Kant's Impure Sublime: Intuition, Comprehension, and 'Darstellung'

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Kant unwarrantedly downgrades the aesthetic credentials of the mathematical and dynamical sublime, by unduly emphasising not merely its moral significance but also, and especially, the moral ground of the pleasure we take in it and of the communicability of the aesthetic judgment based upon it. I argue that Kant is wrong both in grounding the sublime in morality and our susceptibility to moral ideas, and in grounding sublime *pleasure* in the awareness of our moral superiority over nature. On Kant's account, I contend, despite his averments to the contrary, the judgment of the sublime is not *purely* aesthetic.[1]

The Mathematical Sublime

Kant distinguishes two varieties within the category of the sublime: the mathematical and the dynamical sublime. In keeping with the traditional 18th-century distinction between a sense of sublimity connected to size and one connected to power, Kant's mathematical sublime is connected to what is excessively or absolutely large and cannot be grasped fully by our senses and imagination. The dynamical sublime is, on the other hand, connected to an overwhelming power (of, for instance, a hurricane or a volcano) which surpasses the power of imagination. Despite their differences, both varieties of the sublime are, according to Kant, united in putting us in touch with our moral powers and sensibilities and, as we shall see, the pleasure they yield is ultimately grounded in man's moral superiority over nature.

In the mathematical sublime our senses are pushed to the limits of their powers through the overwhelming size of natural objects or phenomena. Although Kant

clearly holds that ‘nature is sublime in those of its appearances whose intuition carries with it the idea of their infinity’, he meaningfully adds that ‘the only way for this to occur is through the inadequacy [*nicht anders geschehen, als durch die Unangemessenheit*] of even the greatest effort of our imagination to estimate an object’s magnitude.’ (§ 26, 5:255)[2] On Kant’s view, the sublime is certainly not a transcendent experience of the absolute, and nor does it involve a (sense of) timelessness. Time does not stand still when faced with the sublime. We do, however, experience the limitations or the ‘maximum’ of the power of our senses, i.e. our imagination. Kant specifies this in a complex passage that is worth quoting in full:

> Now even though there is no maximum [*Grösstes*] for the mathematical estimation of magnitude (inasmuch as the power of numbers progresses to infinity), yet for the aesthetic estimation of magnitude there is indeed a maximum. And regarding this latter maximum I say that when it is judged as absolute measure beyond which no larger is subjectively possible (i.e., possible for the judging subject), then it carries with it the idea of the sublime and gives rise to that emotion which no mathematical estimation of magnitude by means of numbers can produce (except to the extent that the basic aesthetic measure is at the same time kept alive in the imagination). For a mathematical estimation of magnitude never exhibits more than relative magnitude, by a comparison with others of the same kind, *whereas an aesthetic one exhibits [darstellt] absolute magnitude to the extent that the mind can take it in one intuition*. (§ 26, 5:251; italics added)

Kant argues that judging the sublime involves not a mathematical method of measuring, but an attempt to grasp the whole through ‘aesthetic comprehension’. Since there is never a first or original measure to estimate the magnitude of objects, however, ‘our estimation of the magnitude of the basic measure must consist merely in our being able to take it in directly in one intuition and to use it, by means of the imagination, for exhibiting numerical concepts. In other words, all estimation of the magnitude of objects of nature is ultimately aesthetic (i.e., determined subjectively rather than objectively).’ (§ 26, 5:251) The sublime is thus indeed a limit experience, but not in the sense that it involves a transcendent, timeless experience of the absolute (or of the absolutely large, or of ‘that which is large beyond any comparison’), but is rather a double-edged experience of the limits of sensory perception. It is a feeling of the ‘basic measure’ upon which all reflective judgments are based – the ‘horizon’, as it were, which accompanies any estimation of magnitudes – as well as of the limitations of imagination to *comprehend* the absolutely large, i.e. the maximum of simultaneously presentable magnitude in a single image. The sublime is, hence, not an experience of an absolute existing beyond the power of imagination (e.g. God), but of the absolute nature of the unsurpassable limits of our senses to comprehend large wholes in a single image. Our appreciation of the mathematical sublime in nature begins with aesthetically comparing the size of the vast object, but we are soon lost in the comparison. For through the failure of imagination to comprehend incomparably vast magnitudes, that is to say, to present them in a single image, we become aware of ‘the feeling of a supersensible power in us’, namely reason’s striving for totality and its urging imagination to come up with a measure that is suited to take in incomparably great wholes (§ 25, 5:250). Thus Kant argues that imagination’s failed effort reveals

reason's ability to *think* the absolutely large as a rational idea of infinity (§ 26, 5:255). This *felt* inadequacy of imagination is, or so Kant argues, precisely what manifests the immense power of reason at the level of human sensibility, and makes us aware of the 'higher ends' of our rational being, i.e. our ultimate vocation, which is moral. Kant insists that the inadequacy of imagination to intuit infinite magnitudes is still pleasurable, as the judgment of the sublime is ultimately purposive for the power of reason and is in harmony with rational ideas.

