

Kant's Categories

Quantity	Quality	Relation	Modality
Unity Plurality Totality	Reality Negation Limitation	Substance Cause Community	Possibility Existence Necessity
Axions of Intuition	Anticipations of Perception	Analogies of Experience	Postulates of Empirical Thought

Kant, Critique of Judgment

1) Analytic of the Beautiful

a) Judgment of Taste as to Its **Quality**

- i) judgment of taste is aesthetic (not cognitive and not logical) (44)
- ii) it produces liking (pleasure) which is independent of the object's existence (46)
- iii) Concern for existence is brought about by interest, which biases the judgment
 - (1) the "agreeable" (what the senses like) is a form of interest (47)
 - (a) we are concerned here with the "objective presentation of sense" (i.e. how the mind presents the data of the senses to the understanding) (47-48)
 - (b) we are not concerned with our response to the perception of objects of sense, which Kant calls feeling (48)
 - (2) the "good" (either as in good for something (utility) or intrinsically good) is involved with interest (48-49)
 - (a) good as in utility supposes a purpose and hence ties it to will
 - (b) good as in moral good is always of interest to us—we cannot be indifferent to the triumph or failure of the "good"
- iv) the agreeable, the beautiful and the good designate three different relations that presentations have to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure (51)
 - (1) agreeable: what gratifies us (52)
 - (2) beautiful: what we like
 - (3) good: what we esteem or endorse
- v) Only the liking we give to the beautiful is disinterested and free (52)

b) Judgment of Taste as to its **Quantity**

- i) the liking associated with the beautiful, because it is free and without interest must hold for everyone (be universal)
 - (1) we require a similar liking from others(53-54)
 - (2) we speak of beautiful as if beauty were a characteristic of the object (54)
 - (a) which implies such judgments are logical (they are not)
 - (b) beauty is not a characteristic of the object but of the subject's presentation of the object (54)
- ii) "about the agreeable the following principle holds: *Everyone has his own taste (of sense)*" (55)
- iii) Universal validity means these must be *a priori* judgments not empirical ones (57)
- iv) Does pleasure precede judgment or the other way around
 - (1) If pleasure precedes judgment, then the judgment would be tied to the "mere agreeableness in the sensation" (61)

- (2) Judgment must precede pleasure and the pleasure must be related not simply to the object but to the pleasure associated with judging the object
 - (a) When judging the beautiful “the cognitive powers brought into play by this presentation are in free play, because no determinative concept restricts them to a particular rule of cognition. Hence the mental state in this presentation must be a feeling, accompanying the given presentation, of a free play of the presentational powers directed to cognition in general. Now if a presentation by which an object is given is, in general, to become a cognition, we need *imagination* to combine the manifold of intuition, and *understanding* to provide the unity of the concept uniting the [component] presentations. This state of *free play* of the cognitive powers, accompanying a presentation by which an object is given, must be universally communicable” (62)
 - (b) This pleasure “is the quickening of the two powers (imagination and understanding) to an activity that is indeterminate” (63)
- c) Judgment of Taste as to the **Relation** of Purposes That is Taken into Consideration in Them
 - i) Purpose attaches to objects (65)
 - (1) they exist to satisfy some purpose
 - (2) they are the effect of some earlier cause (and therefore purposeful)
 - (3) even when purpose is not obvious, we assume a prior will that is the object’s causality
 - ii) But a judgment of taste requires the form of purposiveness (66)
 - (1) An actual objective purpose involves an object with interest
 - (2) An actual subjective purpose involves an object with will (and therefore interest)
 - (3) Consciousness of this merely formal purposiveness in the play of our powers produces pleasure (68)
 - (4) A judgment of taste is pure if it asserts the beautiful; it is empirical if it asserts the agreeable (69)
 - iii) Objective purposiveness cannot be part of a pure aesthetic judgment (i.e. the beautiful)
 - (1) extrinsic objective purposiveness refers to the object’s utility (good for something)
 - (2) intrinsic objective purposiveness refers to the object’s perfection
 - (3) perfect for what? perfection tied to the agreeable and to an actual purpose (the beautiful must present “purposiveness without a purpose” (73)) (74-75)
 - iv) Free beauty vs. Accessory beauty
 - (1) Free beauty
 - (a) does not require a concept
 - (b) example of a flower (just what IS a flower?)
 - (c) “When we judge free beauty (according to mere form) then our judgment of taste is pure. Here we presuppose no concept of any purpose for which the manifold is to serve the given object, and hence no concept [as to] what the object is [meant] to represent; our imagination is playing, as it were, while it contemplates the shape, and such a concept would only restrict its freedom” (77)
 - (2) Accessory beauty
 - (a) presupposes a concept and the fitness (i.e. perfection) of the object in relation to that concept

