical I may be about the world, I cannot extend my skepticism into the subjective sphere (the sphere of consciousness): so I can be immediately certain of my present mental states. But I cannot be immediately certain of what I am, or of whether, indeed, there is an 'I' to

---

<sup>20</sup> Roger Scruton, "Kant", *German Philosophers: Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche*, Roger Scruton, Peter Singer, Christopher Janaway, and Michael Tanner, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

whom these states belong.”<sup>21</sup> Hence the bridge from the subject to the object is once again a failed project. Then, again, “[s]cience, common sense, theology and personal life all suppose the possibility of objective knowledge. If this supposition is unwarranted then so are almost all the beliefs that we commonly entertain.”<sup>22</sup>

The supposed possibility of objective knowledge is obviously not to be sought in the Cartesian solution, one of its chief faults appearing to be the lack of a ground for the sort of ‘objective integrity’ of the subject which it assumes. In other words, Descartes fails to give a substantial account pertaining to the ontological status of the subject.<sup>23</sup> In the introduction to his book *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism*, published two years after the abovementioned essay, Beiser indeed disagrees with the much accepted idea within the history of philosophy that German Idealism drew the subjectivist claim of Cartesian tradition to the climax.<sup>24</sup> For Beiser it is actually the reverse: beginning with Kant, the subjectivist doctrine that the subject can have the immediate knowledge only of what is going on in its own consciousness, and not of what lies outside of it, was persistently rejected, as it was viewed only to arrive at the skeptical stance formulated by Hume.<sup>25</sup>

Among the thinkers that sought answers to the question of whether there is objective knowledge, in which what is and what seems to be correspond, and the

---

<sup>21</sup> Scruton, 2001, 18

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 18

<sup>23</sup> This is actually where many of Kant’s predecessors including Descartes is at fault. The issue at stake is not the ontological status of the subject but rather the scope of the subject within the epistemological account that Kant gives on the whole. The subject is of epistemological concern, as it is itself also an object of knowledge like any other object that lies beyond itself, when taken in empirical terms.

<sup>24</sup> Frederic Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism, 1781-1801*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002

<sup>25</sup> Beiser, 2002, 2-3

possibilities of reaching this knowledge should there be such knowledge, Scruton refers to Leibniz, known to belong to the Rationalist thought, and Hume, known to belong to the Empiricist thought, as those who came up with substantial ones that had a lasting impact in the intellectual circles.<sup>26</sup> He argues that Kant was especially intrigued by Humean skepticism, which comprised an ineffaceable challenge to the Leibnizian system in relation to the problems of causality and *a priori* knowledge. According to Leibniz's monadology, monads are the elementary substances that mirror the universe from their own perspective and, thanks to the principle of pre-established harmony, the universe "will 'appear' to each monad in a way which corresponds to its appearance to every other."<sup>27</sup> The spatiotemporal relations, along with causality, are a concern of the appearances if not monads themselves. The gap between what is and what seems to be is bridged as, in Scruton's words, "the way things appear bears the metaphysical imprint of the way things are."<sup>28</sup>

In total contrast with Leibniz, for whom acquiring knowledge is conducted ultimately by reason and not experience, Hume, Scruton asserts, argues that reason generates mere ideas whose origin happens to be none other than experience. Yet experience, in a converse manner, is none other than the knowledge of my own perspective which entertains ideas by itself. In a similar fashion, it is reason that generates the idea of necessity and accords objectivity to it without a substantial basis. This is where, Scruton stresses, Kant makes an effort to enter the scene in the

---

<sup>26</sup> Scruton, 2001, 19

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 21

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 22

name of rescuing scientific thought, based ultimately on the necessities including that of causality, from Humean skepticism that shatters its backbone.<sup>29</sup>

Similar to Scruton, Norman Kemp Smith cites Leibniz and Hume as the two most influential philosophers that shaped Kant's philosophy to a considerable extent.<sup>30</sup> Both Hume and Leibniz, Smith argues, reproached empiricism, but in different ways and with different conclusions. Whereas Hume held the opinion that induction through experience did not amount to more than "merely instinctive anticipation", Leibniz confirmed the supremacy of pure reason as a self-legislative substance. Smith articulates the two opposing stances with the following words:

Each maintained, in the manner prescribed by his general philosophy, one of what then appeared to be the only two possible views of the function of thought. The alternatives were these: (a) Thought is merely a practical instrument for the convenient interpretation of our human experience; it has no objective or metaphysical validity of any kind; (b) Thought legislates universally; it reveals the wider universe of the eternally possible; and prior to all experience can determine the fundamental conditions to which experience must conform. Or to interpret this opposition in logical terms: (a) The fundamental principles of experience are synthetic judgments in which no relation is discoverable between subject and predicate, and which for that reason can be justified neither *a priori* nor by experience; (b) all principles are analytic, and can therefore be justified by pure thought.<sup>31</sup>

At the juncture of these two opposing stances, Kant's challenge appeared to be the reconciliation of the two theories in a way that the synthetic, and not self-evident, character of causality consistently conjoins the pure reason as a faculty that

---

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 19-23

<sup>30</sup> Norman Kemp Smith, *A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Smith states that most scholarship evolving around Kant's involvement with Hume's philosophy in relation to the question of the possibility of synthetic a priori judgments have concentrated so far on Hume's *Enquiry into the Human Understanding*, and thus have "obscured" the reasons why Kant developed his argument related to this question. Even when it is very improbable that Kant read Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*, it is highly probable, Smith asserts, that he had the opportunity to follow its *leitmotif* through secondary literature, and it is the *Treatise* in which Hume expounds his thoughts on causality that paved the path to Kant's elaborate articulation of the question and the solution to it. (xxxiii)

<sup>31</sup> Smith, 2003, xxxix

determines its own principles of function. Kant's solution is ultimately motivated by the question of how it is that the principles of knowledge, demonstrated to be synthetic in nature, are *a priori* as well.<sup>32</sup>

All in all, it is not the question of what the subject is, but rather that of how the subject gets to know about the objective world, that appears to be Kant's utmost concern. The supremacy of reason, one of the milestones of Enlightenment, can be fully justified only when a systematic and consistent account of the means to attain objective knowledge, and what kind of knowledge it is, is given. To be more specific, the quest is to evince the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge – to show that human thinking is endowed with the capability of devising a rightful mechanism pertaining to the realm of objects prior to its getting in touch with them in experience, to put it in layman's terms.

#### **2.4. Kant's Solution: Possibility of Synthetic *A Priori* Knowledge**

As Kant states in the preface to the first edition to his *Critique of Pure Reason*, the issue at stake ultimately pertains to the "tribunal" of reason, namely, reason's interrogation of itself from within, letting no intervention from without: "a tribunal which will assure reason its lawful claims, and dismiss all groundless pretensions, not by despotic decrees, but in accordance with its own eternal and unalterable laws."<sup>33</sup> Smith's formulation of the Humean and Leibnizian theories shows that the former uproots the possibility of such a tribunal by supposedly, as Kant would assume, demonstrating the groundlessness of inducing universal and necessary concepts from synthetic *a posteriori* events, whereas the latter makes a leap from

---

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, xxxix-xl

<sup>33</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, Axi-xii

analytic *a priori* propositions to the domain of the synthetic *a posteriori* without a well-grounded passage. Kant in a way sides with Hume when he views the rationalist approach as dogmatic. His critique is opposed to “*dogmatism*, that is, to the presumption that it is possible to make progress with pure knowledge, according to principles, from concepts alone, [...] and that it is possible to do this without having first investigated in what way and by what right reason has come into possession of these concepts.”<sup>34</sup>

Kant sets out to settle the tribunal of reason with the “Copernican Revolution”, which fosters the approach that it is not our concepts that conform to the objects of experience, which we derive upon their observation, but vice versa. This means it is rather the objects of experience that conform to our concepts which precede any experience whatsoever. This is exactly where the important question immediately presents itself. Obtaining the knowledge of objects of experience, to go back to the dilemma articulated by Smith, requires synthesis, for analysis does not add to knowledge. When explicating the Copernican Revolution, Kant cites the necessity of mathematics’ and physics’ determining their objects *a priori* on their way to obtain (theoretical) knowledge. According to Kant, it dawned upon the first mathematician that it was not his observation that yielded the concepts, but that he “[brought] out what was necessarily implied in the concepts he had himself formed *a priori*” and applied to the object of observation. In a similar way, the students of physics discovered that it was reason’s own determination that legislated the order of nature, and not that nature dictated reason to determine its laws upon being observed.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> Kant, 2007, Bxxxv

As regards the question of what constitutes *a priori* knowledge, besides the aspect of the elimination of all that is empirical, namely, all that is attained by sensations, Kant refers to “necessity” and “universality” as the two indispensable criteria for such knowledge, and gives the infamous example of causality as one of the laws that govern the order of nature. This is where Hume made a mistake, he asserts. In the case of the law of causality, it would be “altogether lost if we attempted to derive it, as Hume has done, from a repeated association of that which happens with that which precedes, and from a custom of connecting representations, a custom originating in this repeated association, and constituting therefore a merely subjective necessity.”<sup>36</sup> In brief, with the Copernican Revolution, it is revealed that our reason maintains *a priori* principles that are necessary and universal, and the refutation of the rationalist view as dogmatic on behalf of skepticism is no longer an issue.

As regards the question of what constitutes synthetic knowledge, on the other hand, Kant again cites causality as an example in the “Introduction” to his *Critique*. Accordingly, the predicate of the proposition “Everything which happens has its cause”, i.e., having its cause, is not contained in the subject, i.e., everything which happens, the latter being otherwise analytic. The key issue here is the possibility of the necessity of the proposal. In other words, how is it that every event *necessarily* has a cause, while the principle involves synthesis and thus introduces a new knowledge? Kant explicates the issue at stake with the following words:

It cannot be experience, because the suggested principle has connected the second representation with the first, not only with greater universality, but with the character of necessity, and therefore completely *a priori* and on the basis of mere concepts. Upon such synthetic, that is, ampliative principles, all our *a*

---

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, Bx-xiii

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, B3-5

*priori* speculative knowledge must ultimately rest; analytical judgments are very important, and indeed necessary, but only obtaining that clearness in the concepts which is requisite for such a sure and wide synthesis as will lead to a genuinely new addition to all previous knowledge.<sup>37</sup>

As Kant asserts in the A-Deduction, the task is to discover the ground of the possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgments without jeopardizing their universality and necessity, whose annihilation would then render impure, and therefore nullify the *a priori* of, these judgments. The task, Kant continues, is immanently linked to the possibility of metaphysics. It is because the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic has not been made properly so far that metaphysics has failed to be a credible field. Hume had an acute observation of this impasse, yet his mistake was to take what was an *a priori* principle that *governed* the empirical realm to be an *a posteriori*, and therefore not necessary, connection that was habitually *derived from* the empirical realm, and therefore he was unsuccessful at formulating the distinction adequately.<sup>38</sup> Like in the case of pure mathematics and pure physics, both of which are based on synthetic *a priori* principles, how is it then possible to view metaphysics as a science without falling either into dogmatism or skepticism? Before setting out to expound this grand question, Kant emphasizes the primacy of self-criticism: metaphysics “has to deal not with the objects of reason, the variety of which is inexhaustible, but only *with itself* and the problems which arise entirely *from within itself*”<sup>39</sup>. That is, reason is to determine its limits and scope as regards its applicability without any external assistance or consultation. The tribunal, then, consists of the assessment of reason by none other than reason itself.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, A9-10, B13-14

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, B19

<sup>39</sup> Italics mine.

Taking one's own workings as one's object of its inquiry introduces another pivotal element to Kant's philosophy: "transcendental". "I entitle *transcendental* all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible *a priori*."<sup>41</sup> Indeed, in order for knowledge to be transcendental, it automatically has to be of *a priori* kind, since it involves the interrogation of knowledge from within itself. In other words, its object of investigation is none other than itself. To cite Kant's words, "what here constitutes our subject-matter is not the nature of things, which is inexhaustible, but the understanding which passes judgment upon the nature of things."<sup>42</sup> Such is the critical stance that Kant's transcendental philosophy involves: one that does not get stuck in doubts as regards the ontological status of oneself and the objective world, but one that rather investigates one's epistemological mechanism concerning how one knows about oneself and one's surrounding.

## 2.5. Kant's Philosophy: Transcendental Idealism

The question pertaining to the mode of our knowledge of objects directly informs the dichotomy of idealism and realism. As regards the way in which we attain knowledge of the empirical world, Kant follows a transcendental idealist approach, which simultaneously comprises empirical realism. At this level, a distinction regarding what constitutes an "object", i.e., object of knowledge, seems inevitable. An object of knowledge is not only that which is theoretically possible, i.e., it is determinable by mathematical and physical sciences, but it is at the same time that

---

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, B20-23

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, A11-12, B25

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, A12-13, B26

whose knowledge can only be the knowledge of its appearance and not of itself. In other words, we reasonable beings get to know the natural realm only in the mode that it appears to us. Kant's distinction of the object of knowledge, then, pertains to that between the object as it appears, which is knowable by us, and the object as it is, which cannot be known. The grand riddle of the possibility of metaphysics, aside from that of mathematics and physics, is what this distinction seems to precisely inform. No pure metaphysics is possible unless what constitutes an object of knowledge is designated properly; and this is exactly what Kant seems to mean with his *transcendental* philosophy – a philosophy that, before demonstrating the properties of its subject-matter, turns to itself and interrogates its designation of what it terms its subject-matter.

How does Kant's concurrent formulation of transcendental ideality and empirical reality function in light of the specification of the object of knowledge? As regards this formulation, Beiser refers to accusations of "subjectivism" directed towards Kant.<sup>43</sup> Even if Kant had not intended, he appears as a subjectivist by implication, as when he is inclined to equate appearances to representations in *CPR*. This boils down to an impasse which is defined as "skeptical idealism": what we know are appearances, which means that what we know are representations. Beiser claims that the distinction between the thing-in-itself and the thing as it appears constitutes an answer to the subjectivism accusation. Appearances are not mere entities in the mind of the subject; appearances "have objects", or they are "appearances *of* something, namely, things-in-themselves."<sup>44</sup> The things-in-themselves exist independently of our minds, and we come to know them not in

---

<sup>43</sup> Beiser, *German Idealism*, 2002

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, 49

themselves but only as appearances. “The distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves is then not between distinct kinds of entity – mind-dependent ideas and mind-independent things – but between distinct aspects of the same entity.”<sup>45</sup>

Beiser continues, however, that “Kant’s own critical limits gave him no grounds to claim knowledge of the existence of the thing-in-itself.”<sup>46</sup> Since the object of knowledge is restricted to things as they appear, and not things-in-themselves, how is one to claim that there exist things-in-themselves? This question supports the subjectivist claims, Beiser argues. He then cites definitions of transcendental idealism in *CPR*. In these passages, Kant seems to have taken things-in-themselves and appearances as two distinct entities, not allowing what Beiser terms as “dual aspect interpretation.”<sup>47</sup>

According to Beiser, it is when Kant differentiates transcendental idealism from transcendental realism that the subjectivism accusation weakens. Transcendental realism takes the two to be one and the same thing: “how objects appear to us in our experience *is* how they are in themselves.”<sup>48</sup> Transcendental idealism, on the other hand, distinguishes the two, and thus refrains from the claim to knowledge through the thing-in-itself. In this sense, for transcendental idealism the thing-in-itself comprises “the reality of something besides mere representations.”<sup>49</sup> Beiser is cautious, however, with the difference between taking the thing-in-itself

---

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, 49

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 49

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 49-51

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 51

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 52

factually and hypothetically: accordingly, the stance of the transcendental idealist is the latter. That is, if things-in-themselves exist, we cannot claim to attain the knowledge of them through their appearances. Differently from a dogmatic idealist, then, Kant does not refute the existence of things-in-themselves, yet the skepticism remains as to whether they exist or not.<sup>50</sup>

It is when Beiser articulates the distinction between transcendental idealism and empirical idealism that Kant's transcendental philosophy seems to be granted a more solid justification in the case of the subjectivism accusation. Stating that Kant chooses the term "empirical idealism" to rather emphasize the skepticism regarding the reality of the empirical world than the reliance of empirical principles, Beiser explains how Kant thinks the empirical idealist has to be skeptical, which I will be quoting at length:

[T]he empirical idealist shares a fatal premise with the transcendental realist that to know something in space outside us we must know whether our representations correspond with things-in-themselves (A 369, 372). If we accept such a standard of knowledge, Kant argues, then it becomes necessary to doubt or deny the existence of objects outside us, for the simple reason that we cannot get outside our own representations to compare them with reality in itself. Such a standard of knowledge demands the impossible, Kant argues, because to represent the object as outside us it would be necessary to represent it in space, which is again only the form of representation (A 376). Since, however, the empirical idealist presupposes this standard of knowledge, and since he also recognizes that it is impossible to satisfy it, he doubts the reality of all things in space. What he sees will be, for all he knows, only an illusion. Hence the empirical idealist conflates the transcendental and empirical reality of an object. Since he cannot know the object outside us in the transcendental sense, he assumes that we also cannot know it in the empirical sense.<sup>51</sup>

Judging from Beiser's articulation, it could be argued that the status of the thing-in-itself is *meant to be* hypothetical. When it is factual, the distinction between the thing-in-itself and the appearance is automatically rendered useless, as the former

---

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, 51-52

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, 54-55

gets trapped in the latter and we are left alone with our world of mere representations. In a similar manner, seeking correspondence between the thing-in-itself and the appearance leads to skepticism, as the thing-in-itself is assumed to be a knowable entity and to have no reality outside of the world of representations. Conversely, the transcendental idealist approach, coupled up with empirical realism, acknowledges the existence of the outside world, and yet excludes the conditions of the outside world from the factuality of the empirical realm and in this way avoids the dogma- or doubt-laden conclusions that the rationalists with their transcendental realism on the one hand, and the empiricists with their empirical idealism on the other, have ended up with.

## 2.6. Kant's "Imagination": From Intuiting to Understanding

Concerning the question of attaining the knowledge of appearances, the faculty of imagination enters the scene as a fundamental aspect of the system laid out in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. It lies at the heart of Kant's project that aims to bridge the gap between the subjective and the objective and arrive at a legitimate foundation of knowledge without resorting to the mistaken theories of his predecessors.

