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Finality of Reason

Reflections on Kant's Logocentrism

Abstract

Kant's logocentrism is an attempt of determination of human reason in terms of concepts a priori. In this paper the author points out four aspects of finality of reason: (1) the reason's limitation to human experience; (2) the discursive character of reason; (3) in order to control the experience, the reason is to search for the universal only by heuristic rules; (4) the reason can't find the concepts for the characterisation of some intuitive features, organized entities and the nature as a whole.

1. Kant's Logocentrism: Philosophy as a System of A Priori Laws of Reason For Determination and Control of Experience

Philosopher is, says Kant, a legislator in the name of reason (KRV, B 867). Naturally, we are referring to human reason, to our superior cognitive capacity. Philosopher legislates specifying the rules of application of *a priori* concepts. The territory (*Boden*) to which his legislation extends its authority (*Gesetzgebung*) is delimited by (possible) experience. In this way, the comprised territory includes the whole of sensitive nature (material as well as animated, inside as well as outside of man) in addition to sensible, worldly manifestations of freedom.

Representations are *a priori* speculative concepts, instruments of legislation in the name of theoretical reason. The genus 'representation' is primitive (it cannot be explained, LJ, A 41-2) and it comprises various species, namely, feelings, perceptions, empirical and pure concepts of knowledge (notions) and the ideas of reason. This concerns different types of mental states which can be used in one way or other in the realization of our cognitive interests. While the ideas of reason can be used only in formulation of heuristic rules of the search for objective knowledge, all other representations can be projected directly or indirectly onto the objects to which they refer, either in the sense that they present their empirical characteristics or in the sense that they determine the categorial framework within which these properties can be apprehended, or at least, hypothetically imagined (LJ, A 40).

The *a priori* concepts used in the legislation in the name of practical reason do not refer to objects, nor can they be useful in the search for its knowledge. Although they do not serve the epistemological purposes, they

have an 'objective value' and an 'objective reality' in a practical sense, that is, in the context of an action. For this reason, maintains Kant, one can say that the concepts of practical reason 'have objects', although it could be specified in what way they refer to objects (KRV, A 243). With this correction, we may classify moral concepts also among representations, next to theoretical representations.¹

The representational states of the spirit (*Gemütszustände*) (which 'refer' to objects or 'have' objects) should be distinguished from the non-representational ones, which are feelings of delight and displeasure. The feelings can be 'had' or 'felt', but not 'intuited' (*eingesehen*, KU, H 39), 'conceived' or 'regulated'. Intuitive forms of time and space (KRV, B 88), objective concepts, or moral maxims cannot be applied to these feelings. For this reason, feelings are not representations of anything, not even of a subject, and cannot be used for the purpose of theoretical or practical legislation.

Although they are different from representations, the feelings of delight and displeasure are conditioned by the former. To begin with, the feelings of delight and displeasure for empirical things causatively depend on our representations of the same. As for moral feelings, they also causatively depend on the representations of pure duty (moral law). Finally, the feelings of complacency in the presence of beauty and those of admiration for the sublime, arise in us upon a reflection on the free play between intuitive representations of objects and their conceptual representations (so that they may serve as a foundation for aesthetic judgements, in the conditions of sustaining the pretension to necessity and intersubjective validity in the same way as theoretical and practical judgements.)

In the same way as our feelings, our actions are also conditioned by representations. Moral actions are completely and rigorously determined by representations of moral law (KU, B 125).² Other human actions depend on technological or pragmatic laws. Finally, our passions, inclinations and dispositions are only the effects of our feelings that are on their part determined by (empirical) representations.

Representational activity is thus the foundation of the realization of the ability to feel and to wish: this is the essence of Kant's doctrine that practicing (*Ausübung*) of all mental faculties or powers is determined by the cognitive faculty, be it empirical or pure (KU, H 59), since operations of empirical cognitive faculty are on their part determined by the rules provided by pure cognitive capacity. That is why cognition, feeling and will, the three basic and irreducible faculties of the human spirit (*Gemüt*) are not just an aggregation, but a system, a hierarchically organized system of powers (KU, H 11, 67).

One could object the thesis of the primacy of representation in Kant's philosophy that, according to Kant himself, contemplation of the world (*die Betrachtung der Welt*) is of practical interest to the one whom it serves (KU, B 411); that even the existence of the world becomes man's practical purpose; that our appetitive, and not our cognitive power established the order of values; that, because of that it is more correct to say that will is the supreme power in the human being and that, consequently, Kant's philosophy is not a representational logocentrism. However, it is not possible to ignore the fact that for a philosopher of the Enlightenment, human will is not good in itself and for itself, but only in the degree in which it

complies with the rules of practical reason and that the supreme and ultimate of these interests is the interest of a complete determination of man by means of reason (*die ganze Bestimmung des Menschen*, KRV, B 868; cf. LJ, A 23), that is, by the concept or representation of duty. This reestablishes the primacy of representation, contrary to the present objection.