Surprisingly to say the least, the Kantian sublime almost loses sight altogether of the aesthetic *object*, since our admiration and astonishment for its vastness is ultimately due to a so-called 'subreption'. Nature is actually mistakenly called sublime, for it is *the mind that makes the sublimity of its own moral vocation palpable to itself*. Sublime objects seem to be reduced to merely offering 'occasions' to enjoy our own superiority as moral subjects. No matter how deeply concerned Kant really is with pointing out the aesthetic nature of judgments of the sublime, and no matter how sophisticated his analysis, the core significance of the Kantian sublime is undeniably moral, since it offers 'an expansion of the mind that feels able to cross the barriers of sensibility with a different (a practical) aim', and 'thus nature is here called sublime *merely* because it raises our imagination to the point of exhibiting those cases where the mind can come to feel the sublimity of its own [moral] vocation, which *elevates it even above nature*.' (§ 26, 5:255; 5:262; italics added)

I maintain that we do not have to presuppose that the mathematical sublime is necessarily grounded in the awareness of the superiority of our moral vocation. To experience the mathematical sublime, it suffices that *theoretical* reason challenges the imagination to surpass its own limits and present to the senses what is 'absolutely large' in a single image, which it obviously fails to do and through which we

experience displeasure. For the pleasure in the sublime results from the peculiar awareness – which makes itself felt *only* through the displeasure of imagination's inadequacy, hence, *at the level of sensibility* – that we, as rational beings, have the power to think ideas which we cannot comprehend in a single intuition.[3] The conflict between reason and imagination would then be inextricably linked up with our awareness of the tremendous power of reason in its *theoretical* capacity, which keeps striving for absolute totality even if this implies perturbing or distorting sensory perception. The question now arises as to whether Kant is able to offer a more plausible account of the other variety of the experience of the sublime, namely the dynamical sublime.

The Dynamical Sublime

In the dynamical sublime, it is power and not just size that is overwhelming to the senses and imagination. Although we feel ourselves to be in safety, we are still overwhelmed by the might of nature. Kant writes:

> Bold, overhanging and, as it were, threatening rocks, thunderclouds piling up in the sky and moving about accompanied by lightning and thunderclaps, volcanoes with all their destructive power, hurricanes with all the devastation they leave behind, the boundless ocean heaved up, the high waterfall of a mighty river, and so on. Compared to the might of these, our ability to resist becomes an insignificant trifle. 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 […] 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. (§ 28, 5:261)

Kant concurs with Edmund Burke that the feeling of the dynamically sublime arises only 'provided we are in a safe place', but (*contra* Burke) Kant argues that the concomitant pleasure does not result from realising our personal safety but from realising that we have in us 'an ability to resist [nature's might] which is of quite different kind'. By this Kant clearly means our ability as moral persons, who are orientated towards suppressing sensible inclinations in order to behave morally. Being in a safe place enables us to judge the might of hurricanes, volcanoes, and so on, as sublime without undergoing real fear.

Moreover, this type of aesthetic judgment is not merely 'similar to the moral disposition' ('General Comment', 5:268), it also prepares us not merely for loving nature, as beauty does, but 'for esteeming it even against our interest (of sense).' ('General Comment', 5:267) And, even more crucial to Kant's analysis of the dynamical sublime, the pleasurable aspect of the sublime 'vibration' (*Erschütterung*), as Kant calls it, is essentially based on our susceptibility to morality, for it is a 'feeling of this supersensible vocation' that we, as rational beings, all have. 'The violence that the imagination inflicts on the subject' is experienced as pleasurable merely because it is 'judged purposive *for the whole vocation of the mind*', which is (in Kant's view) purely moral. It even 'reveals in us at the same time an ability to judge ourselves independent of nature, and reveals in us a superiority over nature' (§ 28, 5:261). Although the sublime does not necessarily involve any conscious intellectual recognition of our moral vocation, the pleasure that we may experience, provided we believe ourselves to be safe, is based upon 'discovering' in our mind 'a superiority