Where does imagination stand in Kant's theory of knowledge, and how does it appear to be a fundamental aspect of it? In *A Kant Dictionary* (1995), Howard Caygill points to the "intermediate status of imagination between sensibility and the understanding."<sup>52</sup> Imagination had had a bad reputation in Kant's writings, viewed as an antagonistic force that obstructed the workings of the understanding and of reason, until when Kant wrote *CPR*, in which it underwent a thorough revival, Caygill adds.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, in the preface to the B-Deduction, Kant refers to

---

<sup>52</sup> Howard Caygill, *A Kant Dictionary*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995, 246

“imagination” for the first time as a misleading faculty in the context of his criticism of those who have failed to contribute to the advancement of logic.<sup>54</sup> Differently from the B-Deduction, the A-Deduction grants a crucial task to imagination as the intermediary of the three *a priori* grounds of the possibility of experience aside from intuition and concept. Most importantly, imagination is brought to the agenda as the faculty that provides the connection between sensibility, which involves the reception of the outer (as well as the inner) sense, and understanding, which conceptualizes the data received through the sensibility and spontaneously molds it into an object of knowledge. It serves as a gadget between the pure forms of sensibility and pure concepts of understanding, both teams being engaged in synthesis in an *a priori* fashion.

Understanding the workings of the imagination, and delineating the knots that its theorization brings forth, therefore constitute a crucial step in appreciating the Kantian revolution. The next two chapters will be dealing precisely with this faculty. The former will sketch the background of imagination throughout the history of philosophy and make an attempt to pinpoint the characteristics of Kantian imagination vis-à-vis the other definitions as explicated throughout the *Critique of Pure Reason* on the one hand and the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* on the other. In light of the former, the latter will conduct an in-depth examination of the disputes and possible solutions that it entails.

---

<sup>53</sup> Caygill, 1995, 246-247

<sup>54</sup> “It is remarkable also that to the present day this logic has not been able to advance a single step, and is thus all appearance a closed and completed body of doctrine. If some of the moderns have thought to enlarge it by introducing psychological chapters on the different faculties of knowledge (imagination, wit, etc.) [...], this could only arise from their ignorance of the peculiar nature of logical science.” (Bviii.) Kant uses the term “Einbildungskraft” in the original text, and not “Einbildung,” which has also been translated as “imagination” in *CPR* by Norman Kemp Smith (2007).

## CHAPTER III

### THE ROLE OF IMAGINATION IN KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY

#### 3.1. Imagination: Brief Historical Background

“Imagination” has been a curious concept which has undergone a long evolution throughout history in different places and periods. Richard Kearney’s 1988 study *The Wake of Imagination: Toward a Postmodern Culture*<sup>55</sup> provides us with a thorough study regarding the trajectory of imagination in Western metaphysics, delineating the mentalities regarding each period in a profound manner. Before setting out to our journey to the faculty of imagination as expounded in Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, to be followed by its role in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, it will be illuminating to briefly go through these periods to see possible continuities and disruptions between them and the Kantian imagination.

##### 3.1.1. Imagination until Kant

In his study, Kearney argues that imagination as a human ability has been handled mainly in two ways throughout Western thought: “1) as a *representational* faculty which reproduces images of some pre-existing reality, or 2) as a *creative* faculty which produces images which often lay claim to an original status in their own right.”<sup>56</sup> This is a crucial distinction, together with the terms “production” and

---

<sup>55</sup> Richard Kearney, *The Wake of Imagination: Toward a Postmodern Culture*, London: Routledge, 1988

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 15

“reproduction” attributed to these two ways, as Kantian imagination will be accorded with the deed of the revolutionary step from the first to the second.

With respect to the theorization of imagination, Kearney principally examines three periods, namely, Judaic, or what Kearney terms as Hebraic, tradition, ancient Greek world, and Medieval thought, prior to Kantianism. As for the Hebraic tradition, imagination as a human faculty appears on the stage as Adam’s transgression of God’s law. It lies at the core of the Original Sin that Adam and Eve commit when they are tempted by a world which they *themselves* contribute to the “making” of, in the fashion of God as the divine Creator, and thus are led to know what is good and what is evil: they “fall from paradise into history.”<sup>57</sup> In this way, Kearney continues, man acquires the ability to “think in terms of *opposites* – good and evil, past and future, God and man.”<sup>58</sup> Because man has made an attempt to imitate God’s act, his imagination as a creative faculty “bears the stigma of a stolen possession.”<sup>59</sup> Before him now lays bare a future with countless possibilities which he can freely envision.<sup>60</sup>

The Original Sin is nevertheless not interpreted only as a blasphemous act or a curse upon manhood, but as a means to return to God through good deeds as well. Kearney sums up the Hebraic understanding of imagination in four categories: mimetic, ethical, historical, and anthropological. First, man imitates God; second, man is granted the freedom to choose between good and evil once he falls from grace; third, man travels from the past into the future through his deeds – citing

---

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 39

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 40

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 41

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 42

Hannah Arendt's words, Kearney adds that it was the Judeo-Christian teaching that, prior to the ancient Greeks, introduced the concept of a linear history with the emphasis on free will – and last, evil is not a necessary antecedent or consequence but “an option which the human imagination may choose or refuse as it constructs its historical destiny.”<sup>61</sup>

As regards the Hellenic period, Kearney first refers to the Promethean myth as the equivalent of Adam's story. He stresses, however, that the former pertains to a rather epistemological account whereas the latter primarily has ethical overtones. Similar to Adam, Prometheus performs an otherwise godly power by stealing the fire from gods and granting it to a man. He dares to elevate mankind to the level of gods by allowing them to transgress the “order of nature,” which is governed by Zeus, and attain the “order of culture”, which man himself contributes to the creation of with the exercise of his free will. Kearney adds that the power of imagination is never taken in itself in the Western thought, but rather in comparison to, or under the shadow of, a more superior power, namely, God's creative power. The two accounts differ when it comes to what Kearney sees as the ethical-epistemological divide. It is Prometheus's tragic destiny to end up performing an evil deed, whereas Adam chooses to perform the evil deed of imagination as an ordinary act and is equally free to return to God's order through the performance of good deeds. In this sense, the Promethean act is “part of a cosmological order of being which supersedes the anthropological order of freedom and responsibility” as seen in Adam's act. Plus,

---

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 52-53

unlike Adam, Prometheus is not pushed to strive to abide by God's order to redeem himself.<sup>62</sup>

Plato, according to Kearney, is the first to come up with a systematical criticism pertaining to imagination.<sup>63</sup> For Plato, imitation is one more step further away from the divine realm of ideas, being the imitation of the material world of humans, which is already an imitation of the ideas.<sup>64</sup> In his *Republic*, Plato further condemns imagination vis-à-vis reason. In Kearney's words, "[r]eason alone has access to the transcendental Ideas. Imagination does no more than reflect the things of our sensory world – a world which is itself, of course, no more than a copy of the transcendental Ideas themselves."<sup>65</sup> Artistic imagination is "superficial", "non-didactic", and "irrational".<sup>66</sup> It not only claims to possess the divine skill of creation but also hosts contradiction by blurring the line between opposites and this way acting against reason.<sup>67</sup> Whereas arriving at the opposites is greeted with resentment in the Biblical story and the Promethean myth – Adam is introduced to, or rather introduces to himself, the dichotomy of good and evil, and Prometheus, in a similar manner, proposes culture aside from nature – in the case of Plato, reason's ability to discern the opposites is appreciated. The strife of human reason to reach the reality of the transcendental Ideas is greeted with approval; it is when human imagination, in the face of human reason, acts contrary to this strife that its act is deemed negative. In line with these considerations, the only legitimate way in which an image is

---

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 79-87

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, 87

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 88

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 90-91

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 93

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 96

involved is when it is used as a means to explain the reality, like in the case of a mathematician making use of drawings of a square to demonstrate the idea of square, and not as an end that disguises itself as the reality.<sup>68</sup> Besides this, imagination is to accept the supremacy of reason and be in the service of the “divine Good as absolute origin of truth.”<sup>69</sup> At this point, Platonic thought once again resembles the Biblical story in that there is a way to be redeemed – an ethically correct way which entails the effort to conduct good deeds.

In contrast with Plato, Aristotle treats imagination in psychological terms instead of metaphysical ones, Kearney argues. For Aristotle, image serves as a mediator – a mental representation – between sensation and reason rather than being a wrongful act of imitation.<sup>70</sup> Mimesis is saved from its negative meaning as the divine realm of ideas indeed turned out to be “categories of human thought which correspond, through the indispensable mediation of images, to the forms of the real world perceived by our senses.”<sup>71</sup> Imagination, then, is the bridge between our reason and the sensible world. Kearney further asserts that Aristotle makes a distinction between “sensible imagination” and “rational imagination.” The former is concerned with empirical images whereas the latter is involved in the synthesizing these images to let our reason grasp them in a commonsensical fashion. Obviously, the resemblance of this distinction to the reproductive and productive modes of Kantian imagination, which will be expounded in the following part, is hard to miss.

---

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, 99-100

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, 105

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, 106

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 109

Kearney warns us, however, that Aristotle's rational imagination does not correspond to Kant's productive imagination.<sup>72</sup> He concludes that for both Plato and Aristotle, imagination for the most part was a reproductive faculty and not a productive one, imitating instead of originating.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, Aristotelian imagination in a way can be thought as a prototype of Kantian imagination, as the emphasis on its connective function between the sensible and intelligible is reminiscent of the intermediate status of imagination in Kantian epistemology. A more well-known link between the two philosophies is the so-termed categories of human thought, for which Kant has been made the target of criticism of not having invested in a significant input of his own. This aspect put aside, Aristotle's assertion of the correspondence between these categories and the real forms is important when its appeal to one of the grand questions of the Enlightenment, and particularly of German Idealism, i.e., the passage between the subjective and the objective, is considered.

The medieval theories of imagination constitute the third and the last stage of what Kearney classifies as "premodern narratives". In Kearney's interpretation, medieval philosophy, a significant part of which entails Christian thinking, bears a similarity to the characteristic assigned to imagination hitherto: an act of imitating the original.<sup>74</sup> Crudely put, it approaches the workings of the imagination as an unlawful attempt to claim the divine act of creating as in the Hebraic tradition and to

---

<sup>72</sup> "The discovery of an autonomous imagination which creates meaning out of itself is a modern event. Only with Kant and the German idealists would Western philosophy officially and explicitly proclaim the existence of an imagination prior to, and independent of, both sensation and reason." Kearney, p.111

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 113

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, 115

claim to be the original truth as in the Hellenic tradition.<sup>75</sup> Thomas Aquinas is one of the scholars of the medieval era who handle this topic. According to Kearney, Aquinas views imagination as a mediator between the sensible and the rational, his view resembling Plato on the one side for assigning a higher truth to divine forms and Aristotle on the other for acknowledging the necessity of images as representations of forms.<sup>76</sup> All in all, what seems to be common among the medieval philosophers is the consensual idea that imagination is a second-order truth, a mimetic practice that imitates the original and is never the originator itself but a mediating faculty.<sup>77</sup>

Notwithstanding the fine, and sometimes apparent, differences between them, the so-called premodern narratives, to underline it once again, all converge at the formulation of imagination as a mimetic ability that humans possess. As far as the attainment of knowledge goes, it might serve as a useful tool, but should not be taken in itself as the means to know the truth. These narratives as Kearney articulates them are rather interested in the role imagination as a certain human deed and/or capability which endeavours, and at times unlawfully so, to know or to formulate the knowledge of a truth that is independent of human's participatory relation to that truth. As the next parts will make it clear, the question of the subject's participation in the attainment of the knowledge of object, and what the subject and the object as well as the link between them designate, will be the focus of the modern narrative of Kantian philosophy. At this critical juncture, imagination will appear as a central theme to be examined in detail.

---

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 117

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, 129

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, 130-131

### 3.1.2. Kant's Imagination

Taken to be a mainly mimetic practice imitating the divine activity of origination up until then, imagination came to be seen as an originary practice which is no longer attributed to the divine power(s) but to humans in the Enlightenment era. In this scene, it is man who produces his own truth; human imagination is hence a productive activity, “the immediate source of his own truth.”<sup>78</sup> Enlightenment thinkers, Kant and other German Idealists in particular, ended up theorizing imagination as a productive power by demonstrating it to be not a mere reproduction of a given reality or a stabilization of reality in memory but a dynamic activity that itself “produces” reality. Last but not least, the dualism of human carnality and the divine soul, the former claiming the activity of the latter, was obliterated in this new thought.<sup>79</sup>

This is how Kearney's assessment of the modern turn could be summarized. In keeping with his bold claim, Kearney further asserts that it was Kant's Copernican Revolution through which he centralized the role of human reasoning by placing it at the center of the universe. Within this novel frame of thought, imagination, with its property of synthesizing the realms of the sensible and the intelligible, was the crucial link between the thinking subject and the thought object.<sup>80</sup>

How is the Kantian approach to imagination essentially different from some of the other Enlightenment thinkers? While Kearney mentions and briefly delves into the theories of Rationalists such as Descartes and Spinoza alongside with certain Renaissance thinkers, it is again Hume, whose theory regarding the attainment of

---

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 155

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 155-156

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 156-157

knowledge, and the role of imagination in particular, that is perhaps the most noteworthy for his influence on Kantian thought. In line with his demonstration of the baselessness of necessary connection, Hume, Kearney states, can even said to have “pushed the ‘mimetic’ model of imagination to its final and unjustifiable limits. [...] [A]ll human knowledge was derived from the association of image-ideas [and making sense of the reality] was reduced to a series of purely psychological regularities [...] governing the connection between image-ideas.”<sup>81</sup> In his *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume treats imagination as the trait that misleadingly makes us believe in the necessity of the principle of causality among others; our imagination, moreover, merely ends up imitating the truth, which in turn is based on none other than our image-ideas.<sup>82</sup>

In contrast with the Humean view of imagination as a deceptive element that renders truth to what amounts to no more than our own representations, Kant, by discarding the stigma of mimesis and replacing it with an originary function, grants imagination a pivotal role in the lawful establishment of a system of knowledge. Simply put, imagination does not imitate a truth which is either divine, as in the previous theories of Western metaphysics, or nothing that can be known, as Hume holds it to be. On the contrary, it facilitates the possibility of objective knowledge, so to speak, by bridging the seemingly unbridgeable gap between intuition and concept. How it manages to do so constitutes the body of the following parts.

### **3.2. Imagination in the *First Critique***

Kearney’s interpretation of Kantian imagination vis-à-vis the development of the concept throughout the history of Western thought could be said to depict Kant as the

---

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, 165

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, 165

genuine pioneer of anthropocentrism and imagination as its driving force, to articulate it in its crudest sense. Kant's reply to Humean skepticism entails the "rehabilitat[ion of] the validity of objective knowledge by establishing the validity of the subjective imagination – as a 'transcendental synthesis' of our sensible and intelligible experience."<sup>83</sup> According to this formulation, it is imagination as a faculty of the subject that obliterates the doubts regarding the legitimacy of objective knowledge and justifies its possibility. And, as has already been delved into and as will be shown in line with the disputes arrived at by a number of key scholars in the field in the following chapter, imagination has the special status of being at the juncture of "data-receiving" and "data-processing" faculties, namely, sensibility and understanding. For the moment, it will be wise to examine the Kantian faculty of imagination in his *Critique of Pure Reason* with respect to the particularities it harbours so as to prepare for the remainder of the thesis in which these particularities will be central to the disputes involved. Last but not least, an investigation into imagination of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* will be helpful in further clarification of the disputes in question, as it frequently appears as a prominent aspect that informs the arguments of these scholars. It is then to be seen whether the imagination of the *Third Critique* reveals further dilemmas, or solutions for that matter, concerning the question on the whole.

### **3.2.1. Imagination: An Introduction**

Kant expounds imagination for the first time in the A-Deduction of the Transcendental Analytic in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, i.e., the section that lays down the *a priori* grounds of the possibility of experience.<sup>84</sup> In this section,

---

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, 169

Kant formulates a threefold synthesis which involves the faculties of sensibility, imagination, and understanding respectively. The significance of this threefold synthesis is the gathering of receptivity with spontaneity, and concomitantly of the sensible with the intellectual. It is a process without which the attainment of objectively valid knowledge is impossible.<sup>85</sup>

The synthesis of reproduction in imagination is the second stage of the threefold synthesis, following that of apprehension in intuition and preceding that of recognition in a concept. Most significantly, “imagination” itself is first introduced as a “power” of which synthesis is a “mere result.”<sup>86</sup> Granting it a crucial role throughout his epistemology, Kant defines “synthesis” as the “act of putting different representations together, and of grasping what is manifold in them in one [act of] knowledge.”<sup>87</sup> His adamant assertion regarding the source of synthesis poses a contrast to his rather obscure treatment of imagination when he initially defines it as “a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge whatsoever, but of which we are scarcely conscious.”<sup>88</sup> It is nevertheless made obvious from the very beginning that Kearney and a number of other scholars are not exaggerating the overall significance of the role of imagination in Kantian epistemology.

Besides the synthesis of reproduction, the faculty of imagination carries out a synthesis of other kind: one that pertains to production, namely, transcendental

---

<sup>84</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 1787.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, A97

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, A78, B103

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, A77, B103

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, A78, B103

synthesis of imagination. Kant introduces the transcendental synthesis of imagination as the “*a priori* ground of a necessary synthetic unity of appearances”<sup>89</sup> in an effort to justify it as one of the conditions of knowledge. Accordingly, imagination as an *a priori* principle allows “our empirical imagination,” which would otherwise “remain concealed within the mind as a dead and to us unknown faculty,”<sup>90</sup> to gather representations and relate them to one another in a sequence. Like in the case of sensibility and understanding, the two leading faculties involved in the attainment of knowledge, Kant accords imagination two modes of operation, namely, *a priori* and empirical, or transcendental and empirical, which, as will be shown in this part, constitute one of the backbones of his philosophy on the whole.