The simple external appearance of self-control through reason (*Selbstbeherrschung durch Vernunft*) observes Kant, makes us even today call 'anyone a philosopher who appears to exhibit self-control under the guidance of reason, however limited his knowledge may be.' (KRV, *ibid.*) In accordance with the mentioned interest, the general task of philosophical legislation should be to ensure complete rational control over all of the powers of the human spirit (*Gemütskräfte*), and by means of them, the sensible nature and free human acting in the sensible world. Such task develops necessarily into a certain number of essential but not ultimate subtasks of specification of effective types of control. The latter can be divided into theoretical, technically-practical or morally-practical. Kant uses the same word *Bestimmung* to designate both determination of objects as well as education of affections and monitoring of actions. According to him, both the legislation of nature and the legislation of our affectiveness and freedom (the one that directs our *destiny* and imposes on us a *mission* in this world) answers to the same basic problem, the problem of a complete *Bestimmung* of human experience.

The different tasks of control are realized by means of propositions or imperatives, in the first instance, by means of *a priori* propositions and imperatives. The realization of the theoretical interest of reason in defending the cognoscibility of nature, inside or outside of man, is accomplished through the medium of *a priori* principles of understanding. However, effective knowledge of the sensible nature is deposited in theoretical empirical propositions.

The interest of reason for practical control over nature is realized by means of technically practical propositions³ which can be divided into technological imperatives (*Regel der Geschicklichkeit*) aimed at the transformation of nature in accordance with our arbitrary and pragmatic ends, and pragmatic imperatives (*Regel der Klugheit*) that allow us to use natural human dispositions and inclinations for arbitrary purposes. Technological and pragmatic imperatives have the same content as theoretical empirical propositions, differing from them only in the imperative form.

Finally, the interest for the control of human freedom, in accordance with its ultimate objective is realized by means of morally-practical imperatives

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Kantian theory of practical concepts remains a very obscure matter even today. We believe that we can make a significant progress in its clarification if we treat it as a *a priori* semantics, complementary to the *a priori* semantics of speculative concepts elaborated in the first *Critique*.

2

In this case there is no schematism as an instrument of determination. Determination of will is accomplished through its receptiveness (*Empfänglichkeit*) for the categorical imperative (MS, A 37).

3

Usually Kant uses the word 'proposition' (*Satz*) to designate imperatives.

or moral laws. They have no theoretical contents. Their 'objective value' is, as we have said above, 'merely' practical.

Before being a fountain of knowledge or duties, human reason is a source of *a priori* tasks for determination of experience. In its origin philosophy is not a doctrinal or moral system, but an *activity* of resolving the 'necessary' problems, that is, problems imposed by the structure of our mind. To learn philosophy means, first of all, to learn to philosophize, to use reason as a response to its own appeals. This is the cosmic concept of philosophy as an activity in the interests of us all (KRV, B 868b; LJ, A 24) which has absolute dignity (*Würde*) or value (*Wert*) (LJ, A 23). The existing philosophical systems are useful, yes, but only as examples of application of the principles of reason for legislative purposes. Its study is recommended not in order to learn legislations proposed by others, but to practise our own legislative talents and to *cultivate* our mental (cognitive, affective and, above all, volitive) powers always reserving the right to criticize the proposed legislations, approving or rejecting them (KRV, B 412).

One should also bear in mind the fact that the supreme *value* of the human being does not reside in *what he knows* or in *what he feels*, but in *what he does*, or rather, in the manner in which he does it, in his will (*ibid.*). From the point of view of the ultimate aim of the human being, practical *a priori* moral problems are superior to the theoretical ones. For this reason, a true philosopher is a *moralist*, rather than a theoretician of knowledge or of human practice of transforming nature (KRV, B 868).

The idea of an *architectonic order* between different tasks of determination and control, based on the ultimate aim of reason, requires an also systematic order between its solutions, between the different types of legislative propositions. Different *a priori* legislations must be unified, harmonized, in an only hierarchically organized system. Or as Kant says, it is required that different powers of the human spirit be in accord, in proportion to each other. This unification must ensure in particular that the consequences of the propositions about nature be compatible with the imperatives of freedom. (Ent, A 125).