over nature itself in its immensity', since 'it reveals in us an ability to judge ourselves independent of nature', which 'keeps the humanity in our person from being degraded, even though a human being would have to succumb to that dominance of nature.' (§ 28, 5:261; 5:262) Although Kant sometimes seems to suggest otherwise, the dynamical sublime arises through an activity of the imagination, is based on feeling and does not necessarily require any cognitive recognition of our power of reason.

It is hard to see, though, how the revelation of our moral independence and superiority over nature can come about without any conceptual basis for our judgement.[4] Thus not only the purported moral basis of the pleasure threatens the Kantian sublime's purely aesthetic nature, but also Kant's emphasis that the sublime allows us to *recognise* ourselves as moral beings.

What is perhaps more perplexing than this quasi-moralisation of the sublime, and even more damaging to his aesthetic doctrine, is that Kant, when discussing the modality of the judgment of the sublime in § 29, argues that it '*has its foundation … in* something that, along with common sense, we may require and demand of everyone, namely *the predisposition to the feeling for (practical) ideas, i.e., to moral feeling*.' (§ 29, 5:265; italics added) Kant emphatically claims that *the sublime is founded on our predisposition to moral feeling*, and despite his attempt to safeguard the sublime's aesthetic credentials, this definitely affects the purely aesthetic nature of the judgment of the sublime.[5] It is obviously right that the sublime may have a propaedeutic function with regard to morality, and that this does not necessarily turn the sublime into moral feeling.[6] The Kantian sublime is indeed merely akin to moral respect, since it does not suppress our sensible inclinations (*Neigungen*) but rather violates as well as expands our imagination, offering us a mixed feeling of pleasure

and displeasure which is analogous (and, hence, not identical) to the struggle with sensible inclinations involved in behaving morally.[7]

However, what most commentators seem to have overlooked but actually proves far more damaging to the purely aesthetic nature of the judgment of the sublime, is that one of the vital a priori requirements of pure aesthetic judgment, namely its necessary universal communicability (sometimes inappropriately called, its intersubjective nature) cannot be met by the judgment concerning the sublime, unless it is grounded in morality.[8]

The Impurity of the Sublime

What has often been downplayed in the literature, but seems to me to be one of the determining aspects of the Kantian sublime, is that, compared to judgments of natural *beauty*, 'we cannot with the same readiness count on others to accept our judgment about the sublime in nature'. (§ 29, 5:264) This has a number of reasons, three of which are especially worth emphasising.

First, unlike beauty, the sublime does not provide an 'attunement [*Stimmung*] of the cognitive powers that is required for cognition in general' and 'without which cognition […] could not arise' (§ 21, 5:238; see also §39, 5:293). This 'attunement' purportedly grounds the judgment of beauty's universal validity, and since it fails to occur in the sublime, which does not offer a harmonious play between imagination and understanding but a turbulent struggle between imagination and reason, the sublime cannot 'with the same readiness' demand to be universally shared. (We shall shortly see why this is the case exactly and also why this severely damages the sublime's purely aesthetic status.)

Second, to be able to judge vast or mighty natural objects as sublime one needs *culture* – or, at least, more culture is required compared to what is needed to appreciate natural beauty (see § 29, 5:265). One must be receptive to rational ideas, in order to become properly *attuned*, as Kant puts it, to the feeling of the sublime. Thus, instead of urging that the sublime merely *prepares* us for morality, Kant in fact argues that people who have not been sufficiently 'prepared' by culture to appreciate the sublimity of overwhelming nature will simply be frightened and repelled by such overwhelming natural phenomena: they will not be able to take pleasure in what is violent, overwhelming and potentially destructive to them. Only if one is sufficiently susceptible to rational ideas can one judge mighty objects as sublime, that is to say, as not merely chaotic, harmful, dangerous and frightening, but also as ultimately purposive. It should be clear from the above passage that it is, again, reason (and not understanding, as in the beautiful) that grounds the feeling of the sublime. Reason actually uses – or rather abuses – imagination so as to confront nature's destructive powers in order to reveal its own superior might. The sublime is indeed 'a pleasure involved in reasoning contemplation (*Lust der vernünftelnden Kontemplation*)' (§ 39, 5:292).