The centrality of imagination as the mediator between the pure forms of intuition in which immediate, sensible, and particular representations are given on the one hand, and the pure concepts of understanding which unify them to produce general representations and ultimately give rise to objective knowledge on the other, is established at once. This aspect of (transcendental) imagination as the mediator between faculties has been scrutinized by many scholars in the field, especially due to its rather notorious stance regarding the nature of its function. Trying to locate its function, i.e., whether it is intuitive or discursive, or both, and the problematic consequences that any of such readings lead to, informs the following parts and chapter of my thesis to a significant extent. The current task, then, is to pinpoint the particularities of the faculty of imagination in the *First Critique*, which shall serve as a guide while examining the related arguments in the following chapter.

### **3.2.2. Imagination: Productive and Reproductive**

---

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, A101

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, A100

In congruence with the legacy of his transcendental philosophy, Kant accords a twofold function to the faculty of imagination: it produces and reproduces, and it is obviously its first function to which Kearney attributes the revolutionary turn in the assessment of truth and reality. The question of *what* and *how* it produces and reproduces, as well as the distribution of tasks among the productive and reproductive functions of imagination, deserves a thorough explication so as to clarify the specificities and possible drawbacks of Kearney's theorization of the leap from the premodern times to the Enlightenment or, in other words, the switch from the mimetic model of reality to the productive model of knowledge. The answers to these questions are of utmost importance, since they are to serve as a key explanation regarding the workings of Kant's transcendental philosophy that simultaneously avoids, and claims to nullify while avoiding, the dogmatic theories of, and the skeptical approach to, the reality of an objective world and the human mind's legitimate processing of it.

In the *First Critique*, as pointed out in the previous part, Kant first expounds the subjective grounds of knowledge, starting with the forms of intuition to arrive at the concepts of understanding. Being the first of these three grounds, the synthesis of apprehension in intuition involves the unity of a manifold in intuition for each representation "contained in a single moment,"<sup>91</sup> that is to say, it facilitates the containment of the manifold in a single representation. The synthesis of reproduction in imagination then brings together these single representations in line with certain rules. Finally, the synthesis of recognition in a concept involves a "unitary

---

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, A99

consciousness [that] combines the manifold, successively intuited, and thereupon also reproduced, into one representation.”<sup>92</sup>

It is obviously the reproductive imagination that Kant formulates in the first place. As its name suggests, it “reproduces” the singly intuited bundle of senses in a sequence. This way the objects we perceive around us, including our own selves and consciousness, gain a temporally discernible integrity without being something at some moment and something else at the next moment. Strictly speaking, the reproductive imagination provides us with the image of the empirically real world.

In contrast with the reproductive imagination, the productive imagination governs the transcendental function of the faculty. In Kant’s formulation, it is none other than the transcendental faculty of imagination that practices the (transcendental) synthesis that constitutes the basis of the knowledge of possible experience. It does so by authorizing the reproductive imagination to bring together single, separate instances of appearances into a unified image via the “schemata”. The schemata are the functions that render possible the connection between the intuited bundle of appearances and the categories of understanding that, through its application to these appearances, justify a lawfully established objective knowledge of possible experience. Simply put, they enable the understanding to apply its concepts to the intuited appearances. This way the functional hiatus between the sensible, administered principally by space and time as forms of intuition, and the intellectual, carried out by the concepts of understanding, is bridged.

To further understand the significance of the twofold function of the faculty of imagination, it will be helpful to examine them with respect to the corresponding

---

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, A99-103

division of the empirical and the transcendental, and then to have a closer look to the so-termed “schemata”.

### 3.2.3. Imagination: Empirical and Transcendental

The productive / reproductive division points to yet another division, which comprises a basic component of Kant’s method of transcendental deduction before anything else. Like all other faculties that play a major role in the justification of objective knowledge, the faculty of imagination observes two types of application: empirical and transcendental.

While accounting for the reproduction of intuited appearances in a sequence, Kant underlines the transcendental faculty of imagination, i.e., productive imagination, as the transcendental ground which at the same time renders possible the empirical employment of reproductive imagination.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, all empirical employment seems to necessitate a transcendental counterpart so as to be lawfully activated. As explained in the previous part, reproductive imagination recalls the preceding appearance in association with the following appearance. The act that formally foreruns reproduction is the synthesis of apprehension, which involves the containment of the sensible bundle in a single representation. The act that formally succeeds it is the synthesis of recognition, whose empirical function “recognizes” the reproduced series of representations in a single consciousness. The transcendental function of the synthesis of recognition is termed “transcendental apperception”, a “pure original unchangeable consciousness” that makes the innumerable instances of inner appearances into a unified consciousness.<sup>94</sup> As in the case of transcendental apperception, all three subjective grounds of knowledge, besides their empirical

---

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, A101-102

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, A107

employment to appearances, “are likewise *a priori* elements or foundations, which make this empirical employment possible.”<sup>95</sup>

It would not be exaggerated to claim that, of all the so-termed transcendental elements or foundations, the transcendental faculty of imagination is accorded a special role amongst others, specifically in the A-Deduction. The productive synthesis of imagination performed by the faculty in question is stated to be “the ground of the possibility of all knowledge, especially of experience.”<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, as touched upon a number of times so far, it is the medium between sensibility, the receiver of knowledge, and understanding, the lawful generator of the received knowledge in its spontaneity.

A pure imagination, which conditions all *a priori* knowledge, is thus one of the fundamental faculties of the human soul. [...] The two extremes, namely sensibility and understanding, must stand in necessary connection with each other through the mediation of this transcendental faculty of imagination, because otherwise the former, though indeed yielding appearances, would supply no objects of empirical knowledge, and consequently no experience. Actual experience [contains] certain concepts which render possible the formal unity of experience, and therewith all objective validity (truth) of empirical knowledge. These grounds of the recognition of the manifold, so far as they concern *solely the form of an experience in general*, are the *categories*. Upon them is based not only all formal unity in the [transcendental]<sup>97</sup> synthesis of imagination, but also, thanks to that synthesis, all its empirical employment (in recognition, reproduction, association, apprehension) in connection with the appearances. [...] <sup>98</sup>

Judging from the explanation above, one could assert that the transcendental imagination as a faculty is the originator of both its productive and reproductive functions. The term “pure” pertains to that which occurs prior to the experiencing of the empirically real world; it would not be wrong to claim that it corresponds to “*a*

---

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, A115

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, A118

<sup>97</sup> *sic*.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, A124-125

*priori*” and is immanently linked to the transcendental order, as opposed to term “empirical”. Regarding the twofold function of imagination, Kant further states that the (otherwise empirical) function of imagination is rendered transcendental once transcendental apperception, which involves the “abiding and unchanging ‘I’”, is added to it.<sup>99</sup> As mentioned earlier, transcendental (unity of) apperception involves an enduring unity of consciousness that is not affected by phenomena and is itself not a phenomenon like empirical consciousness. The pure concepts of understanding, “brought into play” through the relation of the sensible content to the transcendental unity of apperception, are connected to sensibility via pure productive imagination. In other words, productive imagination brings concepts of understanding into relation with sensible intuition with the help of pure apperception conjoined with reproductive imagination.<sup>100</sup>

As the next fundamental step, understanding unifies the information that the synthesis of imagination lays before it through its schemata.

[W]hat the schematism of understanding effects by means of the transcendental synthesis of imagination is simply the unity of all the manifold of intuition in inner sense [...]. The schemata of the pure concepts of understanding are thus the true and sole conditions under which these concepts obtain relation to objects and so possess *significance*. In the end, therefore, the categories have no other possible employment than the empirical.<sup>101</sup>

It is, then, the productive imagination that provides understanding with the formal device through which understanding processes images as products of reproductive imagination,<sup>102</sup> according to its laws. The emphasis on the empirical employment of understanding as regards what the schemata provide it with is reiterated in the

---

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, A124

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, A123-124

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, A145-146, B185

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, A142, B181

analogies of experience when Kant asserts that synthetic principles can be valid only in relation to the empirical, and not their transcendental, employment of understanding, and that “appearances have therefore to be subsumed, not simply under the categories, but under their schemata.”<sup>103</sup> He further recalls this rule when explicating the postulates of empirical thought. Namely, a concept which contains a synthesis must either be empirical or pure so as to be related to any possible object of experience. If it is an empirical concept, then the synthesis belongs to experience as being derived from it. If it is pure concept, then the synthesis is conversely the *a priori* condition upon which experience rests in formal terms. The pure concept “still belongs to experience, inasmuch as its object is to be met with only in experience.”<sup>104</sup> In brief, regardless of the faculty and its function in question, experience calls for an empirical employment so as to be assessed. In this respect, both the reproductive and productive employments of the faculty of imagination are to restrict themselves to the phenomena, namely, sensibly intuited objects, and to refrain from the government of the noumena, the latter residing outside of sensible intuition.<sup>105</sup>

#### 3.2.4. Imagination and Transcendental Schemata

The part where Kant expounds schematism is pivotal in terms of viewing one of the most important problematics of Kantian epistemology, i.e., the interrelation between phenomena and the conditions that govern the knowledge of the phenomenal world.

---

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*, A180-181, B223

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, A220, B267

<sup>105</sup> In the A-Deduction, Kant articulates the legitimacy of noumenon by underlining the necessary recognition of “appearances” as “indicating a relation to something” whose immediate representation happens to be within the sensible. “We have not, indeed, been able to prove that sensible intuition is the only possible intuition, but only that it is so for us.” (A251-252)

In the schematism part, Kant recalls to mind the crucial question of how pure categories of understanding are to be applied to phenomena. He introduces the notions of homogeneity, and heterogeneity as opposed to it, as regards the relation between the intuition of sensible manifold and its “conversion”, so to speak, into an intellectual datum by the understanding. Since the two activities are different in nature, they are said to be heterogeneous; pure concepts of understanding are “quite heterogeneous from empirical intuitions,” as they cannot be intuited as empirical intuitions are. This poses a problem for the realization of the interrelation mentioned above, namely, the possibility of the “subsumption” of the sensible manifold under pure concepts of understanding in order to yield knowledge of theoretical kind. There must therefore be a mediator in between, which, while being pure *a priori*, should be homogeneous with both sides, i.e., be “both sensible and intelligible at the same time.” Kant terms this mediator the “transcendental schema.”<sup>106</sup>

Upon this description, an intricate, or rather originary, relationship between imagination and schema is soon founded. Constituting the “formal and pure condition of sensibility to which the employment of the concept of understanding is restricted,” the schema is “in itself always a product of imagination.”<sup>107</sup> At this point, one of the leading distinctions that Kant draws upon this definition is one between schema and image; the distinction is justified by his claim that imagination is not involved in intuition but is concerned with the unity of the intuited representations. Kant gives an example that includes numbers so as to make the distinction clear. Put crudely, the image of a number comprises the synthetic unity of the units of a particular number whereas the schema comprises the very “method” whereby this

---

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, A137-138, B176-177

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, A140, B179

synthetic unity is achieved. Kant once more states that schema is an act of representation conducted by the faculty of imagination – a “rule of the synthesis of imagination” – providing an image for a concept, and can only exist in thought.<sup>108</sup>

Besides the example that includes numbers, Kant gives the example of triangle while trying to specify the difference between the image and schema: the schema of the triangle is the rule of the production of a universal triangle figure in a synthetic *a priori* fashion in thought whereas its image pertains to a particular figure, “whether right-angled, obtuse-angled, or acute-angled”. He states that schema entails the “representation of a method” through which a figure is represented in an image in conformity with the concept of that figure, i.e., it provides an image for a concept. Image pertains to the empirical, reproductive faculty of imagination whereas schema pertains to the transcendental, productive faculty of imagination through which images become possible.<sup>109</sup>

[The] images can be connected with the concept only by means of the schema to which they belong. In themselves they are never completely congruent with the concept. On the other hand, the schema of a *pure* concept of understanding can never be brought into any image whatsoever. [...] It is a transcendental product of imagination, a product which concerns the determination of inner sense in general according to conditions of its form (time), in respect of all representations, so far as these representations are to be connected *a priori* in one concept in conformity with the unity of apperception.<sup>110</sup>

The citation makes it clear that schema has priority over image in terms of the attainment of knowledge. There are, on the one hand, schemata of sensible concepts as a product of pure *a priori* imagination, “through which, and in accordance with which, images themselves first become possible”, and schemata of pure concepts as

---

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, A140, B179-180

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, A141-142, B180-181

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, A142, B181

pure syntheses on the other.<sup>111</sup> The latter, as cited earlier, are “the true and sole conditions under which these concepts [of understanding] obtain relations to objects” whereas the former are the “phenomen[a] or sensible concept[s]” that abide by the categories, limiting the function of the categories to the intellectual.<sup>112</sup>

### 3.2.5. Schematism and Time

When Kant says at the beginning of the chapter on schematism that “[w]e must be able to show how pure concepts can be applicable to appearances,”<sup>113</sup> he basically refers to the question of heterogeneity between two faculties of different natures. Kant then sets out to expound schematism, the mediating function which, produced by transcendental imagination, makes it possible to bring the intuited phenomena under the pure concepts of understanding. While performing this function, the transcendental schemata ultimately consult the pure form of sensibility that applies to all possible phenomena: time. Kant’s concise explanation regarding the use of time in this procedure is worth citing at length:

Time, as the formal condition of the manifold of inner sense, and therefore of the connection of all representations, contains an *a priori* manifold in pure intuition. Now a transcendental determination of time is so far homogeneous with the category, which constitutes its unity, in that it is universal and rests upon an *a priori* rule. But, on the other hand, it is so far homogeneous with appearance, in that time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold. Thus an application of the category to appearances becomes possible by means of the transcendental determination of time, which, as the schema of the concepts of understanding, mediates the subsumption of the appearances under the category.<sup>114</sup>

Two issues deserve attention here. First, what makes time in a way privileged vis-à-vis space, even though both are pure forms of sensibility, is that it involves the

---

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, A142, B181

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, A146-147, B185-186

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, A138, B177

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, A138-139, B177-178

“connection of all representations.” It is “contained in every empirical representation of the manifold.” Second, and in relation to its status as the formal condition of each and every representation, formal determination of time is to be contained in the pure concepts of understanding. What does this mean? It means that time as the pure form of sensibility, by being comprised in the syntheses of pure categories, authorizes these otherwise logical forms of judgment to apply to empirical representations all of which involve temporality so as to produce theoretical knowledge. In other words, pure concepts of understanding need pure temporal determinations to be able to synthesize phenomena, a realm characterized by spatiotemporal relations. This way time as the form of inner sense comes to the fore as that whose determination ultimately renders possible the homogeneity between (pure and empirical) intuitions and pure concepts that the transcendental schemata brings together.

Throughout the chapter on schematism, Kant refers to pure categories and delineates their corresponding schemata, including that of causality. He defines the schema of causality as “the real upon which, whenever posited, something else always follows;”<sup>115</sup> the procedure involves the temporal succession of the manifold of representations. Whereas in its logical form the category of causality denotes a hypothetical relation of “if *p* then *q*,” the schematized form of causality is able to apply to intuitions that succeed one another in a temporal order. Kant’s formulation of the schemata as the “*a priori* determinations of time in accordance with rules”<sup>116</sup> with regard to each form of judgment is thus an integral element of his answer to Hume and of the foundations of his Copernican Revolution. Put simply, “[a]ll our

---

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, A144, B183

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*, A145, B184

knowledge is thus finally subject to time, the formal condition of inner sense,”<sup>117</sup> regardless of whether they are pure or empirical.

### 3.3. Imagination in the *Third Critique*

Much as it appears at the critical juncture of the possibility of theoretical knowledge, imagination attains a not less pivotal role in the workings of the power of judgment in the *Third Critique*. It would not be an overstatement to claim that the most important point of divergence between the two *Critiques* lies at the nature and the workings of their leading faculties, i.e., the understanding of the *First Critique* and the power of judgment of the *Third Critique*. Therefore a brief examination of the power of judgment might be helpful in terms of making sense of the role of imagination in the *Third Critique* and then of delineating the extent of its compatibility with that of the *First Critique*.

#### 3.3.1. The Power of Judgment

“[T]he power of judgment is such a special faculty of cognition, not at all self-sufficient, that it provides neither concepts, like the understanding, nor ideas, like reason, of any object at all, since it is a faculty merely for subsuming under concepts given from elsewhere,” writes Kant in the “First Introduction” to his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.<sup>118</sup> Unlike the understanding, which has a determining role regarding the possibility of the objective knowledge of nature thanks to its law-making concepts, the power of judgment is rather concerned with the possibility of experience, which is made up of an endless array of empirical laws, as a system. What is at stake here is not the production of the knowledge of the phenomenal realm through determinative judgment, as in the case of understanding, but the

---

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, A99

<sup>118</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 20:202

conformity of the phenomenal realm to our power of judgment as a lawful system made up of innumerable items. The power of judgment *reflects*: it assumes in nature, without assigning it an objective grounding, a lawfulness through which all of the countless particular components of the empirical realm are systematically connected to one another under general empirical rules. Kant refers to this assumption as the “formal purposiveness of nature” – an *a priori* principle which is nevertheless subjective.<sup>119</sup> He further expounds this principle with the following words:

[...] Thus it is a subjectively necessary transcendental presupposition that such a disturbingly unbounded diversity of empirical laws and heterogeneity of natural forms does not pertain to nature, rather that nature itself, through the affinity of particular laws under more general ones, qualifies for an experience, as an empirical system.<sup>120</sup>

The principle of the formal purposiveness of nature thus does not involve an objectively determining concept(s) as the understanding does. Through this principle, the power of judgment rather reflects on the possibility of a systematic harmony in nature that is compliant with the need of the subject to assume such possibility, “without which presupposition we could not hope to find our way in a labyrinth of the multiplicity of possible empirical particular laws.”<sup>121</sup> The power of judgment comprises two types of judgments, namely, aesthetic and teleological. An aesthetic judgment is reached as the faculty of imagination, once apprehending the sensible manifold in intuition, “agrees with” the faculty of understanding which provides the apprehended object with a concept *and* as the reflection of this mutual play of the two faculties accords a purposiveness to the object, albeit a subjective one that has

---

<sup>119</sup> 20:204

<sup>120</sup> 20:209

<sup>121</sup> 20: 214

nothing to do with cognition.<sup>122</sup> Such judgment involves a subjective sensation that pertains to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, produced as a result of the play between the faculties of imagination and understanding.<sup>123</sup> In contrast, a teleological judgment concerns the play of the understanding not with imagination but with reason, in which an empirical concept of the understanding for an object is viewed in relation to whether the concept is in accord with the principle of reason regarding the possibility of a system in nature. It is a cognitive judgment which relates to an objective purposiveness of nature, yet still reflecting and not determining.<sup>124</sup>

It is the aesthetic judgment, expounded in the sections titled “Analytic of the Beautiful” and “Analytic of the Sublime”, which will be the concern of this part of the thesis, as the imagination has a crucial role specifically with respect to such judgment. It is important, however, to keep in mind the motivation, or rather the necessity, for the emergence of a critique of judgment, which should inform not only the explication of the imagination in the *Third Critique* but also the whole of the thesis.