This is the form which the problem of preestablished harmony assumes in Kant. For Leibnitz (KRV, A 390, B 331-2; Ent, A 124-5; Fort, A 75) this word designates a type of unity between body and soul comprehended as absolutely *isolated* substances. In Kant, this is not about the harmony of things subsistent in themselves, one external to the other, any longer. This is about the harmony of the manners in which the powers of the human spirit work, even when they are governed by different principles, and of their products (propositions and imperatives).

2. Finality of Reason

Legislative human reason can do a lot, but it cannot do everything. Its theoretical use has external limits, limits of the territory of possible experience, beyond which it cannot impose its laws. If it wishes to be critical, reason must acknowledge its impotence in the presence of a suprasensible, incognoscible substratum of nature (KU, B LVI, 245). In its practical use,

the legislation of reason extends also over the suprasensible, over the freedom of rational beings in general. In this case, it also endures limitations; it does not have power enough to definitely double the natural forces in us, our dispositions and our inclinations. Thus, the Kantian logos is no longer an intellect (*nous*) *infinite* in wisdom and in power (omniscient and omnipotent). The infinite, divine logos can see everything, and can do everything, once and for all; it intuits everything and produces everything in a single step. Kant's finite human reason does not have such powers. He repeatedly emphasizes that theoretical human logos is not capable of intuiting an object, that it is condemned to discourse, that is, to spell (*buchstabieren*) or synthesize appearances step by step, by means of concepts, characteristic marks, signs, working in linear and discreet processes.

As for our practical reason, although it does not spell experience, it is also synthetic. Its basic instrument, the categorical imperative, synthetically relates our will to our supreme objective. Such objective is also necessarily realized step by step. According to Kant, human will works in a mechanical manner, proceeding from the parts towards the whole (KU, B 349). This does not prevent the supreme good to please immediately. Practical reason does not have to bring forth arguments in order to convince. It convinces by exercising direct coercion (*Nötigung*, *Zwang*). Not even because of that does it stop being discursive.

Because of its discursiveness, the theoretically-practical legislation in the name of human reason *needs time* to explain itself and to impose itself. We can realize our supreme good, which is our existence in the sensible world under moral law, only through the medium of a practical synthesis in an entire lifetime. It is clear that this time is not the time of intuition. This is an entirely different dimension, in which we acquire a moral attitude and in which we act morally, realizing little by little our destiny and our mission.

From the time of human life we still must distinguish the time of the realization of the progress of the human kind. The innate dispositions of the kind (*a priori* laws of reason, among others), by means of which the forces of human nature admit new rules and new objectives, are activated in this progress. The time of the history of human logos, in which successive attempts at *a priori* legislation of human matters have been made, is also not the infinite time of intuition. Although its duration is not definite, it is limited by the eschatological horizon of the realm of grace which reason projects upon the history of the species.

The temporality of reason is an additional mark of its finality. There are others still. Kant observes that there are aspects of human nature which cannot be determined by reason *nor even by time*, aspects that are *indeterminable* or *accidental* in principle. In other words, Kant admits that he is confronted with cases that prove the existence of limits of the power of reason *inside* the territory of possible experience. Kant's theory of reflective 'aesthetic' and 'logical' (theoretical) judgements is a long meditation on this new aspect of finality of reason.

3. Judgement as Instrument of Determination of Experience

As we have mentioned above, reason dominates over experience applying to it its *a priori* concepts. To *apply* a concept in general means to *subsume* something under the condition expressed in it, to *determine* something by means of this concept (KRV, B 171) or still, to *judge*. Thus, judgement is the basic instrument of the realization of the interest of our reason to impose its rule (control) over our experience as a whole. The limits of the power of Kantian logocentrism are the same as the limits of the power of our faculty of judgement about our sensibility and freedom.

Theoretical judgements are the paradigm of the determining power of human reason.⁴ They regiment objects given by means of *empirical representations*. In this case, to determine something by means of a given concept means to *decide* if intuitive representations that refer to objects, come under the concept in question. This decision is arrived at through the medium of the *rules of synthesis* of intuitive representations associated with the concept that are also called schemes. These rules fix, through a linear successive and not instantaneous process, the extension (*Umfang*) of the corresponding concepts. A concept applicable to empirical representations by means of the rules of determination of its extension, Kant calls by the name of a determined concept. The universal generality and validity of a concept is not based on the fact that it has a content (*Inhalt*), but on the fact that there are rules for determination of its extension.⁵

4. Methodological Priority of Reflection

Kant is a nativist, but not in relation to representations. All of them, including categories, are products of cognitive operations that are, on their part, innate and activated by external ('suprasensible') affection. For this reason, every operation of judicial determination of given representations involves necessarily a moment of production or of search for conceptual representations. Determination presupposes reflection, not as its foundation, but as a way in the direction of the latter.