Thirdly, the *modality* of the judgment of sublimity is, as Kant says, 'one principal moment for a critique of judgment' (§ 29, 5:266), but it has received surprisingly little attention from most commentators.[9] Its importance can hardly be overlooked, however, for it is supposed to convince us of the thought that, as Brady contends, despite 'important differences between the sublime and the beautiful, these differences do not undermine a case for the sublime as aesthetic.'[10] I concur with Brady that questioning the aesthetic status of the Kantian sublime simply by referring to its intimate links to our moral disposition and the moral feeling of respect, may not

be altogether convincing. For whilst it is true that the sublime may somehow prepare us for treating nature with admiration and persons with respect, that in itself is no reason to question the sublime's aesthetic nature. For pure beauty, too, prepares us to love nature and even symbolises morality, yet this does not therefore turn the feeling of the beautiful into a moral feeling. On the contrary, this might actually work in the opposite direction. It is only because beauty exclusively belongs to the aesthetic domain that it may enhance moral capacities and teleological understanding, and be a sign of a genuinely moral disposition. Moreover, that Kant attends to the formless character of sublime objects might further support its aesthetic character, as e.g. Brady, Gibbons and Makkreel contend.[11] Judging the sublime is clearly connected to peculiar features of 'raw nature', which engage imagination and 'expand it commensurately' with reason's power, through which it 'acquires an expansion and a power that surpasses the one it sacrifices'. (§ 25, 5:249; 'General Comment', 5:274; 5:269; see also § 28, 5:262)

Yet, even though (as I aimed to show elsewhere[12]) Kant's doctrine of the sublime can be upgraded to a genuinely aesthetic exploration of the sublime (in art) and offer a more positive evaluation of imagination's productive activity and presentational powers, at least one striking and, to my mind, insurmountable difficulty remains. For, whilst on Kant's official view, judgments of beauty and sublimity share the general characteristics of aesthetic judgments – they please without necessary reference to concepts, they claim universal validity, they are subjectively purposive, and they are subjectively necessary; however, unlike judgments of beauty, judgments about the sublime cannot immediately demand universal assent, unless quite a 'detour' is made, namely via practical reason. What Kant does not sufficiently emphasise is that, despite all that beauty and sublimity have in common, the modality of the two

judgments is far for similar – and this severely tarnishes the sublime's aesthetic credentials.

What are, then, the most striking differences with regard to their modality? First, Kant argues that the sublime requires more *culture*, i.e. 'Kultur' in the sense of the development of moral ideas, than the beautiful (§ 29, 5:265). This is of the utmost importance. For, according to Kant, the beautiful testifies to a felt harmony not only between imagination and understanding but also between the mind (*Gemüt*) and the purposive forms of nature, which tightly connects beauty to natural teleology. The feeling of the sublime, on the other hand, by no means presupposes nor engenders such a harmonious continuity between our mind and nature. In the sublime, Kant contends, reason is felt to be triumphant over nature, for 'we judge the sensible in the presentation of nature *to be suitable for a possible supersensible use*' (§ 27, 5:258). Furthermore, the sublime can 'present […] imagination and reason as harmonious *by virtue of their contrast*' and give rise to a purposiveness by the very conflict of imagination and reason (*ibid.*). The overwhelming object is excessive for the imagination, 'against our interest of sense' and even 'repulsive to mere sensibility', and pleasure can arise solely because *reason uses nature* to force imagination to surpass its limits in order to make palpable the moral vocation of the mind, which is infinitely superior over nature (see 'General Comment', 5:267).

Second, whilst the exemplary necessity of the judgment of beauty is based on the free yet harmonious play of our cognitive powers which is purportedly conducive to any type of cognitive operation, the pleasure accompanying the judgment of the sublime cannot be immediately shared by all, as the sublime is not a matter of taste, says Kant, but of *feeling*. Importantly, the pleasure in the sublime is 'a pleasure involved in *reasoning* contemplation' (§ 39, 5:292; italics added). Its demand that

everyone approve refers to ‘subjective bases as they are purposive’ not for ‘the benefit of the contemplative understanding’, as with the beautiful, but merely ‘in relation to moral feeling’ (‘General Comment’, 5:267). Kant even insists that ‘what is sublime, in the proper meaning of the term, cannot be contained in any sensible form but concerns only ideas of reason […] Thus the vast ocean heaved up by storms cannot be sublime. The sight of it is horrible’ (§ 23, 5:245). I concur with commentators such as Malcolm Budd and Katie McShane, who interpret Kant’s theory correctly as overly directed at the sublimity of the (moral) subject and with Ronald Hepburn, who justly argues that Kant’s doctrine downgrades ‘nature’s contribution in favour of the one-sided exalting of the rational subject’.[13]