### **3.3.2. Imagination and the Beautiful**

“In order to decide whether or not something is beautiful, we do not relate the representation by means of understanding to the object for cognition, but rather relate it by means of the imagination (perhaps combined with the understanding) to the subject and its feeling of pleasure or displeasure,” states Kant at the very beginning of the “Analytic of the Beautiful.”<sup>125</sup> Such decision pertains to a judgment of taste.

---

<sup>122</sup> 20:220-21

<sup>123</sup> 20:224

<sup>124</sup> 20:221

<sup>125</sup> 5:203

Differently from cognitive judgment, an aesthetic judgment that designates taste is a subjective judgment that is not concerned with whether the judged object exists or not but reflects on the object with regard to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. Not claiming to cognize the object, aesthetic judgment does not involve any interest.<sup>126</sup>

The fact that judgments of taste do not determine the object, however, does not mean that they do not comprise validity for every subject. They indeed possess a common validity, albeit one related to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure aroused in the subject and thus referring to a subjective universality. Such universality is not based on a cognitive concept as it would in the case of the understanding, which involves an objectively universal validity. It rather involves an idea that these type of judgments are governed by, i.e., the expectation of subjects' consent rather than an agreement in accordance with concepts that operate on an objective level.<sup>127</sup>

Kant bases the subjective universal validity of the judgment of taste in what he terms as the “free play of imagination and the understanding,”<sup>128</sup> in a way eradicating the hesitation regarding the intervention of understanding that he initially refers to in parentheses. Subsequently, the feeling of pleasure is facilitated in the harmony of these two cognitive faculties and is universally communicable. Within this formulation, that which is beautiful is defined as the universally pleasing without the involvement of a concept.<sup>129</sup> The emphasis on the lack of a process of cognitive nature is once again underlined when Kant reminds the reader that the feeling of

---

<sup>126</sup> 5:209-211

<sup>127</sup> 5:214-216

<sup>128</sup> 5:218

<sup>129</sup> 5:219

pleasure that the beautiful universally stimulates in the subject “is immediately combined with the representation through which the object is given (not through which it is thought).”<sup>130</sup> Judgments of taste, in other words, do not concern thought, which is a cognitive process. Just as can be sensed by the absence of the term “knowledge” and of the lexicon evolving around it throughout the *First Critique*, the role of the faculty of understanding in the judgments of taste is not the kind that produces knowledge of the object or, to put it more accurately, the representation of the given object. In a similar way, the faculty of imagination, though mentioned with regard to its “apprehensive” role, does not appear on the stage as regards its role in the production of knowledge, as expounded in the *First Critique*.

What does this “free play” that alludes to the activity of the two faculties involve? For the attainment of a precise understanding of this activity, the question of how the imagination functions in the process of judging whether a thing is beautiful or not, if its productive role in the attainment of the theoretical knowledge of that thing is of no concern, primarily demands an answer. A bit later in the text, Kant delineates the particular role of imagination as regards what he refers to as the “ideal of the beautiful.”<sup>131</sup> Accordingly, it is imagination, and not reason, that accedes to the ideal of the beautiful as the faculty of presentation. Though it is reason that governs the idea as its concept, and the ideal as the individual sample that matches up with the idea, it ceases to operate here since the ideal of the beautiful is not a conceptual one. With its capability of recollecting numerous images that resemble one another and distinguishing them individually, the imagination manages to come up with a “common measure” that serves as an average of all the images in

---

<sup>130</sup> 5:230

<sup>131</sup> 5:232

question, to which none of them matches exactly.<sup>132</sup> Kant is cautious, however, reminding the reader that the process is not merely empirical: the common measure is not a result of empirical judgments of taste but itself facilitates these judgments, constituting not a determinate idea that compels us to admit it as an objective norm but a reflective one that summons us to agree with it. In other words, we *should* judge a thing to be beautiful whose disinterested judgment is in accordance with the *a priori* form of beauty which, though not objectively universal, asks for the congruence of the judgments of taste made by each and every one of us *as if* they are objectively so.<sup>133</sup>

It could then be concluded that the imagination, with its non-intellectual nature that nevertheless comprises the crucial role of “preparing” the given object to finally be conceptualized by understanding, thus lies at the core of our judgments of taste. This brings us to the posing of another question which is not less important than the one above: how does the understanding function in its free play with the imagination? Kant offers a formulation that sheds light to this question while further expounding the workings of the imagination in the most precise and compact manner, which I find worth citing at length:

[I]f in the judgment of taste the imagination must be considered in its freedom, then it is in the first instance taken not as reproductive, as subjected to the laws of association, but as productive and self-active (as the authoress of voluntary forms of possible intuitions); and although in the apprehension of a given object of the senses it is of course bound to a determinate form of this object and to this extent has no free play (as in invention), nevertheless it is still quite conceivable that the object can provide it with a form that contains precisely such a composition of the manifold as the imagination would design in harmony with the lawfulness of the understanding in general if it were left free by itself. Yet for the imagination to be free and yet lawful by itself, i.e., that it carry autonomy with it, is a contradiction. The understanding alone gives the law. But when the imagination is compelled to proceed in accordance with a determinate

---

<sup>132</sup> 5:234-235

<sup>133</sup> 5:236-239

law, then how its product should be, as far as its form is concerned, is determined through concepts; but then, as was said above, the satisfaction is not that in the beautiful, but in the good (of perfection, in any case merely the formal kind), and the judgment is not a judgment by means of taste. Thus only a lawfulness without law and a subjective correspondence of the imagination to the understanding without an objective one – where the representation is related to a determinate concept of an object – are consistent with the free lawfulness of the understanding (which is also called purposiveness without an end) and with the peculiarity of a judgment of taste.<sup>134</sup>

Simply put, the imagination is driven to be free and at the same time lawful: on the one hand, it is free to the extent of actively producing the forms of the object that it apprehends in accordance with the laws of the understanding. It is lawful to the extent of abiding by the necessities of the determination that awaits the apprehended object to be conducted by the understanding on the other. Conversely, the understanding is free enough to refrain from putting its determining function into the process of the judgment of taste while at the same time it is lawful enough not to violate this function. As Kant puts it, the imagination corresponds to the understanding *subjectively*.<sup>135</sup> Namely, the imagination has a say in the awakening of a feeling of pleasure or displeasure in the subject rather than in the determination of the object whose form triggers this feeling. The understanding facilitates the task of the former by not intervening in the release of the feeling that the form of the object, which it is to determine, stimulates in the subject. It would perhaps be bold yet fitting to claim that the understanding has a passive role in the judgment of taste: it helps with the process by refraining from asserting its determining function and expecting the imagination to work in harmony with this function. Hence the possibility of the free lawfulness, and perhaps the lawful freedom, of the two faculties in the assessment of the beautiful: there is no pressure on the part of the understanding for

---

<sup>134</sup> 5:240-241

<sup>135</sup> 5:241

the production of objective knowledge, nor is there an unjustified claim on the part of the imagination regarding an expansion of such knowledge. To put it in positive terms, the understanding is free enough to let imagination relate the form of an apprehended object to a judgment of taste while the imagination is lawful enough to restrict its claim to the attainment of a judgment of taste.

### **3.3.3. Imagination and the Sublime**

Aside from the judging of the beautiful, the imagination plays a crucial role in the judging of the sublime. The sublime, Kant contends, operates similarly to the beautiful in that both comprise a judgment of reflection and not of determination, being universally subjective non-conceptual predicates that inform singular instances. In total contrast with the beautiful, however, the sublime has to do not with the form of the given object but its formlessness; indeed, the predicate applies to the objects that defy a delineated form. In this light, the feeling of pleasure that the sublime animates, Kant asserts, is not related to quality, as in the case of the beautiful, but to quantity, as the object which is judged to be sublime posits a repudiation of quantification, so to speak. Therefore the pleasure that it triggers in the subject is of a different nature. It does not merely draw the subject toward the given object but simultaneously draws toward and repels from it. In Kant's words, it is a "negative pleasure."<sup>136</sup>

Apart from this difference, Kant argues that the most important point of divergence between the two judgments is that when an object of nature (and not of art, which has a different dynamic) is judged to be beautiful, the compliance of the purposiveness of its form to our power of judgment is at play. Yet the same does not apply to the sublime, since the latter comprises precisely the obliteration of a definite

---

<sup>136</sup> 5:244

form in the given object. According to Kant, therefore, the sublime object of nature is rather “contrapurposive for our power of judgment, unsuitable for our faculty of presentation, and as it were doing violence to our imagination.”<sup>137</sup>

How could this “unsuitableness” and “violence” be explained? Kant asserts that the sublime does not involve the understanding in free play with the imagination, as the beautiful does, but that it involves the reason. Accordingly, imagination endeavours to reach the infinite, whereas reason *claims* to comprehend the totality. The imagination progressively apprehends the estimation of quantity into infinity without managing to comprehend it in its totality; the understanding quantifies the apprehended intuition with the help of the schemata provided by none other than the imagination. Reason, on the other hand, attempts to comprehend in a single intuition all that the imagination apprehends in a progression, not excluding the presentation of the infinite. This way it provokes the mind in the direction of comprehending the totality of the objectively possible world in a single intuition. Kant reminds us, however, that the infinite pertains to an absolute quantity and is not a matter of comparison. In this line, the mere ability to think the infinite without contradiction pertains to the practical, and not to the theoretical, domain in which the mind, moving beyond the sensible, attains a supersensible aspect that is intellectually, if not mathematically, realized as an idea of infinity. It is precisely this idea of infinity, which the imagination is not apt to govern, that the object judged to be sublime recalls upon being intuited.<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> 5:245

<sup>138</sup> 5:250-255

Having put forth an aspect of the discordant relation between the imagination and reason, Kant continues with expounding the issue of purposiveness in the case of the sublime:

For just as imagination and understanding produce subjective purposiveness of the powers of the mind in the judging of the beautiful through their unison, so do imagination and reason produce subjective purposiveness through their conflict: namely, a feeling that we have pure self-sufficient reason, or a faculty for estimating magnitude, whose preeminence cannot be made intuitable through anything except the inadequacy of that faculty which is itself unbounded in the presentation of magnitudes (of sensible objects).<sup>139</sup>

The sublime, then, triggers in the subject concurrent feelings of grasping and failing to grasp the magnitude of an object. Initially claiming that the sublime is contrapurposive, Kant asserts that the sublime indeed comprises purposiveness and contrapurposiveness simultaneously due to a process by the imagination that involves a violation of time. On the one hand, imagination *apprehends* the sensible manifold in time, which constitutes “progression”, conversely, a “regression” takes place when the imagination attempts to comprehend the apprehended manifold as an intuitive unity. The simultaneity of the so-termed progression and regression comprises “violence” against time as the inner sense, of which temporal succession in intuition is a condition. Kant contends that the imagination undertakes this violence as both a subjective and an objective move on its part: the attempt of comprehending a magnitude – the bigger the magnitude, the more serious the extent of violence – is at once subjective, as the imagination works contrary to time’s condition of temporal succession, yet at the same time objective and necessary for the estimation of the given magnitude. The moment of the sublime, then, is on one level contrapurposive for revealing the inability of the subject regarding the

---

<sup>139</sup> 5:258

comprehension of infinity, yet on another level purposive for revealing what Kant terms as the “consciousness” of the subject regarding this inability.<sup>140</sup>

In this sense, the sublime is a moment of opposing forces whose origins can be sought in the imagination and, differently from the beautiful, it is the conflicting stance between these opposing forces that yields a certain introspective understanding on the part of the subject. Kant further states that the displeasure and contrapurposefulness that the regressive movement of the imagination involves, ending up with the discovery of its inadequacy to comprehend the apprehended manifold in aesthetic terms, opens up to a pleasure and purposiveness on the side of reason, which resorts to a comprehension of it in intellectual terms.<sup>141</sup> Accordingly, the two-way movement on the part of the imagination constitutes a “reflection of the aesthetic power of judgment” which, with its attempt to match up with the adequacy of reason, “represents the object, precisely by means of the objective inadequacy of the imagination in its greatest extension to reason (as a faculty of ideas), as subjectively purposive.”<sup>142</sup> Moreover, as this movement discloses the imagination’s failure to present what lies beyond the sensible, its attempt to present the supersensible in its infinity “can never be anything other than a merely negative presentation, which nevertheless expands the soul.”<sup>143</sup> That is, imagination’s failure to move beyond the sensible is immanently accompanied by the feeling of superiority regarding the ideas of reason, which the human mind, being capable of envisioning these ideas that pertain to the supersensible, cherishes this very capability. Last but not least, the moment of realizing the failure – imagination is

---

<sup>140</sup> 5:258-259

<sup>141</sup> 5:259-260

<sup>142</sup> 5:269

<sup>143</sup> 5:274

incapable of relating itself to what lies beyond the sensible – is a moment of self-knowledge – a moment of wisdom.

### 3.3.4. The Significance of Imagination in the Transcendental Deduction of the *Third Critique*

The expounding of the power of judgment as the faculty of aesthetic judgment itself, in compliance with Kant's transcendental philosophy from the general perspective, brings about the necessity of deducing the universal validity of this sort of judgment. In the case of the understanding as the principle faculty of pure reason, its capacity to determine the intuited *Gegenstand* to be a thought *Objekt*, i.e., attain theoretical knowledge of a given object through its pure *a priori* concepts is laid out as a process that is objectively necessary. In this sense, it comprises an objective universal validity, which seemingly fortifies its position as far as its legitimacy regarding the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge is concerned. A subjective, and not objective, universal validity, however, is at work in the case of the power of judgment as regards its aesthetic judgments. Nevertheless, a deduction is necessarily demanded of a judgment which purports to universality, albeit a subjective one. Kant once again formulates the beautiful and the sublime in this context. Being predicated in relation to the form of the given object, the former finds its purposiveness in this form. The latter's purposiveness is to be traced to the subject since, contrary to the beautiful, what it judges is defined by its formlessness, which in turn causes the subject to reflect on its own thinking the sublimity of the given object (hence the "consciousness"). It is an "as if objectivity" that is at play, then, when it comes to predicating something in nature as beautiful and/or sublime and expecting a consensus on the part of all subjects.<sup>144</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup> 5:279-281

Upon his account on the subjective universality of the aesthetic judgments, Kant focuses his attention on the grand question of how synthetic *a priori* judgment is possible. The judgment of taste is obviously synthetic, as its predication surpasses the intuition, as well as the cognition, of the given object that it judges and is by all means singular and empirical. Its demand of a universal subjective agreement on the predicate, however, renders obligatory the legitimization of its *a priori* status. Kant's solution is as follows:

[I]t is not the pleasure but the universal validity of this pleasure perceived in the mind as connected with the mere judging of an object that is represented in a judgment of taste as a universal rule for the power of judgment, valid for everyone. It is an empirical judgment that I perceive and judge an object with pleasure. But it is an *a priori* judgment that I find it beautiful, i.e., that I may require that satisfaction of everyone as necessary.<sup>145</sup>

The part on the *First Critique* has already expounded the collaboration between imagination and understanding in the production of theoretical knowledge of a given object and hence the objective determination of that object. When it comes to conveying the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, imagination and understanding once again collaborate with one another, yet the collaboration is of no cognitive nature. It takes place, Kant once again emphasizes, when the imagination in its freedom stimulates the understanding so that the latter moves the former in turn. The given object is conveyed as a feeling of pleasure and/or displeasure as a result. The feeling is aroused through the mere act of judging the form of the object without involving concepts.<sup>146</sup> In the end, there is no objective claim but a subjective one that nevertheless demands a universal agreement.

### 3.3.5. Creative Imagination

---

<sup>145</sup> 5:289

<sup>146</sup> 5:595-600

Last but not least, Kant examines the imagination in relation to art. He formulates art vis-à-vis nature. Accordingly, art has to do with “doing” whereas nature has to do with “acting or producing.”<sup>147</sup> Emphasizing the man-made aspect of art, Kant distinguishes beauty in nature from beauty in art: we can speak of a beautiful object when it comes to nature but of a beautiful *representation* of an object of nature when it comes to art. In both cases, however, the pleasure derived from the judging of the form of the object, be it an object of nature or of art, is what counts as beautiful. In art, however, there is a certain mimetic consciousness. Most important, art always involves “production through freedom, i.e., [...] a capacity for choice that grounds its actions in reason.”<sup>148</sup>

What could the necessary involvement of art with reason mean? Here, again the imagination is at play. It steps beyond its role as a productive faculty in the cognitive sense, which constitutes the concern of the *First Critique*, and comes up with representations which evoke the ideas of reason. In other words, the imagination frees itself from its cognitive responsibility in the attainment of the knowledge of nature and instead generates representations that exceed the cognizable territory of nature. Kant describes this process as the creative aspect of imagination:

Now if we add to a concept a representation of the imagination that belongs to its presentation, but which by itself stimulates so much thinking that it can never be grasped in a determinate concept, hence which aesthetically enlarges the concept itself in an unbounded way, then in this case the imagination is creative, and sets the faculty of intellectual ideas (reason) into motion, that is, at the instigation of a representation it gives more to think about than can be grasped and made distinct in it (although it does, to be sure, belong to the concept of the object).<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>147</sup> 5:303

<sup>148</sup> 5:303

<sup>149</sup> 5:315

The creative aspect of imagination, Kant contends, does not disregard the understanding; to the contrary, the imagination adds its ideas to the concept of an object determined by the understanding, thereby neither contributing to cognition in an objective manner nor merely detaching itself from the cognitive process. It rather subjectively engages itself, understanding, and finally reason in the making of a representation that, while appealing to the concept of the object represented, is not restricted to it and is apt to be communicated universally. Kant defines the interplay of the imagination, understanding, and reason in this specific fashion as “genius.”<sup>150</sup> Genius pertains to the union of imagination and understanding in which imagination in its aesthetic activity arouses representations on whose concepts the understanding does not have a cognitive administration. It undertakes two chief tasks respectively: coming up with ideas through the free play of imagination and understanding for a given concept and facilitating the expression of these ideas, which in turn allows these expressions to be communicated in a universal and subjective fashion. In contrast with the object of nature, the object of art that comprises the act of genius can be evaluated to be beautiful given that the concept of the object portrayed is taken into consideration whereas the evaluation of the former as regards beauty involves the reflection on an intuition of it and does not need its concept. The judgments of neither object, however, comprise determination in an objective universal fashion.