The most general *rule* of reflection on representations, having in mind its determinableness by means of concepts (KU, H 16), states: it is always possible to *determine* the forms of objects of nature given in intuition by means of concepts, or rather, by means of universal and indispensable rules (KU, H 17).⁶

This principle of reflection directly follows from the transcendental deduction of objective validity of categories. An intuitive representation, claims Kant, which were not conceivable through judgements and, thus, determined by categories that correspond to judgements, would be null and void from the cognitive point of view, or rather, it would not be a representation of any object. Consequently, all intuitions of objects effectively given in our intuition are determined by categories.⁷

The statement about the determination of intuitive forms of objects by categories can be developed into two statements, namely, that for each

form of an object given in empirical intuition it is possible to find a category applicable to that form and that, inversely, for each category it is possible to produce *a priori* an empirical form that exemplifies it. In this way it is guaranteed that *the system of categories*, as well as the system of all possible forms of judgements, can be effectively applied to the forms of objects given in intuition. In other words, that 'logic could be applied to nature' (KU, H 17).

The procedure by means of which we find categories for given objective forms is a logical analysis of the supposition that there are objectively valid synthetic judgements. On the other hand, the procedure, or rather, *a priori* procedures for generating intuitive forms that exemplify categories are different *a priori* syntheses that establish a 'transcendental schematism' (KU, H 18). This concerns definite operations in the field of sensible intuitions that impose upon appearances conceptual conditions expressed in categories, operations which realize the subsumption of experience under categories, or still more precisely, their *construction* as experience for us. The principles of understanding, which will be demonstrated later,

⁴ Kant divides judgements into theoretical, practical and aesthetic (KU, H 32). *Theoretical judgements* are based exclusively on objective concepts in the speculative sense, that is, with references in the domain of empirical objects. They are divided into determinative and into logically-reflexive (objectively teleological). Practical judgements also use objective concepts only in the practical sense, that is, they can be applied only in the domain of free actions. They are divided into technically-practical (hypothetical imperatives whose content is given by theoretically objective concepts) and morally-practical (unconditional imperatives, based on practically objective concepts). As a rationalist and a rigorist, Kant does not admit the existence of practical reflexive judgements. Finally, there also exist *aesthetic judgements* which employ valorative terms ('pleasant', 'beautiful', 'sublime' etc) without objective value, in addition to conceptual terms, and are divided into judgements of feelings (without pretension to universality) and aesthetic reflexive judgements (subjectively teleological, without pretension to universality and necessity).

⁵ A concept which can be applied to an object by means of the rules of determination of its extension is a *characteristic mark* (*Merkmål*) of that object. Therefore, a characteristic mark can be considered as the foundation of determination (*Bestimmungsgrund*) and thus the foundation of knowledge (*Erkenntnisgrund*) of the things that fall in its extension.

⁶ There are various other operations of reflection in Kant. One of them is the operation

of *logical reflection* on given representations. It is used in the formation of concepts (LJ, §§ 5,6), that is, in the search of the common characteristic marks of different combinations of intuitive representations. Once they have been found, the concepts can, again through the medium of logical reflection, be compared to another concepts from the point of view of *form*, in order to determine 'whether both have the same content, whether they are contradictory or not, whether something is contained within the concept or is an addition from outside, which of the two is given and which should serve only as a mode of thinking what is given' (KRV, B 335). Logical reflection can be used for other purposes, particularly to determine the indispensable laws of thought. In this way the *form* of thought becomes determined and ordered.

There is also the operation of *transcendental reflection*. According to Kant 'it is the consciousness of the relation of given representations to our different sources of knowledge; and only by way of such consciousness can the relation of the sources of knowledge to one another be rightly determined' (KRV, B 316, see B 318). Relations between the representations which belong to feelings (intuitions) are different from the ones that govern the representations of understanding (KRV, B 317).

⁷ Transcendental deduction does not state *in what way* this determination is realized. This matter is treated in the chapters of the *First Critique* which speak about transcendental schematism and the principles of understanding.

only confirm that this regimentation effectively takes place in our experience, that our intuitions and perceptions are cases classified under categories. 'Transcendental philosophy has the peculiarity that besides the rule (or rather the universal condition of rules), which is given in the pure concept of understanding, it can also specify *a priori* the instance to which the rule is to be applied' (KRV, B 174-5). The general means of *a priori* indication of all of these cases is categorial schematism.