Also, someone lacks feeling, not taste, Kant contends, ‘if he remains unmoved in the presence of something we judge sublime.’ (§ 29, 5:265) Therefore, and this is an extremely important point, contrary to judgments of beauty, the sublime cannot demand immediate communication (*unmittelbare Teilnehmung*). The principal reason for this is that, whereas assenting to judgments of taste can be ‘demanded unhesitatingly from everyone’:

> In the case of feeling, on the other hand, judgment refers the imagination to reason, our power of ideas, and so *we demand feeling only under a subjective presupposition* (though we believe we are justified and permitted to require fulfilment of this presupposition in everyone): *we presuppose moral feeling in man*. And so we attribute necessity to this kind of aesthetic judgment as well. (§ 29, 5:266; italics added)

From this follows that, despite all similarities between judgments of beauty and sublimity which Kant is keen to point out, there is an immense difference between the ways they are able to meet the modal requirement of pure aesthetic judgments, i.e. the crucial a priori requirement to be universally communicated or shared. *Pace* Brady and numerous other commentators, I do not think this is a minor point which leaves the sublime squarely in purely aesthetic territory. On the contrary, it deeply affects the purely aesthetic character of the Kantian sublime. For the requirement of universal assent is one of the transcendental conditions that is supposed to logically distinguish aesthetic from non-aesthetic judgments. It forms the very heart of Kant's *critique* of aesthetic judgment.

Furthermore, whereas the beautiful lays claim to *immediate* participation (*Teilnehmung*) and universal assent, the sublime demands universal participation, merely because it 'presupposes […] a feeling of our supersensible vocation, a feeling which, however obscure it may be, has a moral foundation' (§ 39, 5:292). And as the sublime reveals the *presence* of moral freedom and thus endows us with a value infinitely superior to nature, its demand to be universally shared can be based solely on the transcendental idea of moral freedom. Kant expressly specifies this in section 39, which has been usually downplayed by commentators, possibly because it does not feature in the Analytic of the Sublime as such. Yet what Kant writes, is crucial and unambiguous: 'I may require that liking too from everyone, but only by means of the moral law, which is in turn based on concepts of reason.' (§ 39, 5:292) What demands and legitimates the necessity of the sublime's universal shareability is neither cognitive nor aesthetic, but moral.

Does this, then, turn the feeling of the sublime into moral feeling? By no means, for the feeling of respect is not aesthetically pleasurable (it is definitely not

'Wohlgefallen'). Furthermore, as already indicated, in the sublime 'the imagination thereby acquires an expansion and a power that surpasses the one it sacrifices', which is (although clearly grounded in practical reason's impossible demand to present what cannot be presented) obviously a matter of *aesthetic* presentation (*Darstellung*), which cannot be confused with moral action and the feeling of respect. ('General Comment', 5:269; see also § 25, 5:249)

However, as already noted, the story of the Kantian sublime does not end here. The Kantian sublime is not merely analogous to moral struggle. For Kant is adamant that what *grounds* not only the universal communicability of the sublime but also the pleasure we take in it – hence, what supposedly resolves 'the paradox of the sublime' – is really the 'non-pathological' feeling of moral respect. Thus, the feeling of the sublime is not itself a moral feeling, but both its requirement to be universally shared, which is supposed to guarantee its purely aesthetic credentials, and its pleasurable aspect do presuppose the ability to take pure interest in the moral law. Hence, contrary to pure judgments of beauty, judgments about the sublime cannot be *immediately* shared, as their demand to be assented to by all others purportedly needs to be mediated by morality.