- (b) examples of horse, building, or human being
- v) An ideal of beauty is impossible
 - (1) because the liking associated with the beautiful is tied to the free play initiated by the object, no ideal is possible (and would in fact defeat the possibility of the beautiful by replacing the free play of imagination with what is an empirical and logical judgment (i.e. the perfection of the object for some purpose) (79-80)
- d) Judgment of Taste as to the **Modality** of the Liking for the Object
 - i) The beautiful has a *necessary* reference to liking (85)
 - ii) We can expect all to agree but our requirement can only be conditional and not absolute (86)
 - iii) Common Sense is the subjective principle that guarantees assent (87)
 - (1) Since when we call an object beautiful we are actually communicating a subjective attunement of our cognitive powers to the object
 - (a) But this attunement must be universally communicable
 - (b) That universality must be the principle of common sense (88)
- e) General Comment
 - i) Judgment of Taste involves the “*free lawfulness* of the imagination” (91)
 - (1) “in a judgment of taste the imagination must be considered in its freedom. This implies, first of all, that this power is here not taken as reproductive, where it is subject to the laws of association, but as productive and spontaneous (as the originator of chosen forms of possible intuitions)” (91)
 - (2) “The understanding alone gives the law. But when the imagination is compelled to proceed according to determinative law, then its product is determined by concepts (as far as its form is concerned); but in that case the liking, as was shown above, is a liking not for the beautiful but for the good (of perfection, at any rate, formal perfection), and the judgment is not a judgment made by taste. It seems, therefore, that only a lawfulness without a law, and a subjective harmony of the imagination with the understanding without an objective harmony—where the presentation is referred to a determinative concept of an object—is compatible with the free lawfulness of the understanding (which has also been called purposiveness without a purpose) and with the peculiarity of a judgment of taste.” (91-92)
 - ii) Judgment of Taste is pure
 - (1) “it connects liking or disliking directly with the mere *contemplation* of the object, irrespective of its use or any purpose” (92)
 - iii) The beautiful is associated with variation (which involves the free play of the imagination)
 - (1) example of the explorer discovering a pepper garden amidst wild and irregular jungle landscapes: “And yet he need only have made the experiment of spending one day with his pepper garden to realize that, once regularity has [prompted] the understanding to put itself into attunement with order which it requires everywhere, the object ceases to entertain him and instead inflicts on his imagination an irksome constraint; whereas nature in those regions, extravagant in all its diversity to the point of opulence, subject to no constraint from artificial rules, can nourish his taste permanently” (94).
 - (2) “In beautiful views of objects, taste seems to fasten not so much on what the imagination *apprehends* in that are, as on the occasion they provide for it to

engage in *fiction*, i.e., on the actual fantasies with which the mind entertains itself as it is continually being aroused by the diversity that strikes the eye” (94).

2) Analytic of the Sublime

a) Similarities and Differences between the Beautiful and the Sublime

i) Similarities

- (1) Neither refer to concepts
- (2) Liking connected to mere exhibition, and so related to imagination
- (3) Both singular and yet proclaim themselves as universally valid (97)

ii) Differences

- (1) beautiful associated with form and therefore bound; sublime can be found in formless object (unboundedness)
- (2) beautiful associated with quality, while sublime with quantity
- (3) Different pleasures
 - (a) the liking associated with the beautiful “carries with it directly a feeling of life’s being furthered, and hence is compatible with charms and with an imagination at play” (98)
 - (b) “only arises indirectly: it is produced by the feeling of a momentary inhibition of the vital forces followed immediately by an outpouring of them that is all the stronger. Hence it is an emotion, and so it seems to be seriousness, rather than play, in the imagination’s activity” (98)
 - (i) attracted and repulsed
 - (ii) admiration and respect
- (4) Relation to our power of judging
 - (a) the beautiful seems made for our judging
 - (b) the sublime seems “incommensurate with our power of exhibition, and as it were violent to our imagination” (99)

iii) Beautiful and Sublime in Nature

- (1) Sublime is not *in* nature: sublimity is the response of the mind to the sublime (99)
- (2) Beautiful leads us to further contemplation of the forms (and laws) of nature
- (3) Sublime suggests no forms and no laws

b) The Mathematically Sublime

i) Absolutely large: not great or a magnitude but absolutely large (103)

- (1) relative size implies measure
- (2) sublime exceeds measure

ii) Pleasure

- (1) no liking for the object
- (2) “liking for the expansion of the imagination itself” (105)

iii) Sublime related to Imagination Reaching its Limit

- (1) “[What happens is that] our imagination strives to progress toward infinity, while our reason demands absolute totality as a real idea, and so [the imagination,] our power of estimating the magnitude of things in the world of sense, is inadequate to that idea. Yet this inadequacy itself is the arousal in us of the feeling that we have within us a supersensible power ... *Sublime is what even to be able to think proves that the mind has a power surpassing any standard of sense*” (106).
- (2) “For [the spectator at St. Peter’s] has the feeling that his imagination is inadequate for exhibiting the idea of a whole, [a feeling] in which imagination reaches its

maximum, and as it strives to expand that maximum, it sinks back into itself, but consequently comes to feel a liking [that amounts to an] emotion” (109).