All things considered, imagination plays a pivotal role in both *Critiques*; yet, as the present chapter has revealed, the nature of the role differs in each. In both determinative and reflective judgments, imagination in its productive mode constitutes a fundamental element, interacting with other fundaments of knowledge

---

<sup>150</sup> 5:316-317

production in the *First Critique* and of aesthetic appreciation and artistic creativity in the *Third Critique*. It remains to be seen where there arise conflictive interpretations regarding its function in each *Critique*, which makes up the task of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### RE-THINKING IMAGINATION: FRAMING THE DISPUTES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

This chapter scrutinizes discussions on the role of imagination by various scholars. It primarily looks at how each scholar views and interprets the workings of the imagination in the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. It then compares these views to see where they agree and disagree with one another. In this manner, it delineates the disputes regarding the imagination and seeks to formulate solutions by evaluating the works by these scholars in light of Kant's *Critiques* as expounded in the third chapter.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the prevalent debates related to the imagination's stance, i.e. whether its undertakings have an intuitive or discursive character, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. It does so mainly by examining two major functions attributed for the most part to the imagination, namely, synthesis and schemata. The second part deals with the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* and analyzes the discussions related to how the imagination gets involved in reflective judgment as differently from its involvement in determinative judgment of the *First Critique*. Finally, the third part looks at the meeting point between the two (and indeed three) *Critiques* and seeks to define the contribution of the imagination to Kant's overall system.

While carrying out this task, I have consulted Sarah Gibbons' 1994 work titled *Kant's Theory of Imagination* extensively.<sup>151</sup> Gibbons' study provides the reader with a detailed scrutiny of the imagination in both *Critiques* and contains many insightful formulations and interpretations. It has been especially helpful in organizing the debates in distinct parts. In this respect, this chapter constitutes a close reading of Gibbons' study beside the comparative evaluation of the arguments of all the scholars that have contributed to this chapter.

#### **4.1. The Nature of Imagination in the *First Critique***

As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the most renowned disputes pertaining to the faculty of imagination is its seemingly dubious nature: it stands at the critical juncture of the intuitive and the discursive, and of the sensible and the intellectual. What exactly does the nature of the imagination comprise if it is to have a legitimate stance between sensibility and understanding?

Taking this grand question into consideration, this part examines the disputes regarding the nature of the imagination under two headings: synthesis and schematism. These two aspects of the imagination not only constitute the major elements of the imagination *per se* but directly inform Kant's transcendental philosophy on the whole. Disputes related to the imagination, specifically as handled in the *First Critique*, thus heavily pertain to these two interrelated aspects. This renders pivotal their examination and evaluation to the extent that the scope of this thesis may allow while at the same time allowing us to attain a better understanding of the character of Kantian imagination.

##### **4.1.1. Imagination and Synthesis**

---

<sup>151</sup> Sarah Gibbons, *Kant's Theory of Imagination: Bridging Gaps in Judgment and Experience*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994

As has been expounded extensively in the third chapter, synthesis is a pivotal aspect of not only imagination as its facilitator but of Kantian philosophy on the whole. Specifically in his *First Critique*, it appears as the activity that takes place at the juncture where pure space and time receive sensible representations for the pure concepts to generate theoretical knowledge from them. The debates therefore concern the evaluation of this critical juncture to a considerable extent, and in the meantime address the nature of the imagination as to whether it is intuitive or discursive. While some evaluations, such as that of Heidegger, place an emphasis on the centrality of imagination regarding the generation of theoretical knowledge due to its synthetic activity, there are others that either challenge this stance or come up with an alternative, if not totally opposing, view.

Regarding whether imagination tends to be sensible or intellectual, Henry E. Allison<sup>152</sup> refers to a significant difference between the two deductions on imagination's role. In the A-Deduction, imagination is "accorded the dignity of being a separate cognitive power mediating between sensibility and understanding,"<sup>153</sup> which is taken away to a considerable extent in B-Deduction. That is, in the A-Deduction imagination is granted a distinct stance which sides with neither of the two faculties; the B-Deduction, however, snatches from imagination this privilege of being a distinct faculty and binds it to the workings of the understanding in which the transcendental synthesis of the former is viewed as an "effect"<sup>154</sup> of the latter on sensibility.

---

<sup>152</sup> Henry E. Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid*, 186

<sup>154</sup> Kant, B152; Cited by Allison, 187

This attribution of the imagination's synthetic activity to the understanding has led to the evaluation of the activity of imagination as rather intellectual by a number of scholars.<sup>155</sup> As opposed to the "intellectualization" of imagination, whose employment stands on the verge of the intellectual though it is "always in itself sensible,"<sup>156</sup> Allison argues that in both A and B deductions, Kant does not refrain from his major thesis that "imagination is an essential ingredient in cognition, without itself yielding cognition 'in the proper sense.'" <sup>157</sup> Despite all the vagueness of its employment, according to Allison, imagination is ultimately a faculty that renders possible the unification of the sensible manifold so as to be brought under conceptualization, "without itself *being* a mode of conceptualization".<sup>158</sup> It is an "interpretive" faculty rather than an intellectual or conceptual one: a "proto-conceptual, interpretive faculty, distinct from a capacity to produce images, on the one hand, and to form judgments, on the other."<sup>159</sup>

At the juncture of Kant's explication of the interrelated workings of the three faculties, and as a counterpoint to Allison's assumption that imagination is neither apprehensive nor cognitive in the proper sense, stands Heidegger's highly controversial debate on imagination's being the "common root" of the two extremes in A-Deduction.<sup>160</sup> Heidegger argues that transcendental imagination is not "merely

---

<sup>155</sup> Allison particularly cites Peter Strawson and Wilfred Sellars. Allison, 2004, 187-188

<sup>156</sup> Kant, A124

<sup>157</sup> Allison, 2004, 186

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, 188

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid*, 189

<sup>160</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 1929, trans. James S. Churchhill, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965

an external bond” but a faculty that is “originally unifying, i.e., it is the specific faculty which forms the unity of the other two.”<sup>161</sup>

Heidegger has a twofold explication as regards the formative asset of imagination as regards the two faculties in their transcendental employment. As for pure intuition, he points at its imaginative character, citing Kant’s words as regards pure forms of space and time as the formal condition of appearances and not objects to be intuited. “What is perceived in pure intuition as such is an *ens imaginarium*. Therefore, the act of pure intuition is essentially pure imagination,”<sup>162</sup> he concludes. Two of the explanations that pave the path to his conclusion comprise the manifestation of the inevitable interplay between acts of receptivity and spontaneity on the one hand *and* the act of synthesis’s being a necessary product of imagination on the other. Firstly, pure intuitions of space and time are not merely receptive but spontaneous as well, in the sense that their receptivity entails a “formative act which gives to itself that which offers itself.”<sup>163</sup> What these pure forms intuit “spring forth” thanks to the forms themselves, and in terms of its original, formative, and spontaneous act, pure intuition is essentially pure imagination, “an imagination which in forming aspects (images) spontaneously gives them [to itself].”<sup>164</sup> Secondly, Heidegger refers to Kant’s explication of synthesis as the “mere result of the power of imagination.”<sup>165</sup> He then mentions the “synopsis” of pure intuition, namely, its perception, if not synthesis, of the unity that it gives to itself, as well as the “synthesis” of pure understanding, in their necessary relation to pure imagination

---

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid*, 144

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid*, 150

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid*, 148

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*, 148

<sup>165</sup> Kant, A78, B103

as “in general the source of all that is “synthetic” in character” in Kant’s formulation.<sup>166</sup> In other words, pure imagination as the originator of synthesis comprises pure intuition – and consequently the synthesis of pure understanding – as well.

As for pure understanding, Heidegger shows how Kant defines pure, transcendental schemata, which the former employs, as a product of pure imagination. “[T]his pure schematism which is grounded in the transcendental imagination constitutes original being-as-understanding, i.e., the ‘I think substance.’”<sup>167</sup> It is then evident that the act of thinking that pure understanding undertakes is, “as a spontaneously formative act of representation, a fundamental act of the transcendental imagination.”<sup>168</sup> It is an imaginative faculty which entails the “‘envisioning’ of something, an envisioning which is at once a forming and a projecting.”<sup>169</sup> Last but not least, much as the receptivity of pure intuition is a spontaneous receptivity, the spontaneity of pure understanding is a receptive spontaneity.

While an all-comprehensive analysis and criticism of Heidegger’s thesis exceeds the limits of this study, it seems inevitable to incite doubts regarding the distribution of tasks in light of his thesis. Heidegger explicitly refers to transcendental imagination as the formative faculty that, in its formative activity, governs an intellectual, as well as sensible, employment. Thought in this manner, the distribution of tasks between transcendental and empirical faculties of imagination appears to be null, for if transcendental imagination is at once engaged in producing

---

<sup>166</sup> Heidegger, 1965, 149

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid*, 157-158

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid*, 158

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid*, 158

representations, *a posteriori* as well as *a priori*, and conceptualizing them to release knowledge proper, what task is left for empirical imagination to perform? What does it really “reproduce”? In other words, why need another mode of imagination if the transcendental imagination is both form- and content-oriented, in an empirical as well as a pure sense, letting empirical representations, as well as *a priori* ones, “spring forth” to be processed in an *a priori* fashion? Let alone empirical imagination, why need an empirical faculty, or an empirical process for that matter? Considered from this perspective, Heidegger’s thesis makes Kant’s carefully detailed formulations of each faculty as governing distinct operations seem futile, for the whole activity of attaining theoretical knowledge boils down to the synthesis of imagination.

Similarly to Heidegger, and evoking Kearney at times, Bernard Freydberg<sup>170</sup> grants a central position to the role of imagination in Kant’s philosophy on the whole in his 1993 book in which he examines the *First Critique*, specifically the sections that directly refer to the imagination. Not less bold than Heidegger, Freydberg posits imagination as the central faculty of the *First Critique* at the expense of downgrading that of the understanding. He views the discrepancy between the realm of experience as the “actual contact” and the *a priori* processes of the understanding that ultimately produce “knowledge of objects”<sup>171</sup> as primarily related to the imagination. Imagination, according to Freydberg’s account, has two fundamental functions which directly inform the overall structure of knowledge production and hence the possibility of judgment: it is “at once [the] knowledge-begetting synthesizer and

---

<sup>170</sup> Bernard Freydberg, *Imagination and Depth in Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, New York: Peter Lang, 1994

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid*, 14

contact-empowering image-maker.”<sup>172</sup> In other words, imagination is the facilitator of synthesis as well as the producer of images.

Establishing these two major activities as belonging to or stemming from the imagination, Freydberg in a way formulates all his arguments regarding the workings of the *First Critique* as ultimately determined by the imagination. Being the facilitator of synthesis, imagination is what makes synthetic *a priori* judgment possible aside from analytical judgment in which the subject-predicate relation can utterly rely on the logical procedures undertaken by reason. His stance resembles that of Heidegger when he refers to the synthesis of imagination as the base act of both intuitions and concepts:

In every judgment of every kind a bringing together, i.e. a synthesis is the work of imagination. This synthesis represented generally, i.e. in terms of its formal unity, is a pure concept; this synthesis, represented in terms of its transcendental content, yields pure intuition. But without imagination, there can be no synthesis, and hence no unity of representations of any kind.<sup>173</sup>

Freydberg’s approach harbours similar problems to that of Heidegger in terms of the attribution of synthesis to imagination and hence of relating the whole big bang, so to speak, ultimately to imagination. Pure intuitions and pure concepts come to the fore thanks to synthesis, which occurs thanks to imagination. Freydberg’s approach gets even more problematic when he claims that the notions that play an important role in Kant’s system such as sensibility, understanding, reason, experience, representation, space, and time should be seen as originating from imagination since they are images and since imagination is the source of these images.<sup>174</sup> The reification of all these distinct faculties, forms, and functions to images, all of which are generated by the

---

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid*, 14

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid*, 53

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid*, 16

imagination, is reminiscent of the accusations of dogmatism especially on the part of the rationalist stance that Kant himself is critical towards. That is, all these elements viewed as images by imagination renders dogmatic, and at worst illegitimate, the connection between what Freyberg terms the realm of actual contact and the subject's assessment of this realm as knowledge of theoretical and objective character. Here, imagination in a way resembles the mind that jumps from its inner images to conclusions about the world of nature and experience. Judged from this viewpoint, Freyberg's thesis is an ultra-subjective idealism characterized by dogmatism.

Not all works on the *First Critique* focus specifically on the function of imagination with respect to synthesis and the attainment of objective knowledge. One such work belongs to Béatrice Longuenesse.<sup>175</sup> In her attempt to re-establish the role Kant accords to the logical forms of judgment that Heidegger and some others have rather shaded with their strong emphasis on imagination,<sup>176</sup> Longuenesse sets out to clarify the workings of the *First Critique* primarily through the lens of the subject's ability of discursive thought. For Longuenesse, undertaking this task requires a specific emphasis on the expounding of the B-Deduction, which she views to be a "positive argument" vis-à-vis the "negative" and "psychological argument" of

---

<sup>175</sup> Béatrice Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Analytic of the Critique of Pure Reason*, 1993, trans. Charles T. Wolfe, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998

<sup>176</sup> "[R]eaders of the Critique have often thought they must choose one or the other version of the transcendental deduction, and they did so depending on what they believed to be the most fruitful orientation of Kant's argument. Cohen and his neo-Kantian followers favored the orientation of B edition because of what they perceived to be the more epistemological character of its argument, as opposed to the dubious psychologism of the A edition. Heidegger, on the contrary, preferred the A edition because he found that the B edition diminished the fundamental role of transcendental imagination and instead privileged pure understanding, thus "intellectualizing" the transcendental deduction with the ultimate goal of affirming the supremacy of reason in its practical use." Longuenesse, 1998, 59-60

the A-Deduction.<sup>177</sup> While opposing the dismissal of the A-Deduction as mere psychologism on Kant's part, Longuenesse openly admits it to be inferior to the more complete formulation of the table of categories in relation to the logical forms of judgment, and ultimately to the capacity to judge.

Regarding the seemingly differing, or rather clashing, definitions of the functions of the faculties in the two deductions, Longuenesse posits the question of what faculty is involved in synthesis. According to the A-Deduction, she repeats, it is imagination to which the act of synthesis is assigned. Imagination is then assisted by transcendental apperception, which appears to be the understanding in its relation to the synthesis of imagination, in an effort to unite the synthesis in question. In the B-Deduction, however, Kant attributes all acts of combination, which he thinks can be plausibly considered to be an act of synthesis, to the understanding. According to Longuenesse, then, Kant means to state that "every synthesis is an act of the understanding,"<sup>178</sup> a statement that is likely to jeopardize the mediating function of imagination as well as blur the distinction between the activities of imagination and understanding.

To this question, Longuenesse comes up with an answer from within the two deductions. Namely, as understanding is the same as transcendental apperception in relation to the synthesis of imagination, it happens to be the very faculty which, through its rules, allows imagination to undertake the synthetic operation. In other words, for imagination to be able to realize an adequate synthesis within the subjective threefold synthetic activity, it needs the assistance of understanding in any case. Within this framework, understanding not only facilitates the combination of

---

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid*, 9

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*, 62

the intuitive manifold but also that of concepts. Longuenesse even coins the term “transcendental understanding/imagination” with respect to the necessity of the involvement of this faculty in understanding’s conceptualization of the sensible manifold: the former “guide[s] the syntheses of the sensible manifold,” which she equates to the “reproductive syntheses of imagination.”<sup>179</sup>

In this line, the subjective unity of representations is achieved as a result of the syntheses performed by the reproductive imagination, which provides the forms of judgment with the processed empirical data. Their objective unity might yield either judgments of subjective character, which rather concerns the particular perception of a particular subject, or of objective character, in which the judgment is unexceptionally valid for all subjects. In either case, the objective unity of representations nevertheless are the true means of formulating these representations as objects, and therefore constitute objective judgments with objective validity. It is thanks to the transcendental unity of apperception that brings about the *a priori* principles through which both empirical and pure representations are determined in an objective manner; these principles, Longuenesse asserts, are none other than those of the understanding in its pure mode.<sup>180</sup>

Longuenesse’s interpretation of the imagination as a kind of side-function to the understanding which needs to be assisted by the transcendental apperception in its effort to subjectively synthesize intuitions is further augmented by her reply to Heidegger’s reading of the imagination as the common root of sensibility and discursivity. Longuenesse argues that Heidegger takes the unity of the two components as “already given, or, rather, projected” whereas, she asserts, they are

---

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid*, 64

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid*, 83-84

not given but produced by the imagination “*only if it is under the unity of apperception, whose form is the logical form of judgment, or form of the Vermögen zu urteilen whose specifications make up the table of the forms of judgment.*”<sup>181</sup> In sum, whereas Heidegger places the imagination as the common root at the center of Kant’s transcendental philosophy and sets out to find out about its workings, for Longuenesse, Kant’s transcendental philosophy rather has to do with the question of what it means to be capable of judging, i.e., to be capable of discursive thought. At this juncture, the meeting of the intuitive and the discursive is primarily geared towards the attainment of determinative judgment as the expression of objective knowledge, and the focus is rather on the workings of the understanding at the cost of downgrading the pivotal position of the imagination.