For this reason, *understanding* provides the *faculty of judging* with all of the instruments that this faculty needs for regimenting of intuitive forms by pure concepts of understanding. On this level, the faculty of judgement does not need any of its own principles in order to be able to carry out its discursive syntheses (KU, H 18).

It is easy to notice that this general part of the Kantian doctrine of theoretical judgement is not a system of truths about the world in Leibnizian sense of the 'mirror of nature in ourselves'. Transcendental schemes, which *a priori* determine the forms of intuition, are not operations of nature, but operations concerning our sensible representations of nature, operations that can be controlled by our reason. The principles of understanding do not recast a new ontology upon the old one, but only establish discursive rules for application of categories. In Kant, the fundamental sense of a *doctrine* is that of a general theory of subsumption of sensible forms under categories, or expressed in a more general way, of exposition of experience in concepts (KRV, B 303).

Kant thought that discovering of transcendental schematic procedures was one of the most significant discoveries in his first *Critique* (MS, A VII). Indeed, these procedures are the central part of his *a priori* semantics of determined concepts in general. In the present context, however, it is worth singling out the *practical role* of the schemes, their role of an instrument of power (*Macht*) and even of coercion (*Zwang*) and violence (*Gewalt*) of our reason over our representational sensibility. Schemes are an instrument of the power of reason! This is a daring statement, more than a mere metaphor.

Already in his first *Critique* it is clear that Kant conceives transcendental schemes as being analogous to the mathematical schemes for the construction of geometrical figures and numbers. In the *First Introduction to the Critique of Reason*, Kant returns to the same matter and compares the 'merely mechanical' procedure of production of pure schemes of transcendental imagination with the manner in which 'an instrument' works (KU, 19). What type of an instrument could Kant have in mind? Undoubtedly, the instruments for construction of figures of Greek geometers. He knew well the 'Euclidian instruments', the ruler and the compasses, which are traditionally called 'geometrical' in opposition to other, more complicated instruments for construction (such as conic sections), called 'mechanical' (Ent, A 12-13). In addition to mathematical mechanisms, Kant undoubtedly thinks of purely physical mechanisms as well, such as Archimedes's lever and Galileo's inclined plane (KU, H25). All of these instruments are determinative mechanisms which produce effects in an *effective* way. According to Kant, this is the way in which transcendental imagination acts as well.

After having schematized mechanically the sensory data our imagination imposes on them figures and, in this way, transforms physical bodies themselves into mechanisms. Indeed, what is a 'mechanism' if not a natural cause, a body whose motoric power depends on its *form* (MAN, A 100)? Thus, it is not incidental that Kant call by the name of a 'blind mechanism' (KU, B 270) nature itself when it is determined by transcendental schematism and by laws of understanding and, particularly, by the law of causality. Constituted, ordered by theoretical reason, the sensible world becomes a *mundus machina*, reigned by mechanical *causality*, completely intelligible by mechanic *explanations*, which constitute a part of mechanical *theory*. Even will begins to be seen as a cause, if not mechanical, then at least fully natural, compelled by the *determined concepts* of objectives. Human practice is thus defined by conceptual (propositional) contents, expressed in determinative judgements.

5. Limits of Operation of Determination

Nevertheless, Kant knows that the theory of nature as a mechanism is theoretically insufficient and must be complemented in the favour of the ultimate aim of reason (which is, as we have seen, a complete determination of man). Let us look at some of his reasons.

The first reason consists in the indeterminateness of the schemes for empirical concepts. Empirical schematism, claims Kant, 'is an art concealed in the depths of the human soul, whose real modes of activity nature is hardly likely ever to allow us to discover, and to have open to our gaze' (KRV, B 180-81). What does this mean if not that our chances of being able to specify *the rules* of application of empirical concepts are minimal? If it is so, an essential part of the problem of determination of objects by means of concepts remains without solution. Indeed, the transcendental schematism of categories does not give us, in itself, complete objects, but only their temporal (and spatial) schemes. Complete objects are given only through the medium of empirical schematism, which is the reason why empirical schematism must be treated as a constituent part of Kantian logocentrism.