- (3) But Reason Demands Unity
 - (a) Imagination progresses to infinity; but Reason demands comprehension in one intuition: “reason makes us unavoidably think of the infinite (in common reader’s judgment) as *given in its entirety* (in its totality)” (111).
 - (i) “The infinite, however, is absolutely large ... Compared with it everything else ... is small”
 - (ii) “But—and this is most important—to be able even to think the infinite *as a whole* indicates a mental power that surpasses any standard of sense” (111)
 - (iii) “If the human mind is nonetheless to *be able even to think* the given infinite without contradiction, it must have within itself a power that is supersensible” (111)
 - (b) So the beautiful refers the imagination in its free play to the understanding so that it will harmonize with the concepts (of the understanding); the sublime refers the imagination to reason so that it will harmonize with reason’s ideas (112-113)
- iv) Scales : “Now when we judge such an immense whole aesthetically, the sublime lies not so much in the magnitude of the number as in the fact that, the farther we progress, the larger are the unities we reach. This is partly due to the systematic division in the structure of the world edifice; for this division always presents to us whatever is large in nature as being small in turn, though what it actually presents to us is our imagination, in all its boundlessness, and along with it nature, as vanishing[ly small] in contrast to the ideas of reason, if the imagination is to provide an exhibition adequate to them” (113-114).
- v) The Liking (Pleasure?) associated with the Sublime
 - (1) Respect for our own vocation: accorded to an object in nature that makes “intuitable for us the superiority of the rational vocation of our cognitive powers over the greatest power of sensibility” (114).
 - (2) Displeasure at the imagination’s inadequacy
 - (3) Pleasure at the awareness of the supersensible (in us and in nature)
 - (4) Agitation—“an abyss in which the imagination is afraid to lose itself” (115)
 - (5) Attraction—such striving of the imagination; reason’s idea of the supersensible (115)
 - (6) We can only know the superiority of our reason in its failure when pressed to the greatest extent (and the mind’s recovery from that failure) (116)
- c) The Dynamically Sublime: Nature as Might
 - i) arouses fear (119)
 - ii) but we can’t be afraid (i.e. not really threatened) (120)
 - iii) makes us aware of our power to resist: “Yet the sight of them becomes all the more attractive the more fearful it is, provided we are in a safe place. And we like to call these objects sublime because they raise the soul’s fortitude above its usual middle range and allow us to discover in ourselves an ability to resist which is of a quite different kind, and which gives us the courage [to believe] that we could be a match for nature’s seeming omnipotence” (120)
 - (1) confronted with power of nature, we realize our independence of nature (121)
 - (2) not just material self-preservation, but psychic (?) (121)

- iv) “Hence nature is here called sublime merely because it elevates our imagination, [making] it exhibit those cases where the mind can come to feel its own sublimity, which lies in its vocation and elevates it even above nature” (121).
- v) Don’t confuse Nature as might with God in nature (exhibiting his might) (122)
- vi) Summation: “Hence sublimity is contained not in any thing ...” (123)
- d) Modality of a Judgment about the Sublime
 - i) Requires Universal assent
- 3) General Comment
 - a) Liking divided amongst the agreeable, the beautiful, the sublime, and the good
 - b) Nature is appearance: if we can cognize it then it is limited (128)
 - c) The sublime response: “Thus any spectator ...” (129)
- 1) On Fine Art
 - a) mechanical art: “If art merely performs the acts that are required to make a possible object actual, adequate to our *cognition* of that object, then it is *mechanical art*” (172)
 - b) aesthetic art: “but if what it intends directly is [to arouse] the feeling of pleasure, then it is called *aesthetic art*” (172)
 - i) “It is agreeable art if its purpose is that the pleasure should accompany presentations that are mere sensations”
 - ii) “It is fine art if its purpose is that the pleasure should accompany presentations that are *ways of cognizing*”
- 2) On the Powers of Mind that Constitute Genius
 - a) imagination: “For the imagination ... is mighty when it creates, as it were, another nature out of the material that actual nature gives it. We use it to entertain ourselves when experience strikes us as overly routine. We may even restructure experience; and though in doing so we continue to follow analogical laws, yet we also follow principles which reside higher up, namely, in reason ... In this process we feel our freedom from the law of association ...” (182)
 - b) an aesthetic idea “is a presentation of the imagination which is conjoined with a given concept and is connected, when we use imagination in its freedom, with such a multiplicity of partial presentations that no expression that stands for a determinate concept can be found for it. Hence it is a presentation that makes us add to a concept the thoughts of much that is ineffable, but the feeling of which quickens our cognitive powers and connects language, which otherwise would be mere letters, with spirit” (185)
 - c) understanding: “but it is necessary that the imagination in its freedom be commensurate with the lawfulness of the understanding. For if the imagination is left in lawless freedom, all its riches [in ideas] produce nothing but nonsense, and it is judgment that adapts the imagination to the understanding” (188)