Longuenesse’s account is significant not only for shifting the focus from imagination to understanding but also for its treatment of synthesis as a function whose operation is more under the supervision of understanding than that of imagination. Aside from pinpointing the faculty that undertakes synthesis, delineating what exactly synthesis and its various types entail – that is, if there are syntheses of different natures – appears as a crucial question. In her outstanding account on the workings of the imagination in the two *Critiques*, Sarah Gibbons makes an attempt to clarify the boundaries between imagination, synthesis, and conceptualization. Arguing that the assignation of the act of synthesis to the faculty of imagination makes it possible to distinguish synthesis from conceptualization, Gibbons comes up with a number of explanations to edify her argument. One of these explanations is based on Kant’s differentiation of general logic from transcendental logic, the latter constituting his dissenting move from the former that

---

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid*, 204

can only provide us with a dogmatic metaphysics. The fact that transcendental logic is concerned with the subject's ability to bring not mere representations, but their pure synthesis, to the concepts comprises, according to Gibbons, a distinction between the acts of synthesis and conceptualization. That is, concepts are not applied to intuitions, but the synthesis of these intuitions is brought to concepts for the latter to proceed with its cognitive procedure.<sup>182</sup>

Another explanation involves the synthesis of apprehension in intuition as the first of the three grounds of subjective knowledge. The synthesis of apprehension, Kant contends, facilitates the representation of pure space and time; only through the synthesis of apprehension are these representations produced. Here, Gibbons challenges the sharp distinction accorded to sensibility and understanding, which depicts the former as passive and the latter as active. Namely, the production of the representations of space and time as pure forms of sensibility cannot come true merely through receptivity; it requires a synthesis as well – a synthesis which is innate to intuition. Gibbons interprets this situation as the “possibility of an extra-conceptual synthesis in pure intuition.”<sup>183</sup> The synthetic unity in question, therefore, is of an intuitive nature and cannot be equalled to the conceptual-synthetic unity required for determinative judgments that ultimately pertain to the knowledge of empirically possible objects. Indeed, it is only the third ground of subjective knowledge, namely, the synthesis of recognition in a concept that involves conceptualization. The transcendental unity of apperception as the *a priori* function of the synthesis of recognition, while rendering necessary the unity of representations which is then determined by the understanding, does not consult syntheses other than

---

<sup>182</sup> Gibbons, 1994, 18-19

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid*, 23

that of recognition. Furthermore, Kant's assertion that transcendental apperception is required for the determination, i.e., conceptualization of an object does not generate the requirement of the full-fledged participation of other synthetic activities in the conceptual procedure of knowledge-production. In Gibbons' words, "not all synthesized material need be so known."<sup>184</sup>

In the face of these explanations concerning the difference between synthesis and conceptualization, Gibbons does not thoroughly repudiate Heidegger's position regarding the imagination as the "common root" of sensibility and understanding. She rather contends that it is impossible to formulate an exact stance for the imagination. On the one hand, imagination generates sensible manifold for the understanding to conceptualize, which points to its receptive nature; it actively collaborates with the transcendental apperception in a conceptual, and therefore spontaneous, effort on the other.<sup>185</sup> In a manner that could be defined as rehabilitating Kant's blurry exposition of synthesis, imagination, and concept, Gibbons stresses the distinction between the three grounds of subjective knowledge in the A-Deduction: bringing synthesis to concepts with the help of the consciousness of this activity, namely, transcendental apperception, is not the same task as that of apprehending and combining the sensible manifold undertaken by imagination. Similarly, the B-Deduction leaves no theoretically convenient room for the imagination in its strife for strictly separating the conditions of sensibility and understanding.<sup>186</sup>

---

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid*, 28

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*, 29. As regards Heidegger's designation of imagination itself as the "common root", Gibbons makes the following remark: "While I do not disagree that imagination both marks and bridges the 'gap' between intuition and understanding, its mediating function follows rather than precedes the division of the 'stems'." See footnote no. 39

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, 35-36

One of the major aspects of Gibbons' thesis is her assessment of synthesis as not merely originating from the faculty of imagination but as an activity that takes place on a variety of levels. Her approach, then, poses a contrast to those of Heidegger and Freydberg since there are, as in the attainment of pure space and time, syntheses of intuitive character as well as those of a conceptual character as in the case of pure (and empirical) concepts. On the other hand, for Gibbons any synthetic activity involves a spontaneity as an active process vis-à-vis receptivity as a passive one. This way Gibbons in a sense does justice to sensibility, imagination, and understanding on the whole as faculties none of which is merely passive and all of which undertake synthetic activities (which indeed is what makes them active).

Gibbons' approach also differs from, and perhaps even constitutes a counter-argument to, that by Longuenesse. Accompanied by her approval of the superiority of the B-Deduction, Longuenesse accords the act of synthesis to the understanding or, in the A-Deduction, to the imagination *only* when helped by the transcendental apperception. For Gibbons, the question is less about what faculty the act of synthesis can be ultimately attributed to. It is more about what acts can be defined as synthetic, and of what character these synthetic acts are. Thus by drawing the attention from the utmost origin of synthesis to the different types of syntheses, Gibbons neither "crowns" the imagination, so to speak, nor downplays its significance. It could be noted, however, that her thesis, and especially her reference to the importance of the first subjective ground of knowledge as the facilitator of the synthesis of pure forms of sensibility, stands in stark contrast with that of Longuenesse. While the latter attributes the act of synthesis involved here to reproductive imagination as the subjective ground of knowledge, the former takes it as a distinct act that takes place in intuition. Gibbons at the same time restores the

status of this act as an indispensable step which is logically prior to the conceptualization of the manifold of synthesized representations.

While raising an objection to the classification of synthesis as belonging to a distinct faculty, Gibbons also draws attention to the difficulty of pinpointing the nature of imagination as either receptive or spontaneous, or as sensible or conceptual. Indeed, for her, imagination is both. In a way, her approach is in accordance with that of Allison, who also points at this difficulty and defines imagination as an “interpretive” faculty that in some way gets involved in conceptualization on the one hand and does not itself “conceptualize” on the other. For now, it remains to be seen how imagination is related to schematism, which is to further reveal the link between sensibility and understanding.

#### **4.1.2. Imagination and Schematism**

Aside from synthesis, schematism constitutes an essential part of the whole discussion on the nature of the imagination in the *First Critique* in general. To remember Kant’s words, “schema is in itself always a product of imagination.”<sup>187</sup> On the other hand, a schema is a schema *of a concept*: in order that concepts are applicable to phenomena, they are to comprise the formal conditions of time as the pure form of inner sense, since all phenomena are temporal determinations. Here, again, the relation between sensibility, imagination, and understanding, as well as the administration that each of these faculties comprises, is debated. Taken on a broader level, the exposition of schemata is of paramount significance as regards making further sense of Kantian epistemology.

In line with her attitude towards the imagination and its relation to synthesis, Gibbons disagrees with the “psychologism” attributed to the imagination in its

---

<sup>187</sup> *CPR*, A140, B79

schematizing function by some critics. For her, this approach overlooks the subjective character of the issue. Namely, the section on schematism does not merely provide us with a psychological description of the workings of the imagination as the mediator of two heterogeneous faculties. Instead it “explains how judgment is possible for beings that possess a discursive understanding and spatiotemporal intuition.”<sup>188</sup> In a way, Gibbons frees schematism as a mechanism of determinative judgment from accusations of dual nature and draws the attention to the subject and its capability regarding what it judges. She uses the term “exhibition”<sup>189</sup> to refer to schemata. Accordingly, schemata are not in-between entities corresponding to forms of sensibility on the one hand and concepts of understanding on the other. They rather exhibit the extent of compatibility between the workings of the two faculties. In her persistent attempt to rescue the imagination from the charges of conceptualization, Gibbons formulates the problem, and the possible means of solution to the problem, with the following words:

What we need to unravel here is the relation of the schemata to judgment and the way in which the schemata can make rule-following (and, therefore, the application of concepts) possible without explaining their production wholly in terms of concepts [...]. If Kant seems confused in explaining what a schema is, this is in part because he must gesture at a capacity that is not itself rule-governed and yet makes rule-following possible.<sup>190</sup>

Gibbons cites Kant’s theorization of his transcendental philosophy in “The Analytic of Principles,” where Kant emphasizes the need for such philosophy to devise the harmoniousness of the pure concepts of understanding to phenomena.<sup>191</sup> Schematism, she argues, does not itself comprise rules; it governs the conditions

---

<sup>188</sup> Gibbons, 1994, 57

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid*, 58

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid*, 61

<sup>191</sup> *CPR*, A135-136, B174-175; Cited by Gibbons, 61.

under which the spatiotemporally given manifold can be harmonious with the categories which then subject the former to a synthesis of conceptual character in line with certain rules. In other words, schemata facilitate the appropriateness of the concepts to intuitions, and the consequent harmony between the two; and it does so without consulting the concepts at hand.<sup>192</sup> Gibbons' account not only exculpates the transcendental schema from the charges of possessing dual-character. It also establishes its indispensability as an "impartial" mediator between sensibility and understanding that abides by the rules while not being a rule itself.

While Gibbons is concerned with defining the specific character of schemata and their relation to concepts in particular, Paul Guyer has a rather comprehensive formulation as regards why Kant has come up with schematism.<sup>193</sup> For Guyer, the initiation to the problematic in general has to do with Kant's separation of the pure concepts of understanding from the principles of temporal determination. Kant insists on the derivation of pure categories from the logical functions of judgment so as to establish their objective validity which, however, prevents them from having a direct relation to the object that they are to judge, Guyer contends. Put simply, there remains a gap between the activity of determinative judgment and the intuition of the sensible manifold, namely, that between activities of the discursive and the intuitive orders. Hence the need for schematism:

The chief object of the schematism must therefore be to show exactly how these categories can be instantiated or manifested in our sensible intuition of objects. So, to give the categories sufficient content for their empirical use, temporal and/or spatial correlates must be found for what have thus far remained purely

---

<sup>192</sup> Gibbons claims that concepts themselves cannot generate harmony due to their rule-governed nature. If they had such an attempt, they would end up regressing infinitely, since to be able to determine whether an object is subsumable under a rule, one would need to come up with another rule. To proceed with this procedure, one would then have to consult the rule-giver and this way would find oneself in a vicious circle of consulting the rule-giver each time for determinability. See Gibbons, 60-62.

<sup>193</sup> Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987

logical properties and relations of judgments. Such correlates will be the transcendental schemata of the pure categories.<sup>194</sup>

What mainly concerns Kant, Guyer continues, is solely the pure concepts of the understanding, whose content involves none other than logical functions. Pure concepts of mathematical order and empirical concepts of natural science are not subject to the same problem, since these concepts themselves constitute the very rule of applicability to the particulars they are concerned with. In a way, they are themselves schematic. The pure concepts of understanding thus need additional principles so as to be applicable to the phenomenal realm, i.e., so as to be *homogeneous* with the representation of the intuited object. In Kant's words, schematism must "treat of the sensible condition under which alone pure concepts of understanding can be employed."<sup>195</sup>

Guyer then sets out with a further clarification of what is and is not at stake regarding the homogeneity of the concept with the object through examples. The first example pertains to the empirical concept of "plate" in relation to the mathematical concept of "circle."<sup>196</sup> There is no problem regarding the instantiation of the former to plates of the phenomenal realm, since it comprises circularity within itself as a predicate – circularity "represent[ing] a form that can be given in pure intuition and *a fortiori* in actual empirical intuition."<sup>197</sup> It is not that "plate" as an empirical concept is round; it includes circularity as a concept that has a sensible, and hence intuitable, property. In sum, the empirical concept of plate comprises a predicate for an

---

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid*, 158

<sup>195</sup> *CPR*, A136, B175; Cited by Guyer, 163

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid*, 163

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid*, 163

intuitable property, which renders an additional schematic procedure unnecessary. The second example concerns the empirical concept of “dog” in relation to another empirical concept of “four-footedness” that comprises a sensible property. In this case, the term “dog” denotes the empirical concept of dog that is itself the very rule that exhibits, together with certain other properties, the property of being four-footed. Again, the concept of dog itself comprises a schema by itself.

Aside from these two empirical concepts in relation to a pure concept in the case of the former (circle) and another empirical concept in that of the latter (four-footedness), Guyer also cites the mathematical concepts of number and triangle. Mathematical concepts, like empirical concepts, are also schemata themselves, since both pertain to the rule or method for providing an image for a concept via the transcendental imagination.<sup>198</sup> Thus the problem concerns specifically the pure concepts of understanding and their homogeneity with the objects they aim to conceptualize, since the content of the former is only derived from logical relations. They do not seem to be authorized for predicating on an intuition, whether the latter is pure or empirical. In Guyer’s words:

Although being four-footed or triangular is something that may be both *thought* in a concept and directly presented in the appropriate kind of intuition, being *real* or a *ground of a consequence* – that is, possessing the property which is the objective correlate of the logical function of affirmation or the logical relation of antecedent to consequent – is not the kind of property that is directly presented in pure or empirical intuition.<sup>199</sup>

The problem therefore necessitates a third faculty or function to mediate between these pure concepts and the intuitions that they aim to think, and this is why Kant

---

<sup>198</sup> “The schema of number is “the representation of a method whereby the multiplicity, for instance a thousand, may be represented in an image in conformity with a certain concept”; the schema of a triangle “is a rule of synthesis of the imagination, in respect to pure figures in space” (A140/B180).” Kant cited by Guyer, 165

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*, 165

primarily has come up with schemata. The formulation of the schemata also lies at the heart of his answer to Hume, who, as Guyer asserts, was dissatisfied when he could not discover a direct method of application for the concepts such as necessary connection on objects of experience. Schemata, on the other hand, are a means, and hence a mediating function, between such pure concepts of logical character and the phenomenal realm of which the former are supposed to be properties. In order for the categories to be homogeneous with phenomena, Guyer continues, Kant further devises a solution: he tries to find out about a property of phenomena that can be both applicable universally and known *a priori* in the first place, which turns out to be time. Guyer claims that time, despite the fact that Kant does not explicitly refer to this, is also suitable for its containment of sufficient diversity, which enables it to function with categories that are also diverse. Transcendental time determinations, then, happen to be the schemata of the pure categories of the understanding. Why Kant does not opt for space is due to the fact that “all appearances in outer sense are also appearance in inner sense, but not vice versa,”<sup>200</sup> meaning that pure spatial determinations do not have the privilege that temporal ones have. At the same time, however, spatiality is needed – not necessarily for the content but the use of schemata, since the latter necessitates objects in space, Guyer argues. Hence the spatiality of phenomenal objects serves as the ultimate condition that allows categories to be universally valid, even when the particular object in question comprises a non-spatial phenomenon<sup>201</sup>.

Guyer’s elaborate account underlines the significance of spatiotemporality concerning the harmonization of intuitions and concepts. Namely, experience is

---

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid*, 167

<sup>201</sup> For further debate on why spatial determination is required, see Guyer, pp. 166-172

spatiotemporal, and concepts need to be able to “recognize” this spatiotemporality of experience in some way to be able to legitimately produce their knowledge. Mathematical and natural concepts are their own schemata, as both of them recognize this property of “intuitability” or sensibility. The twelve categories of understanding as logical forms of judgment, however, need to be granted this property of intuitability to synthesize experience, and this is exactly where schemata are needed. Within this framework, schemata can be described as the mechanism that renders possible the recognition of spatiotemporal designation by these twelve categories, and imagination as the faculty that generates these schemata. Imagination, then, is once again being at the very centre of the meeting of the sensible and the intelligible. However, this centrality does not necessarily lead to the formulation of imagination as either intuitive or discursive, or both. Nor does the imagination need to be confined to the “common root” definition. Aside from its synthetic activity which is neither exclusively sensible nor exclusively conceptual, imagination as the producer of schemata can in the safest mode be described as a faculty that makes it possible for the pure logical categories to attain spatiotemporal applicability and this way to produce judgments of objects as spatiotemporal determinations. Such an approach shifts the focus from the clear-cut determination of the *nature* of imagination to the expounding of its *function* within the procedure of knowledge production.

#### **4.2. Imagination and Judgment**

This part examines the role of imagination with respect to judgment, taking into account both the *First Critique* and the *Third Critique* and yet focusing mainly on the latter. As has been expounded in the third chapter of my thesis, the judgment-attaining faculties in the two *Critiques* are the understanding and the power of

judgment respectively. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, understanding is the faculty that legitimately produces judgments by cognizing, determining, and therefore “thinking” the given manifold in space and time; it is the authority that generates the theoretical knowledge of the object. In the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, on the other hand, the reader encounters another seemingly autonomous authority that dominates the activity taking place in the terrain of the *Critique* in question, which is none other than the power of judgment. Provided that we take it to be so, then how to account for two distinct faculties of judgment? To put it slightly different, why would there be two such faculties, and how would their dual presence be reconciled? This part will seek solutions to these questions by first delineating the two major types of judgment that constitutes Kant’s transcendental philosophy, which will then be followed by a discussion on the role of imagination in the type of judgment that predominates the *Third Critique*.

#### **4.2.1. Judgment: Determinative and Reflexive**

As has just been mentioned, the most obvious point of divergence between the understanding and the power of judgment as regards their activities seems to concern the two types of judgment, to which Kant pays attention especially in the *Third Critique*. Simply put, the pure understanding is authorized to *think* the object of experience in a determinative fashion whereas the power of judgment conducts a judgment of reflective nature, being thoroughly disinterested in the empirical delineation of the object. Of the two types of reflective judgment, namely, aesthetic and teleological, the emphasis throughout this part will be on the former, since it is the former that involves imagination to a considerable extent.

Is it really the case that determinative and reflective judgments are rigidly distributed among the two faculties in question? In Gibbons’ formulation, the

involvement of two distinct faculties with distinct tasks is preserved; however, the two modes of judgment are not strictly accorded to each faculty. Referring to Kant's definition of the activity of reflection in the "First Introduction,"<sup>202</sup> Gibbons underlines the correspondence of reflective judgment with the power of judgment, yet at the same time contends that determinative<sup>203</sup> judgment also comprises a reflective activity. While not delving into the specificities of how reflection takes place in the determinative judgment, Gibbons once again emphasizes the subjectivity implicit in the workings of the understanding that seems to be shaded by the emphasis on objective determination in Kant's account.