Kant denies that it is possible to formulate clearly the rules of empirical imagination. 'Nobody can explain' the products of empirical imagination (we are referring to empirical schemes as products), nor derive from them 'comprehensible concepts' (KRV, B 598). They are, continues Kant, 'a kind of *monogram*, a mere set of particular qualities, determined by no assignable rule, and forming rather a blurred sketch drawn from diverse experiences than a determinate image' (*ibid.*). Kant ends this analysis of *the technical moment* of the doctrine of empirical schematism as follows: 'Such representations may be entitled, though improperly, ideals of sensibility, inasmuch as they are viewed as being models (not indeed realisable) of possible empirical intuitions, and yet furnish no rules that allow of being explained and examined' (KRV, B 598-9).

Soon afterwards, Kant compares the monograms of empirical imagination to vague images 'such as painters and physiognomists profess to carry in

their heads, and which they treat as being an incommunicable shadowy image of their creations or even their critical judgements' (KRV, B 598). This comparison of the manner of operation of empirical imagination to the work of a painter is not incidental. The idea of regularity without rule (*Gesetzmaessigkeit ohne Gesetz*) or, at least without explicable rule has become an important theme of the *Critique of Judgement*. Kant resumes it several times, for instance, when he says that 'the rules of art of a true artist are dictated by his *genius*, that is, by his talent or natural disposition, and that these rules cannot be explained conceptually in a single judgement (KU, B 181-2). Or, when he claims that the spirit that animates the soul of the genius is the capacity of presenting (*darstellen*) aesthetic ideas that lack verbal expressions, capacity that 'makes us think about' many things that 'cannot be named' (*unnennbar*) by a concept. Since we cannot comprehend it, all that we can do in this case is to let the sensations of the non-nameable connect 'the spirit with the language', language in the sense of a 'mere letter' and not a vehicle of a determinative concept (KU, B 198).

What we have here is a clear recognition of the internal limit of the power of logocentrism, an attempt to determine propositionally the whole territory of cognitive experience fails in the presence of incommunicability of the rules of art employed by nature and by man and the ineffable character of finality (since it is an infinite finality) of the products of this art. Here reason clashes against the limits of the language which it commands, obliged to face the other-than-reason.

Without the rules of empirical schematism we cannot *a priori* guarantee the subsumption of experience under empirical concepts, not can we *a fortiori* guarantee its control by means of empirical laws. Understanding does not provide the faculty of judgement with the *a priori* guarantee of finding reflexively, by means of logical analysis, empirical concepts of an increasing generality for all given intuitive representations and, even less so, of realizing our interest for a determination of experience by means of a *system* of empirical concepts and laws (KU, H 9, 18-9). In other words, our superior cognitive power cannot suppress the *accidental character* of the particular. The empirical particular is not determined by the universal and cannot be derived from it; nevertheless, the particular, given in the multiplicity of nature must agree with the universal (through empirical concepts and laws), in order to be subsumed under the universal.

The particular as such is only one of the cases, the most clear and general of all, in which the faculty of judgement is abandoned to itself and compelled either to yield to scepticism or to make a virtue out of necessity and produce its *own rules* in order to be able to search for determinative concepts and judgements. The beautiful and the sublime provide additional, equally recalcitrant cases. Other aspects of experience also defy the power of judicial determination. We do not know how to present the internal structure of organized beings in determinative concepts. Moreover, we completely lack *a priori* conditions for propositional determination of harmony between duty and happiness. In all of these cases the accidental, given in experience, seems to resist to what has been prescribed by the law and in this way to defy the legislative power of human reason.

6. Techniques of Reflection

At the beginning of the *First Introduction to the Critique of Reason* Kant divides philosophy into a *doctrinal system* (*doktrinales System*) or *doctrine* (*Doktrin*) and a system of critique (*System der Kritik*) (H 10, 12). Philosophy as a doctrine consists of *a priori* theoretical and practical synthetic judgements, all of them determinative, the former of intuitive forms and the latter of actions. Philosophy as a critique consists of studies about the conditions of the possibility (theoretical or practical objective validity) of determinative judgements in general, that is, of the legislative activity of reason.

Subsequently, Kant will announce a second part of the system of critique, the purpose of which is not to study the conditions of the possibility of determinative judgements, but the conditions of the possibility of *a priori* judgements in which *we reflect* on the sides of our experience that resist the legislating activity of reason. The objective of this additional part of the critique is to find the *a priori* means which our faculty of judgement could use in order to advocate the judicial determination of objects and actions.