This clearly tarnishes the sublime's *purely* aesthetic character. For, as Kant writes, 'from the aesthetic side […], the pleasure is negative, i.e. opposed to this interest, but considered from the intellectual side it is positive and connected with an interest.' ('General Comment', 5:271) No matter how hard Kant and several of his sympathetic commentators attempt to safeguard the sublime's purely aesthetic nature, one ought to concede that the demand of the sublime for universal assent stems solely from 'the intellectual side' of the feeling, i.e. the universal validity of the moral law, which is intimately tied up with the palpable *presence* of the Idea of moral freedom in the

mind.[14] There can thus be neither a *completely* disinterested judgment of the sublime nor a sublime 'sensus communis'. It is necessarily an impure or 'dependent' judgment.[15] This might also ultimately explain the healthy '*madness* (*Wahnsinn*)' which is typical of sublime affects, such as enthusiasm ('General Comment', 5:275).[16] Sublime 'vibration' (*Erschütterung*), as Kant calls it in § 27, cannot be purely aesthetic, as it really belongs to two separate realms or territories, the moral and the aesthetic – or, rather, to neither of them as such. The sublime indeed simultaneously involves 'repulsion and attraction'. The Kantian sublime is, like a monster in a horror film, interstitial. [17] It is a radically split feeling dwelling in two distinct domains, and is torn between their opposite requirements.[18]

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[1] Arthur Schopenhauer offers a more plausible theory of the sublime, which safeguards the sublime's aesthetic credentials and moves beyond Kant's in numerous meaningful ways, as I argue extensively in my book *The Sublime in Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). There I offer a profound critique of Kant's and Schopenhauer's doctrines. Drawing on recent insights in philosophy of mind and psychology, I also offer a critical alternative to Schopenhauer's theory of the sublime.

[2] References to Kant are to his *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. I indicate the section number, followed by the 'Akademie Ausgabe' volume and pagination. Translations are based upon Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, Translated by Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987) and *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Edited by Paul Guyer, Translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[3] 'Intuition' is often used to mean 'ineffable insight', and the sublime has frequently been associated with this kind of (quasi-)mystical understanding. I here use 'intuition' in the Kantian sense of an imaginative synthesis of the manifold's appearance.

[4] Here I take issue with Emily Brady's all too charitable, 'aesthetic' reading of the Kantian sublime. See Brady, *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy: Aesthetics, Ethics, and Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 189 and *passim*.

[5] See Brady, *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy*, 61: 'My reading of Kant's sublime places it firmly within the aesthetic domain. While there are key links made to practical reason, the foundation of Kantian morality, it is important to emphasize that this type of judgment, like the beautiful, only *prepares* us for morality'. This is misguided, since for Kant the modality of the sublime, i.e., its *demand* to be universally shared, 'has its foundation in human nature: in something that […] we may require and demand of everyone, namely, the predisposition to the feeling for (practical) ideas, i.e., to moral feeling'. Therefore, someone who cannot appreciate the sublime in nature is 'someone who has no *feeling*'. (§ 29, 265) Hence the sublime does not merely prepare us for morality, but is actually *based upon* our predisposition to moral feeling. Moreover, its claim to universal communicability is construed as grounded in the (unwarranted) assumption of a susceptibility to moral ideas in all human beings. It might be no coincidence that Kant usually puts 'practical' between brackets in § 29, as he often does in the context of the sublime. Perhaps he sensed the threat that such a close link to morality would pose to the purely aesthetic nature of the sublime. But unfortunately Kant could not resist, what Malcolm Budd aptly calls, 'his inveterate tendency to evaluate everything by reference to moral value'. See Malcolm Budd, 'The Sublime in Nature', in Paul Guyer, ed., *Kant's Critique of the Power of Judgment* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 134 and Malcolm Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 68 and 84. My view is that Budd is right and that Brady's reading is overly charitable.

[6] Here I disagree with Melissa McBay Merritt, who holds that 'moral feeling is a mode of the Kantian sublime: it is an elevated state of mind, registering as the subject's attraction to an ideal conceived through the moral law.' See Melissa Merritt, 'The Moral Source of the Kantian Sublime', in Timothy M. Costelloe, ed., *The Sublime: From Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 46-47. Merritt overlooks the fact that, in Kant's view, unlike the sublime, respect is a 'non-

pathological' feeling. Kant does say at one point that 'the liking for the sublime contains not so much positive pleasure as rather admiration and respect, and so should be called a negative pleasure.' (§ 23, 5:245) From this does not follow, however, that Kant implies that the moral feeling of respect is identical to the feeling of the sublime, and it would be rather odd if he did. He even explicitly acknowledges that 'the moral law in its might' is 'the object of a pure and unconditioned intellectual liking' and, hence, not aesthetically sublime itself. It is only 'if we judge aesthetically […] the moral good, [that] we must *present* it not so much as beautiful but rather as sublime, so that it will arouse a feeling of respect' ('General Comment', 5:271; italics added). Kant thus holds that moral feeling is analogous to the sublime, not that it is identical with it, and that the sublime *may* give rise to a feeling of respect.