In a sense, then, Gibbons equates the objective move with the determinative judgment and the subjective move with the reflective judgment; this equation is further confirmed when she refers to what is at stake when understanding and imagination interact with one another. Accordingly, they interact the same way with one another, no matter what mode of judgment is involved: they either "further or hinder" one another.<sup>204</sup> What matters is whether one views their relation in subjective or objective terms. Viewed objectively, the relation comprises schematism, which is geared toward the cognition of an object of possible experience. Viewed subjectively, the relation affects one's mental state. Most probably to highlight the sameness of the activity held by understanding and imagination together, Gibbons refers to the latter procedure as the "subjective characterization of schematizing;"<sup>205</sup>

---

<sup>202</sup> "To reflect (or consider) is to hold given presentations up to, and compare them with, either other presentations or one's cognitive power..., in reference to a concept that this [comparison] makes possible. The reflective power of judgment is the one we also call the power of judging." *CJ*, 20:211; Cited by Gibbons, 83

<sup>203</sup> Gibbons uses the term "determinant". I have opted for sticking to the term "determinative".

<sup>204</sup> Gibbons, 84

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid*, 84

its guiding principle being none other than the purposiveness of nature for one's judgment.

In expounding the characteristics of pure aesthetic judgments as Kant delineates them, Gibbons relates the affection of the mental state to the universality that aesthetic judgment, despite its subjective character, asks for. Universality is of paramount significance for there to arise a feeling of pleasure as a result of finding an object beautiful, since this pleasure requires the universal communicability of the mental state in question. At this point, the pure aesthetic judgment calls for harmony between imagination and understanding in their free play. Referring to the "First Introduction" to the *Third Critique*,<sup>206</sup> Gibbons elaborates on this harmony in question. She interprets it as that "between imagination, *qua* power of apprehending a manifold in intuition, and imagination, *qua* power of exhibiting a concept."<sup>207</sup> In other words, the harmony is not released, or "felt" as Gibbons coins it, through understanding's activity of conceptually determining the form of the object in question. Rather, it is through the compatibility of that particular form's apprehension and exhibition, both of which are undertaken by the imagination, to the cognitive function of the understanding. This way, the object of possible experience, conceptualized into an object of knowledge by the understanding as the *leitmotif* of the *First Critique*, is demonstrated to be suitable to, or harmonious with, our capacity for (aesthetic) judgment. The particularity of the object is no longer a matter of disturbance; it is rather perceived to be purposive for judgment, as it is shown to be

---

<sup>206</sup> "[I]f the form of an object given in empirical intuition is of such a character that the *apprehension* in the imagination, of the object's manifold agrees with the *exhibition* of a concept of the understanding (which concept this is being indeterminate), then imagination and understanding are – in mere reflection – in mutual harmony...; and the object is perceived as purposive, [though] purposive merely for judgment." *CJ*, 20:221; Cited by Gibbons, 93

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid*, 93

congruent with the cognizing and conceptualizing demands of the understanding *thanks* to the apprehensive and exhibitivive functions of the imagination.

Despite her repudiation of a precise correspondence between judgments and faculties, and arguing that understanding also gets involved in reflection besides determination, Gibbons offers a reading of the reflective judgment that confirms the rather passive stance of the understanding regarding reflection as has been viewed in the previous chapter. In this line, she highlights the pivotal stance of the imagination while diverting attention from that of the understanding. Another significant aspect of Gibbons' reading is that it briefly introduces the power of judgment as that which is the chief administrator of reflective judgment vis-à-vis the understanding as that which ultimately generates determinative judgment, and then accentuates the function of imagination. Rather than appearing a distinct faculty with a distinct function, the power of judgment leaves the floor to the free play of imagination and understanding in the making of pure aesthetic judgments. Moreover, as in the case of determinative judgment, it is again mainly the interaction between imagination and understanding that leads to reflection, and not the interaction between the power of judgment as a sovereign faculty or function *and* some other faculty or function. Finding a solution to the heterogeneity of intuitions and concepts through its schemata in the *First Critique*, imagination actively assists in the harmony between itself and the understanding in the *Third Critique*. The figuration of the power of judgment as a separate faculty is rendered futile in this portrait.

In what resembles an inverse approach to Gibbons' suggestion that the understanding is involved in reflection as well as determination, which is not

precisely delved into, Rudolf Makkreel<sup>208</sup> suggests that the imagination is not merely restricted to reflection but also partakes of cognition in the *Third Critique*. For Makkreel, the main issue at stake regarding imagination in its reflective-aesthetic undertakings is that it might be viewed as not contributing to the epistemological aspect of Kantian philosophy – that it is totally non-cognitive. This would be, he argues, primarily because the imagination of the *Third Critique* is not involved in a synthetic activity. Such view, which Makkreel interprets as a mistake, is to be disproved not by insisting on tracing the continuation of synthesis on the part of the imagination in the *Third Critique* but rather by another route. In Makkreel’s words:

Although the aesthetic imagination does not serve the interest of determinant judgment in definite cognition of objects, it is a function of reflective judgment that has a bearing on the theoretical task of the systematization of experience. The judgment of taste is not directly cognitive, but nevertheless relates to “cognition in general”.<sup>209</sup>

Thus quoting Kant, Makkreel sets out to show how the imagination is engaged in cognitive activities in reflective judgments. According to his view, the imagination retains its relations to the categories of understanding like in the *First Critique*. This time, however, it does not facilitate their synthesizing, and hereby conceptualizing, the sensible manifold for the production of theoretical knowledge. Rather, it “specif[ies] the categories reflectively to organize pure mental contents.”<sup>210</sup> Makkreel terms this task of the imagination “reflective specification.”<sup>211</sup>

What exactly does this reflective specification of the imagination entail that the schematization of the *First Critique* does not? In the case of determinative

---

<sup>208</sup> Rudolf A. Makkreel, *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of the Critique of Judgment*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid*, 51-52

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid*, 54

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid*, 55

judgment as explicated in the “First Introduction,” the process involves three stages: first, (the) sensible manifold is apprehended in intuition; second, its consciousness as a synthetic unity is comprehended in the concept of an object; and last, the comprehended object is presented in intuition as corresponding to the concept in question. Here, Makkreel specifically draws attention to the fact that Kant uses the term “*Objekt*” for the second stage and “*Gegenstand*” for the third, and then claims *Gegenstand* to be a schematized *Objekt*.<sup>212</sup> This means that *Gegenstand* pertains to an object of an empirical concept, and the process is not merely about the schematization of the categories but concerns their application to empirical objects. In the case of reflective judgment, imagination performs the apprehension of the sensible manifold of an object and the presentation of a concept of the understanding in a mutual agreement, provided that the form of the object given in intuition (*Objekt*) is suitable for the generation of such an agreement. This then leads to the harmony of imagination and understanding in their free play, while the object (now *Gegenstand*) is felt to be purposive for the judgment. In reflective judgment, then, all the elements needed for determinative judgment are present: a concept of understanding is being presented and the given *Objekt* is schematized into a *Gegenstand*. However, no procedure involving the application of an empirical concept to determine an object takes place. This renders legitimate the assertion that imagination in its reflective activity schematizes without the involvement of empirical concepts.

Before evaluating Makkreel’s stance, it might be helpful to take a brief look at the distinction between *Gegenstand* and *Objekt*. Asserting that Kant refrains from using the term “*Ding*” in his *Critiques* due to the term’s association with the

---

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid*, 55

dogmatic metaphysical discourse, Howard Caygill<sup>213</sup> continues with his explication of this particular distinction. Accordingly, *Gegenstände* are objects of experience: they might either be objects of appearances that have not yet been conceptualized or objects of consciousness that are not distinct from their apprehension. *Objekte* are objects *for* knowledge: a *Gegenstand* becomes an *Objekt* once the given representations in intuition are united through apperception to ultimately relate to an object.<sup>214</sup> It then seems from Makkreel's formulation of the phases of determinative judgment as if his formulation presents a reverse order to that of Caygill: Makkreel formulates *Gegenstand* as the final phase whereas from Caygill's definition it is understood to be *Objekt* as the final phase in which *Gegenstand* is conceptualized by and for the understanding to produce its knowledge. It might, however, be that the two accounts are not conflicting: upon having formulated *Objekt*, Makkreel highlights the final touch, which is the schematization of a concept so as to be applicable to intuitions as spatiotemporal determinations. Put simply, an *Objekt* is granted the status of a *Gegenstand* when the former is schematized. In the case of reflective judgment, this schematization involves no empirical concepts: the *Gegenstand* in question is apprehended and presented to the understanding by the imagination, but not objectively defined to be such and such phenomenon. In other words, to what phenomenon this *Gegenstand* pertains to is an irrelevant question. However, to the extent that the intuited representations are unified to have a determinate form, which then either satisfies or does not satisfy the concordance between the apprehension of the intuited representations *and* the exhibition of a

---

<sup>213</sup> Caygill, *A Kant Dictionary*, 1995, 304-306. Caygill specifically refers to the Wolffian school in relation to the dogmatic metaphysics that Kant rejects. He adds that Kant uses "Ding" only when he refers to a "metaphysical thinghood" as in the case of "Ding-an-sich," this way underlining the latter's undetermined thinghood.

<sup>214</sup> Caygill also asserts that the *Gegenstand/Objekt* distinction is thoroughly omitted in Kemp Smith's translation of the *First Critique*. Caygill, 1995, 305

concept to the unity of these representations, imagination does get engaged in cognition. The result is a feeling of pleasure or displeasure, or both (as in the case of the sublime).

If one evaluates Makkreel's analysis in relation to his claim cited earlier, then one sees that Makkreel rightfully repudiates the possible degradation of the imagination in its reflective activity as a non-cognitive function with no theoretical bearing. Here, what "cognition" specifically entails appears as a crucial question that deserves to be treated, even if shortly. According to Caygill, cognition (*Erkenntnis*) includes intuitions and objects in contrast with "knowledge" (*Wissen*) which is not bound to sensible intuition and thus can be viewed only in relation to the principle of non-contradiction. For there to be cognition, however, there needs to be either an *a posteriori* procedure via experiencing or an *a priori* procedure via reasoning so as to approve its possibility.<sup>215</sup> Considered in light of Caygill's definition, Makkreel's stance is confirmed once again. To go back to the question of faculties regarding determinative and reflective judgments, Makkreel's analysis further delineates the specificities regarding the two judgments and how they are undertaken. Accordingly, both judgments involve cognition, and in both judgments imagination and understanding come to the fore as the main actors – a formulation that resembles Gibbons' account in this sense. The two accounts are also similar in the way they claim that a schematic activity, albeit one that does not result in the determination of an object of knowledge, is conducted by imagination. Though not accentuated, it is clear that the imagination here would be the pure, productive imagination and not the empirical, reproductive imagination, the latter being informed by empirical conditions which are of no fundamental concern in the process of reflective judging.

---

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid*, 113

#### 4.2.2. The Role of Imagination in Aesthetic Judgment

As its title suggests, this part will scrutinize the workings of the (productive) imagination in the process of aesthetic judging as one of the two types of reflective judgment. It will also clarify the significance of related notions such as aesthetic appreciation, artistic creativity, and genius, and what relation the imagination has to these notions.

Aside from the distinction between determinative and reflective judgments regarding the type of universality they comprise – the former comprises objective universality and the latter subjective universality – one of the major points of divergence between the two pertains to the involvement of imagination in the processes that concern rule-making. In this light, Gibbons provides us with a profound articulation regarding the difference between these judgments by examining the role of imagination with respect to artistic creation aside from objects of nature. She uses the term “exemplary originality” to refer to artworks, each one of whom is unique and constitute their own rule through their uniqueness. Differently from determining objects of nature through concepts that comprise objective universality, reflecting on a work of art generates a rule of judging none other than that very work of art. In Gibbons’ words, “no other work could express precisely the same rule. What the artist expresses and what the rule requires is ‘this’ – the particular work.”<sup>216</sup> In a way, the artwork gives rise to the rule as much as the rule gives rise to the artwork throughout its coming into being. Gibbons further asserts that while artworks are different from mathematical constructions or schemata in the sense that the rule involves a rather concrete process in the former, all three are similar procedures concerning the activity of imagination:

---

<sup>216</sup> Gibbons, 1994, 108

[I]n all cases, productive imagination innovates by exhibiting ‘new rules’ in intuition rather than by following recognized rules and simply subsuming intuition under concepts. Imagination creates and exhibits order and coherence in intuition, which then makes concept-application or rule-following possible.<sup>217</sup>

In line with her previous emphasis on imagination as a capacity that is not merely between the intuitive and the discursive, Gibbons assigns a role to imagination that is more than mediating between faculties. In both determinative and reflective judgments, imagination gathers what is grasped in intuition into an organized manifold of senses. From then on, the organized manifold can either be thought to be an object of knowledge through the concepts of understanding or judged to yield in the subject pleasure, displeasure, or both. In the former, imagination allows the understanding to apply its concepts to the sensible manifold through the schemata; in the latter, it moves beyond conceptualization while not antagonizing against the rule-ridden workings of the understanding.

Gibbons frequently refers to the aspect of “moving beyond conceptualization” while articulating the imagination’s activity in reflective judgment – in aesthetic judgment, strictly speaking. And the aspect of moving beyond the conceptual order of the understanding is immanently tied with a peculiar link to reason. When explicating genius in the context of artistic creation, Gibbons asserts that the productive imagination involved in the activity of the genius is free from abiding by its reproductive functions, which she simultaneously terms “empirical”. In its productive function, imagination instead looks up to reason. Gibbons’ stress on the deference of the reproductive, empirical imagination evokes the terminology of the *First Critique* and hence the understanding as the faculty that conceptualizes the reproduced manifold with the help of transcendental apperception. In other words,

---

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid*, 110

the productive imagination involved in artistic creation is not subject to the conceptualizing principles of the understanding. It rather concerns itself with reason. The ideas it produces strive to match up with those of reason without being conceptual or cognitive.

Why would imagination opt for collaborating with reason instead of understanding when aesthetic judgments are in question? Perhaps the second part of the question, namely, “why not understanding” has more or less been expounded in detail. That is, aesthetic judgments are not directed by a universally objective, theoretically abiding parameter or set of parameters: they are not determinative. But why, and how to, work with reason? I will put this pivotal question aside for the moment to be examined in the next part of this chapter. Gibbons’ interpretation regarding the function of imagination in reflective judgment can be concluded with her emphasis on the exhibitive character of imagination. Making use of the term “exhibition” repeatedly in relation to imagination, Gibbons claims that Kant is indeed inclined to employ this term to highlight the “productive and presentational character”<sup>218</sup> of imagination, no matter what the mode of the activity it is engaged in. Specifically speaking, imagination’s exhibition of ideas in aesthetic judgment renders possible a non-conceptual representation of the systematic harmony in nature. This way aesthetic judgment, even when it operates on particulars, channels itself to a harmony with a universal appeal. Regardless of whether the object, nature or fine art, is judged in terms of beauty or sublimity, imagination comprises an “ability to exhibit an order of intuition which conceptualization cannot adequately express.”<sup>219</sup>

---

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid*, 139

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid*, 142

Gibbons' formulation of the felt harmony between the two faculties might seem to downgrade the role of understanding, while according a pivotal one to imagination, in it. To put it slightly differently, the theoretically determinative capacity of the understanding is appeased, if not thoroughly shut off. Gibbons seems to be especially attentive to delineating the restriction on the understanding in an effort to demonstrate that it is not engaged in a discursive activity and that the imagination moves beyond theoretical determination. Perhaps most importantly, the creative aspect of imagination, along with its relation to objects of art as well as objects of nature, is expounded. Here the term "creative" has a peculiar connotation that cannot be equalled to "productive." Whereas imagination in its productive aspect is at work extensively in both judgments, the creative aspect of imagination pertains to the rule of the particular, in keeping with the procedure of reflective judgment whose starting point is particulars and which then tries to map out these particulars within a systematic harmony in a subjectively universal fashion.

Gibbons' emphasis on the similarity of the mechanisms involved in mathematical and aesthetic judgments is another highly relevant issue that is broadly construed by Donald W. Crawford in his 1982 essay where he particularly delves into the connection between mathematics and art.<sup>220</sup> Here, Crawford formulates the role of productive imagination in art and creativity, and the designation of the beautiful in particular, with remarkable conclusions. Claiming that Kant's treatment of aesthetic appreciation and artistic creativity has mostly been overshadowed by discussions pertaining to the universality and objectivity of reflexive judgments sketched out in the *Third Critique*, Crawford strives to restore and demonstrate the prominence of the former. His major premise is that the issue at hand is "a key step

---

<sup>220</sup> Donald Crawford, "Kant's Theory of Creative Imagination", *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics*, ed. Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, 151-178.

in [Kant's] declared attempt to make a transition between the pleasant and the good,<sup>221</sup> which the experience of the beautiful entails with a legitimate demand for response from all of us as judging subjects.