These means are certain *techniques of reflection*⁸ about theoretically or practically accidental aspects of human experience in the light of the concept of finality (teleomorphism), or rather, of different concepts of finality which the faculty of judgement can generate *a priori*. To begin with, the supposition of the finality of nature allows us to introduce, thinks Kant, an *a priori* logical order into the multiplicity of natural species. The same concept can be used in order to establish *a priori* our aesthetic agreements about the beauty of intuitive forms.⁹ The internal constitution of organized beings is less unintelligible if we admit a finality between an organism as a whole and its parts (organs). Finally, the nature-*machina* becomes inhabited by man, if it is considered a system at the service of the ultimate moral objective.

Let us consider, for the sake of example, in what way the concept of finality of nature can be used to restrict *a priori* the multiplicity of empirical species. The principle of the technique of relevant reflection Kant calls the principle of specification of nature. Thus he supposes that nature in the process of producing species acts congenially to the interests of our superior intellectual capacity. Explaining better the concept of finality which has been employed here, Kant notices that we are dealing with a *formal finality*, that is, an *infinite finality* (that cannot be explained by means of a determined concept, KU, B 44) and, thus, a merely *subjective finality* (KU, H 21), which nevertheless favours the logical use of judgement (KU, H 24) in the *search* of increasingly universal empirical concepts and laws

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The technique of the faculty of judgement is the foundation and not a consequence of the idea of the technique of nature (KU, H 24).

9

For identity of concept and finality in these two cases, see KU H 556.

(although it does not give us any guarantee that it will be possible to actually find the universal KU, H 9-10).

Another example of the use of concept of finality is provided by the principle of reflection. According to this principle, finality is not any longer formal, but material, which means that it can be explained by means of the determined concepts of aims (relating to the determined organs etc.) and thus it can be objective (attributable to objects of nature).

In what sense is it possible to maintain that the principles of reflection of the faculty of judgement are the foundation of reflective or teleological judgements? The following is a draft of the answer: the concepts of finality express *a priori* conditions of possibility, that is, of *intersubjective validity* of teleological judgements in the same way in which categories express the *a priori* conditions of possibility, that is, of *objective* (empirical) *truth* of determinative theoretical judgements. For instance, the concept of formal subjective finality of intuitive representations of objects in every human subject expresses a condition that is sufficient for founding, at least at the beginning, a pretension to intersubjective validity which we analytically establish in our aesthetic judgements of those objects.

According to Kant, objectively true judgements are also intersubjectively valid, but not vice versa. This asymmetry between the two mentioned types of the conditions of possibility reflects a *semantic difference* between categories and concepts of finality. While categories present the determinations (predicates or relations) of objects of our empirical intuitions that can be produced by modes of acting which can be schematized or even mechanized, different concepts of finality express features of the same objects or of nature taken as a whole that result from nature's modes of acting that cannot be schematized in any way. As we have said before, the harmony between our intuitions of objects and our concepts in general (the formal subjective finality between these representations) is merely subjective and is not based on explicable rules. Also we cannot *understand* how it is possible that nature mechanically produces organisms endowed with internal teleomorphic structures or that nature itself is a teleologic system.

The same semantic difference explains why the principles of understanding are the transcendental *truths* about empirical nature that constitute the central part of philosophy as a doctrine, while the principles of the faculty of judgement are mere techniques of reflection upon the same. Since they use the concepts of finality that cannot be schematized the principles of reflection do not say anything definite about the manner of acting of empirical nature and thus they cannot be neither true nor false, nor can they *a fortiori* secure a real power over these forms or even over nature. However, the principles of reflection are also not transcendental: they do not say anything definite about the manner of acting of nature in itself. Thus, they rightfully belong to the faculty of judgement and not to theoretical reason.

In spite of that, these principles implicate consequences upon the *suprasensible substratum* of empirical nature. The principle of specification of nature, for instance, which says that this substratum adjusts itself to our cognitive ends, implicates, according to Kant, that nature is more than a mere mechanism. To treat nature as if it were definable by a system of

empirical concepts and laws means to suppose that it does not act only as a mere machine, but at least in certain cases, as a talented artist.

Every other principle of reflection introduces new moments into the idea of the suprasensible. The principle of reflection of teleomorphic structures of organized beings, leads necessarily to the conception of nature as an unintentional technique and in the last instance, to the one of intelligent and omnipotent engineer, a 'supreme artist' (KU, B 402), outside of nature, capable of using mechanical laws in order to produce organized beings in accordance with teleological representation of everything (KU, B 77). Finally, the principle of reflection on nature as a whole, based on the concept of the ultimate moral end, aims at a suprasensible principle beyond all nature which acts as not only an omniscient and omnipotent but also as an extremely kind and just sovereign. Since neither nature comprehended as a product of a mere mechanism nor as a work of art of an artist, nor as a fabrication of a formidable engineer, can be the scene of *virtuous* and *happy* human existence, we must conclude, in the light of the concept of our ultimate moral end that only nature conceived as an only *teleological system*, subordinated to that end by a moral creator, can offer the necessary shelter to moral action as such. Only in this way will nature (which in this case can be called 'world') be the home of the human being (KU, B 402-3).