[7] Katerina Deligiorgi even argues that sublime pleasure 'comes from the mere thought that we have the capacity for agency'. See Katerina Deligiorgi, 'The Pleasures of Contra-Purposiveness: Kant, the Sublime, and Being Human', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 72, 2014, 32.

[8] Already in the pre-critical *Observations*, Kant draws a connection between the sublime and morality. See also Clewis, *The Kantian Sublime and the Revelation of Freedom*, 13. Still, the connection between sublimity and morality is much tighter in his critical work.

[9] One notable exception is Jean-François Lyotard. See Jean-François Lyotard, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 224-239.

[10] See Brady, *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy*, 74.

[11] See Brady, *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy*, 74-79; Sarah Gibbons, *Kant's Theory of Imagination: Bridging Gaps in Judgment and Experience* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 136, 148ff., 150-151, and *passim*; and Rudolf Makkreel, *Imagination and Understanding in Kant* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), esp. chapter 3.

[12] See Bart Vandenabeele, 'Kant, The Mannerist and the Matterist Sublime', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 49, 2015, 32-49.

[13] See Brady, *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy*, 70-71. Here I side with Katie McShane, 'Neosentimentalism and the Valence of Attitudes', *Philosophical Studies* 164, 2013, 747-765, and Ronald W. Hepburn, 'Landscape and Metaphysical Imagination, *Environmental Values* 5, 1996, 201.

[14] As Robert Clewis justly points out, 'for Kant the sublime discloses that the subject belongs to a realm of freedom'. See Clewis, *The Kantian Sublime and the Revelation of Freedom*, 22.

[15] Whether intentionally or not, Kant actually seems to leave room for dependent or partly intellectual judgements of the sublime, by insisting that 'if the aesthetic judgment [of the sublime] is to be *pure* (*unmixed with any teleological* and hence rational judgment), […] then we must point to the sublime not in products of art (e.g. buildings, columns, etc.), where both the form and the magnitude are determined by a human purpose, nor in natural things *whose very concept carries with it a determinate purpose* (e.g. animals with a known determination in nature) but rather in crude nature [*an der rohen Natur*] (and even in it only insofar as it carries with it no charm, nor any emotion aroused by actual danger), that is, merely insofar as crude nature contains magnitude.' (§ 26, 5:252-253) Kant does not really make clear what 'crude nature', which allegedly occasions pure sublimity, exactly is, but he does seem to allow the occurrence of impure or dependent sublimity.

[16] Like Kames, Dennis and others, Kant connects enthusiasm and the sublime. He does so in a rather confusing passage in the 'General Comment', 5:272, in which he first claims that enthusiasm merely 'seems to be sublime', then also asserts that enthusiasm is as blind as any other affect and can by no means 'deserve to be liked by reason'. Yet, he adds in the following sentence that 'enthusiasm is sublime aesthetically because it is a straining of our forces by ideas that impart to the mind a momentum whose effects are mightier and more permanent than are those of an impulse produced by sensory representations'. Further in the same section, he distinguishes between 'fanaticism' (*Schwärmerei*), 'madness' (*Wahnsinn*), 'mania' (*Wahnwitz*) and 'enthusiasm' proper (*Enthusiasmus*). Kant now suggests that fanaticism and mania are closely related and not compatible with the sublime, whereas enthusiasm is (see 'General Comment', 5:257.). See also Jean-François Lyotard, *Enthusiasm: The Kantian Critique of History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009). For a critical rebuttal of Lyotard's interpretation, see Clewis, *The Kantian Sublime and the Revelation of Freedom*, 21-23.

[17] For the complicated relation between the sublime and the monstrous (*ungeheuer*), see Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, § 26, 5:253. For a controversial reading of Kant's account of the relation between the monstrous and the sublime, see Jacob Rogozinski, 'The Sublime Monster', in Donald Loose, ed., *The Sublime and Its Teleology: Kant, German Idealism, Phenomenology* (Leiden: Brill,

2011), 159-168. For an inspiring account of monsters in art-horror, see Noël Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York: Routledge, 1990), especially 31-33, 42-49, 176, 185.

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