To ground his argument, Crawford initially sorts out the similarities and differences between philosophy and mathematics, and then between mathematics and art. Accordingly, philosophy and mathematics are similar in that both fields concern the attainment of knowledge through rational thinking; involve the universal; and comprise *a priori* knowledge. There is a crucial difference between the two, however. Namely, philosophy works through concepts which are not synthesized in intuition but analyzed with the aim of delineating their precise workings in an abstract manner,<sup>222</sup> whereas mathematics works on concrete samples by edifying concepts in pure, *a priori* intuition. Even when considered through the lens of Kant's transcendental philosophy that brought forth synthesis as an indispensable component of discursive thinking, philosophy is still different from mathematics in its unconditional privileging of the universal. In brief, the particular is to be thought only in the context of relation to or subsumption under the *a priori* universal. This is precisely where, according to Crawford, mathematics and art resemble one another vis-à-vis philosophy: both work "*in and through the particular*".<sup>223</sup> This is also where the imagination in its creativity stands out as *the* pivotal faculty, namely, the formation of particular intuitions. In this respect, Crawford articulates the link between the two fields with the following words:

---

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid*, 169

<sup>222</sup> Crawford adds that Kant was aware of the need for a revision of the definition of philosophy as a merely analytical field, and asserts that his critical philosophy comprised the theorization of (transcendental) synthesis that concepts themselves engaged in. See pp. 152-158.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid*, 157

[J]ust as the productive imagination of the geometrician produces that which expresses a concept and serves as a schema for the production of particular images (empirical intuitions), so the artistic genius produces that which expresses an idea and serves as an exemplar for the production of particular works of art.<sup>224</sup>

Crawford's formulation implicitly asserts that pure mathematical ideas constitute concepts that have a say on the knowledge of the phenomenal realm whereas aesthetic ideas of the genius cannot be considered as such. Nevertheless, the stress is rather on their involvement with the particular images in intuition as the point of convergence. Why would this operative semblance between mathematics and art be of significance? For Crawford, the answer lies in "mastery." Namely, in both mathematics and art, "the mind is master of nature".<sup>225</sup> Mathematical reasoning masters nature through its generation of pure particular intuitions that nevertheless pertain to concepts; legislating its own rule, the particular intuitions directly authorizes the concepts they express to subsume the particular in turn. Artistic genius masters nature through the expression of particular ideas that serve as rules for the production of multiple representations. This way the spontaneous creativity of the productive imagination plays a central role in the mastery of mind over nature in symbolic terms if not in the real sense. Ultimately, the beautiful does not only give pleasure to us but becomes a "symbol of morality" – the symbol of "our supersensible freedom from nature and our supersensible dominion over it."<sup>226</sup>

It is perhaps through this crucial connection to morality that primarily grants the genius power over nature. As the last citation also suggests, the power over nature is not meant within the confines of the theoretical domain. Imagination in its

---

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid*, 163

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid*, 174

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid*, 176

artistic creation moves beyond this phenomenal realm and its rigid objective rules and opens up a space where the genius, as Gibbons also claims, executes the very rule that it legislates itself through the artwork it produces. Moreover, aesthetic judgment is held in connection to the noumenal realm, through which the human mind is exalted for a higher purpose than mere cognition of and rudimentary compliance with the order of nature. To have a deeper insight into this connection, a scrutiny of the aesthetic judgment of the sublime, which constitutes the main issue of the next part, will be needed. The next part will also shed light to the question posited earlier in this part: why would imagination work with reason?

#### **4.3. Imagination's Input in Kant's Transcendental Philosophy**

Having proven to be a faculty and function of highly disputable nature, the imagination nevertheless secures its stance as a pivotal aspect of Kant's transcendental philosophy further through its direct and intense involvement with one of Kant's major concern, namely, the systematic unity of experience and knowledge. Kant lays the foundations of the system in the *Critique of Pure Reason* in which he theorizes the possibility of objective knowledge and in which he manages to delineate the boundaries of this type of knowledge. In the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, he devises reflective judgment as different from determinative judgment and seeks solutions to what have been left incomplete throughout the first two *Critiques*.

Ultimately, Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* harbours a solution regarding the systematization of experience and knowledge in its grand effort to conjoin the theoretical and the practical. For Makkreel, the aforementioned "reflective specification" as an operation of productive imagination strives to execute this task. Accordingly, reason in its regulative use indeed makes an attempt to

systematize experience in all its complexity in the *Critique of Pure Reason*; however, it fails to do so due to its hypothetical character. What is at stake here is the reflective specification of the pure concepts of understanding that renders possible the arrangement of the phenomenal realm into a system of genera and species.<sup>227</sup> To quote Makkreel at length:

The specification of universal concepts in the *Critique of Judgment* raises the possibility of reflecting on nature as a system of harmoniously co-existing parts. The idea of specifying a general concept suggests that Kant now regards it as a content to be formed instead of as a form that is fixed. Thus instead of considering the category of causality as a formal universal *under* which all objects of nature must be subsumed, the imagination now specifies it into “different kinds of causality” (C<sub>3</sub>, intro., v, 21) appropriate to different kinds of objects. Whereas determinant application was called a mechanical process in which the universal remains fixed, reflective specification was called artistic because the universal concept is itself modified: the content thought to be contained *in* the universal is specified in terms of genera and species.<sup>228</sup>

The imagination as the prime facilitator of reflective specification thus plays a crucial role in the combination of the countless particular concepts into a systematic unity. The emphasis is mainly on the imagination in its specifying and modifying capacities with respect to the concepts of the understanding in Makkreel’s account. Gibbons on the other hand scrutinizes the achievement of systematic unity with respect to aesthetic ideas vis-à-vis determinative conceptualizations in line with her emphasis on the function of imagination and pacification of that of understanding in the *Third Critique*. This is also where the activity of reason is justified. Whereas reason’s demand for total comprehension of the phenomenal realm is viewed as a violation against the determination of this realm in the *First Critique*, its consultation in the ideal of beauty is welcomed as a contribution to the harmony between faculties. In this respect, Gibbons contends that aesthetic judgments related to beauty

---

<sup>227</sup> Makkreel, 1990, 57

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid*, 58

are means for us to view the phenomenal world through a moral lens. They are not merely “moral judgments, [but] imaginative exhibitions of this broader ‘special unity’ manifesting a harmony between nature and reason.”<sup>229</sup> The phrase evokes a justifying tone regarding the necessity of the *Third Critique*, and the theorization of the reflective judgment in the face of determinative judgment, as a link between the seemingly difficult-to-harmonize natural realm of the *First Critique* and the moral realm of the *Second Critique*. Aesthetic judgment does not claim to generate theoretical knowledge; it does, however, perform an expansion of our knowledge of the phenomenal world, albeit one of non-cognitive, mental character. That is, judging the particular, without subsuming it under a universal, grants imagination, and consequently reason, the means to generate a comprehensive reading of the phenomenal world in an indeterminate fashion:

Through the mental expansion offered by aesthetic ideas, reason itself gains new tools for proceeding with the never-ending task of discovering systematic unity in nature and of discovering a unity between nature and man’s moral ends. Because imagination exhibits aesthetic ideas in a sensible intuition, reason finds its ideas are made intuitable (though not merely cognizable) through genius. Furthermore, since no single conceptualization of the products of genius captures the indeterminate meaning in an art work, reason’s ‘new tools’ are simultaneously singular exhibitions and open-ended invitations to create and recreate meaningfulness in nature. Thus, if the creativity of imagination lies in its relation to reason, this is due to the fact that it not only strives to exhibit reason’s ideas, but also adopts a similar mode of activity – that of seeking totality, or striving for completeness – *within* the phenomenal realm.<sup>230</sup>

Within this frame, then, imagination facilitates the generation of novel perceptions of what would be strictly determined in the phenomenal world through the concepts of understanding. It serves as a junction where the intuitive and the discursive processes work together not merely to produce knowledge of the nature but also give rise to non-theoretical ideas that nevertheless has a say on the otherwise purely mechanical

---

<sup>229</sup> Gibbons, 1994, 105

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid*, 112

knowledge of the nature. Gibbons' demonstration of the crucial role of imagination in artistic creation and aesthetic appreciation in a way reconstructs imagination's significance that Kant seems to overlook when he expounds reason's demand of systematic unity and its seemingly illegitimate appeal to the expansion of the knowledge of the phenomenal world.

Aside from singular aesthetic judgments of the beautiful that foster the achievement of systematic unity, judgments of the sublime likewise highlight the imagination and reason as of paramount significance in Gibbons' account. In the case of the sublime, reason is greeted with respect, for, as Gibbons' repeats Kant's words, "we estimate 'as small in comparison with ideas of reason everything which for us is great in nature as an object of sense.'"<sup>231</sup> For reason to be respected, the sublime is to involve the evaluation of the phenomenal world, as reason cannot foster this feeling through its own activity. What is more, the inability to master the phenomenal world in theoretical means, and the respect for reason that this situation stimulates, also comprises a comparison according to Gibbons. Namely, our imagination fails to intuit the whole of phenomenal world, which could be undertaken only by an intellectual intuition. In Gibbons' words, Kant "thus implicitly contrasts our limited imagination (which must be 'saved' by reason) with an intellectual intuition, which does intuit an absolute whole."<sup>232</sup> Last but not least, the interplay of imagination and reason in the sublime has another crucial aspect for Gibbons. In the aesthetic appreciation of nature accompanied with a respect for reason, the sublime animates a moral feeling like in the case of the beautiful. The aesthetic, reflective assessment of nature as sublime operates as a means of "'bridg[ing] the gap' between nature and

---

<sup>231</sup> *CJ*, 5:257; Cited by Gibbons, 129

<sup>232</sup> Gibbons, 1994, 138

freedom.”<sup>233</sup> Within this framework, imagination appears as an indispensable catalyzer of this bridging activity through its exhibition of ideas that pertain to both theoretical and practical ideas of reason.<sup>234</sup>

Concerning the respect for reason in relation to the sublime, Makkreel has a similar, if not the same, insight. Namely, confrontation with the sublime “reverses” our tendency to be “more impressed with the infinity of physical nature than with the infinite destiny of our moral nature.”<sup>235</sup> The feeling released in our confrontation with the sublime ultimately lies at the very nexus of the three *Critiques*:

The Copernican revolution of the first *Critique* proved that concepts of the *understanding* rather than things-in-themselves set the conditions of objectivity; that of the second *Critique* showed that the authority of the moral law derives not from without, but from within each person’s *reason*. The third *Critique*’s revolutionary transposition of view occurs in the regress of the *imagination* in the sublime: the inability of the imagination to comprehend mathematical infinity produces a regress that allows us to feel a sublime infinity within ourselves. This regress is at best understood transcendently as the basis for an integration of the faculties.<sup>236</sup>

In Makkreel’s formulation, the imagination indeed appears at the very centre of the *Third Critique*, which has the final say on the order of nature in its empirical diversity. Within this network, the imagination reminds us of the fact that our relation to nature as subjects is not merely theoretical; the human mind is engaged in art and culture, which owes its production to artistic creation and aesthetic appreciation, as much as it is engaged in science and technology to whose development its determinative judgment aids. Moreover, the imagination in its strife for systematic unity of experience also instils the hope in us that the nature is not a

---

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid*, 125

<sup>234</sup> Gibbons delineates this discussion in light of her scrutiny of the dynamical sublime. See pp. 147-151.

<sup>235</sup> Makkreel, 1990, 87

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid*, 87

total chaos; it helps us to appreciate it through reflective judgment. Last but not least, imagination restores the status of reason, the *leitmotif* of Kantian philosophy, by revealing that reason's demand for totality is not mere transgression of our legitimate attainment of objective knowledge but the ultimate means to make our experience of the world meaningful for us.

All things considered, the imagination of the *Third Critique* is the main agent that assists in the subject's appreciation of itself via its appreciation of the object without falling into despair. In this sense, imagination is redeemed from the reputation of being a faculty of dubious nature in the *First Critique* and revealed to be a faculty that lies at the heart of meaning. Considered from this perspective, Kant's transcendental philosophy can be considered to be a metaphysics of meaningfulness as well as an epistemological doctrine in its effort to rehabilitate the Humean dead end.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The study of the faculty and function of imagination in Kantian philosophy has proven to be a prolific task in a number of ways. First of all, it has provided the author of this thesis with the opportunity to extensively examine a large part of the two *Critiques*. Second, due to the highly strategic position of the imagination regarding the workings of these *Critiques*, studying the imagination has rendered necessary the close scrutiny of the major faculties, processes, and notions that constitute each *Critique*. Furthermore, it has had an indirect and yet important allusion to the *Critique of Practical Reason*, which, even though it has not been referred to throughout the thesis, has retained its presence at the backdrop especially as regards the connection between the three *Critiques*. In light of all these, I have refrained from making an adamant assertion regarding the nature of imagination and instead followed a comparative approach that involved the examination of various interpretations on the topic at hand. On the whole, the expounding of the imagination within the broader scope of Kantian system is not only pivotal in terms of attaining a deep understanding of his philosophy but serves as an illuminative guide to assess the theories of his successors that pertain to epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic concerns.

During the commencement of the study, I have especially found Sarah Gibbons' account very enlightening. Of course, the fact that Gibbons has worked extensively on imagination as expounded in both the *First* and the *Third Critiques* has been instrumental in my prioritization of her arguments throughout the essay;

however, it obviously has not been the only reason. Several aspects of her account have been especially helpful in further understanding the significance of imagination. Regarding the discussion on the role of imagination in the *First Critique*, Gibbons moves the spotlight from the seemingly everlasting debate on nature of imagination, i.e., whether it is intuitive or discursive or both, to the clarification of the function of syntheses as acted out by each faculty as well as those of schemata. This way she expounds each faculty's extent of involvement in attaining the knowledge of the natural world instead of pinpointing the exact nature of imagination or of schemata *per se*. Her approach neither succumbs to the reification of imagination as the ultimate centre of the whole knowledge-production process as in the case of Heidegger and Freydberg, nor underrates the articulation of imagination as psychologism as in the case of Longuenesse. In a similar vein, Paul Guyer also focuses on the function, rather than the exact nature, of imagination in his explication of the schemata and their significance in this process.

Why I have sided on the accounts that focus more on the specificities of the function of imagination and not on its nature or its "rank" in knowledge-production comes into view more vividly when considered in light of the disputes related to the *Third Critique*. It has appeared to be of paramount importance to examine the specific synthetic and schematic functions of imagination, as well as synthesis and schema in their own particularities, to fully make sense of the role of imagination in the *Third Critique*. Like in the *First Critique*, imagination interacts with understanding in the *Third Critique* and, as both Gibbons and Makkreel argue, a schematic act which concerns particulars and which does not get involved in knowledge-production in an objective fashion is at play here, too. In the *First Critique*, the function that allows pure concepts of understanding to be appropriate

and applicable to sensible intuitions is termed a “schema;” here, schematism involves a conceptual process. In the *Third Critique*, a set of sensible intuitions, apprehended and arranged into a sensible manifold by our imagination, is exhibited again by our imagination to the understanding. This time, however, the understanding does not authorize its pure concepts to undertake synthesis but, through the presentation of its concepts to the sensible manifold by our imagination, facilitates mental affection. From this point of view, “schematism” in a broader sense entails the activity of imagination whereby it attains and organizes the bundle of intuitions to be presented to the understanding. From then on, understanding gets involved either in a determinative activity whereby it synthesizes the intuited bundle to produce objective knowledge or in a reflective activity which results in the release of a feeling concerning the intuited bundle. Both accounts make it clear that imagination lies at the heart of both procedures and that it is an indispensable element of both theoretical knowledge and aesthetic appreciation; a fuller insight into the latter procedure, however, is attained more conveniently when the workings of the former procedure is examined in detail. In this respect, the discussions on the role of imagination in the *First Critique* have been highly valuable in terms of grasping and appreciating its role in the *Third Critique*.

Conversely, studying the *Third Critique* especially with reference to the writings of Gibbons, Makkreel, and Crawford has been an invaluable experience in terms of making sense of Kantian philosophy on the whole. The study has revealed that Kant’s system not only constitutes a groundbreaking epistemological account that has proven to be an inexhaustible source of inspiration for his successors. His effort also constitutes an account of ethics and aesthetics, whose dynamics are intertwined, as is exemplified in the most manifest manner through the reflective

designation of the beautiful and the sublime as the promoter of our supersensible side. Namely, judging in aesthetic terms is simultaneously a reminder of our freedom from the determination of the sensible world in line with rigid rules. To put it poetically, the juggernaut of countless particulars does not need to be our nightmare but can well be our joy in its universal systematicity. Within this frame, imagination as a fundamental component of aesthetic judgment as well as theoretical knowledge has come into view as a faculty that deserves a close, detailed scrutiny in our effort to see the intricate connections between Kantian epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics.

In view of the discussion above, it could be argued that the study of imagination is central to have a fuller apprehension of the passage from an epistemological account to ethical and aesthetic ones. If we are to accept Kearney's position regarding the distinction between Kantian imagination and the philosophies that preceded his, we can then observe that the "productivity" of imagination simultaneously concerns knowledge, taste, and morals. That is, having a "productive" role in the attainment of knowledge in a way impels, or in softer terms allows, the faculty of imagination to actively take part in the approval or disapproval of an act in moral terms *and* the arousal of a feeling pleasure or displeasure regarding an object of nature or art. All in all, understanding the theoretical and practical link(s) between the major branches of philosophy is a momentous task, and the study of imagination in Kant's doctrine at least provides us with a glimpse of the mechanism that binds these branches to one another. It would be notably prolific to trace the impact of Kantian imagination in the philosophies of his successors – a study that exceeds the scope of this thesis and yet remains to be conducted.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allison, Henry E. *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004
- Ameriks, Karl. "Introduction: Interpreting German Idealism", *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 1-17
- Beiser, Frederic. "The Enlightenment and Idealism", *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000
- . *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism, 1781-1801*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002
- Caygill, Howard. *A Kant Dictionary*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995
- Crawford, Donald. "Kant's Theory of Creative Imagination", *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics*, ed. Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, 151-178
- Freydberg, Bernard. *Imagination and Depth in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, New York: Peter Lang, 1994
- Gibbons, Sarah. *Kant's Theory of Imagination: Bridging Gaps in Judgment and Experience*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994
- Guyer, Paul. *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987
- Heidegger, Martin. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 1929, trans. James S. Churchill, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965
- Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding: A Critical Edition*, ed. Tom L. Beauchamp, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000
- Jones, W. T. *A History of Western Philosophy: Kant and the 19th Century*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969-1975
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007
- . *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000

---. "What is Enlightenment?" 1784.

<<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/kant.html>>

Kitcher, Patricia. "Immanuel Kant", *The Blackwell Guide to the Modern Philosophers: From Descartes to Nietzsche*, ed. Steven M. Emmanuel, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2001, 223-258

Kearney, Richard. *The Wake of Imagination: Toward a Postmodern Culture*, London: Routledge, 1988

Kemp Smith, Norman. *A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

Longuenesse, Béatrice. *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Analytic of the Critique of Pure Reason*, 1993, trans. Charles T. Wolfe, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998

Makkreel, Rudolf A. *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of the Critique of Judgment*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990

Scruton, Roger. "Kant", *German Philosophers: Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche*, Roger Scruton, Peter Singer, Christopher Janaway, and Michael Tanner, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001

## TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

### YAZARIN

Soyadı : .....

Adı : .....

Bölümü : .....

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans

Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:** .....