We have seen that, although they cannot be schematized, the concepts that express teleomorphic *modes of action* of nature can be interpreted by *an analogy* with actions directed to the end carried out by human beings, namely, by talented artists, intelligent engineers and good-hearted and just sovereigns.¹⁰ In this way the concepts of finality get so to speak an empirical meaning which however is not adequate, nor complete, nor direct and which does not constitute, nor cannot constitute the occasions of schematism.

Having enriched our idea of the suprasensible with a different note, each principle of reflection provides an additional mark of finality of human reason. Indeed, to resort to teleological concepts, and consequently to different ideas of the suprasensible, means to admit that there exist corners of our experience that cannot be ordered by means of determinative judgements. Nevertheless, the reflexive use of different concepts of finality, interpreted by analogy by the manner of acting of human agents, favours the interests of our faculty of judgement in a non-contemptible way. Considering the formal subjective finality of natural species as an artistic expression, we can formulate fruitful heuristic rules in an empirical inquiry (KU, H 10). Having in mind the same subjective finality of intuitive forms, we can regulate our contemplation of beauty in an intersubjectively valid manner. The appeal to the concept of formal or material objective finality, typical of a competent engineer, allows us to formulate also heuristic rules of the search for objectively determinative causal empirical laws that operate in organized beings (KU, B 355).¹¹ Finally, having taught us to

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For analogical interpretation of teleological concepts, see KU, B 77, 269, 309.

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Contrary to mechanical or constructive rules such as are transcendental schemes, heuristic rules do not guarantee in all the cases a

look at nature as the only teleological system subordinated by a benevolent creator to the greatest aim of pure will, the ability to judge can decisively favour our practice of morality.

We have seen the pretensions of Kantian logocentrism - a complete determination of human experience by means of *a priori* concepts and its limitations. The latter is the measure of finality of reason. Human reason is finite, in the first place because its legitimate use is restricted to the territory of possible experience. It is finite, in the second place, because it is discursive, temporalized, because it cannot embrace its whole territory in a single gesture. It is finite also because in order to control experience it must begin searching for the universal, relying only on heuristic rules. And in the fourth place, Kantian reason is finite because it cannot think nor invent determined concepts in order to distinguish certain traces of intuitive forms, of organized beings and of nature as a whole. In these cases it clashes with the unutterable. In order to be clear with itself, it must recognize a substratum beyond the reach of its hand, something other than representational reason.

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Endlichkeit
der Vernunft

Überlegungen
zu Kants Logozentrismus

Kants Logozentrismus ist ein Versuch, die menschliche Vernunft mittels apriorischer Konzepte zu bestimmen. In diesem Aufsatz verweist der Autor auf folgende vier Aspekte der Endlichkeit der Vernunft: (1) die Begrenzung der Vernunft auf menschliche Erfahrung; (2) der diskursive Charakter der Vernunft; (3) um die Erfahrung kontrollieren zu können, braucht die Vernunft auf ihrer Suche nach dem Universellen nur den Gesetzen der Heuristik zu folgen; (4) die Vernunft ist nicht in der Lage, das Konzept zur Charakterisierung einiger intuitiver Erscheinungen, organisierter Entitäten sowie der Natur als Ganzheit zu finden.

Željko Loparić

Finalité
de la raison

Réflexions sur le logocentrisme
de Kant

Le logocentrisme de Kant marque une tentative de détermination de la raison humaine en termes de concepts a priori. Dans cet article, l'auteur met l'accent sur quatre aspects de la finalité de la raison: 1. limitation de la raison à l'expérience humaine; 2. caractère discursif de la raison; 3. pour contrôler l'expérience, la raison doit rechercher l'universel au seul moyen des règles heuristiques; 4. la raison ne peut trouver les concepts nécessaires à la caractérisation de certains traits intuitifs, des entités organisées et de la nature en tant que tout.

successful outcome of the operation that they are in command of. In this way they also differ from the method of trial and error because they take into account the conditions (information) contained in *a priori* speculative and teleological concepts on which they are based.

The heuristic rules of the faculty of judgment constitute themselves an important complement of the rules of the same type of pure theoretical reason exposed in the first *Critique* and founded in speculative ideas (KRV, B 691).