

MÖGLICHKEIT UND WIRKLICHKEIT DER FREIHEIT
KANT UND HEIDEGGER ÜBER FREIHEIT, WILLEN UND RECHT

**Imagination and finitude:
comparison between Kant and Heidegger**

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Introduction

Heidegger, in his famous study *Kant and the problem of metaphysics* (1929), starting from a focus on the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), considers imagination as the “common root” of sensibility and understanding, i.e., an element of foundation for an ontology of the finite human being. Heidegger, in this sense, follows the Hegelian interpretation of Kant’s philosophy, in particular offered in *Glauben und Wissen* (1802)¹, according to which transcendental imagination, inserted in his theory of absolute subjectivity and conceived as an original synthesis, was identical to the intuitive intellect, that is, the unity of subject and object.

¹ On this point, see also V. Verra, *Immaginazione trascendentale e intelletto intuitivo*, in AA.VV., *Hegel interprete di Kant*, a cura di V. Verra, Napoli, 1981, pp. 67 - 89.

The Heideggerian discourse takes up this "unitary" interpretation of the Kantian imagination² and, as will be seen later, is based above all on an interpretation of this theme in *Critique of Pure Reason*, in particular, in its first edition. What is interesting to point out is that Heidegger does not seem to have in mind the elaboration of Kantian imagination in the development of his critical works after 1787 and, in this sense, Heidegger looks at this problem of Kantian philosophy only from one point of view. Moving from this point, the aim of this paper will then be to focus on the reasons for this "presumed" Heidegger's historiographical *forgetfulness* in the interpretation of Kantian imagination. In particular, the theme of imagination will be first introduced by the Kantian critical elaboration and, subsequently, will find some interesting ideas in Heidegger's works. In this way, we will see how on some points the positions of Heidegger and Kant seem to be very close while, on others, Heidegger follows his specific metaphysical position, unlike the purely gnoseological use of the Kantian imagination.

In traditional psychology, imagination was considered an intermediate faculty between sensibility and intellect. From the empirical psychology of C. Wolff and the German scholastic rationalism, also taken up in Baumgarten's *Metaphysics*, Kant retrieves the imagination in a "traditional" sense, treating it together with the sensitive faculty of poetry [*sinnliches Dichtungsvermögen*], that is, the ability to present the past and anticipate the future. In some passages of *Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view* (1798) Kant defines imagination as the faculty of intuitions "even without the presence of the object". In this sense, compared to simple affection, imagination is capable of intuiting without the presence of the object. In this sense, therefore, imagination is not based *totally* on affection, that is, on the immediate and intuitive presence of an object of sensitive perception. Imagination is, in fact, more independent from the contents offered by the sensitive manifold and, in this sense, it is properly an *activity*. It is clear that Heidegger insists on this "active" and "functional" aspect of Kantian imagination, omitting (more or less consciously) the complex treatment of the imagination offered in the various

² H. Mörchen's study, *Die Einbildungskraft bei Kant*, 2. Unveränderte Aufl Tübingen, 1979, integrates Heidegger's interpretation from a historical-philosophical point of view, analyzing the Kantian imagination also in the works subsequent to the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Mörchen identifies in the imagination a *mediating structure* that acts as a link between the different faculties of the mind and leads to the position of the fundamental question on the subject's Dasein.

critical works. In this sense, we will first try to speak about imagination precisely within the theoretical elaboration of the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. After that, we will analyze transcendental imagination from the point of view of the *Critique of Judgment*, seeing if this perspective can somehow communicate with the Heideggerian view.

Kantian imagination in first edition of Critique of Pure Reason (1781): formativity and unity of experience.

Kantian imagination is not defined according to a single gnoseological paradigm. The elaboration of the faculty of imagination is in fact very varied in Kantian works and he does not seem to establish a unitary meaning of this faculty. It is possible to say that in Kant's view there are as many "imaginationes" as there are different functions of a single structure, which assumes various levels of application. Imagination, in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), is an autonomous faculty, with the function of unifying the manifold given in time, through a synthesis of reproduction; in the second edition, imagination becomes a secondary function of the understanding, inserted inside the doctrine of transcendental schematism, according to which transcendental schemes, mediators between the intuitions and the pure concepts of the understanding, are a product of imagination. In *Critique of Judgment* (1790), imagination links the spheres of knowledge, will and feeling, becoming a faculty of subject's unity. Lastly, in *Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view* (1798), productive imagination is the faculty of original presentation of the object, preceding the experience (*exhibitio originaria*).

The theory of imagination in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is connected to the problems posed by the realization of a possible empirical psychology³. In *Lectures on Anthropology* Kant finds a faculty of formation, within the study of sensitive knowledge: «Besides the faculty of sensation, we have in addition a faculty to form images of objects, and through special power in the mind is to describe and to form what strikes the sense»⁴. This faculty (*facultas informandi impressiones sensuum*) is an ability to form impressions in the senses and it is connected to a specific temporal dimension. This particular skill seems to Kant similar to an *art*, such as poetry, but relative to human knowledge. Kant finds a faculty of formation of reproductive image as «a faculty of bringing the object forward at one point, thus every memory is a reproductive image formation»⁵. Therefore he finds a faculty of invention, conceived as a capacity to produce an image of an object which is neither present, nor future, nor past, but like a symbol, i.e. a figure that is not present, but *fictional*. Kant talks also about a *facultas praesagiendi*, i.e. a faculty of forming anticipatory images, in the sense of a prophetic faculty, because a considerable part of the human mind depends on associating one's representations. In Kant's view, this faculty of forming has a propensity to complete the formation of everything in the mind. This faculty, named *faculty perficiendi*, is explained «if the object does not agree with our idea, then the mind persistently endeavors to complete its formation, for example, an incomplete part in a comedy, a gallant knight and an inferior horse».

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant believes that the edification of the cognitive principles is based on the synthetic role of the a priori synthetic judgments and on the activity of unification of the faculties. This is a gnoseology based on a synchronic perspective in which the role of

³ A possible empirical psychology, then, will study the phenomena of the inner sense, constrained by the natural law and the operations of the human mind. A possible empirical doctrine of soul is a study of inner sense in its natural description: the changes of the mental state will be analyzed like alterations of substance, through an empirical methodology and by laws of cause and effect. In contrast to rational psychology, which addressed the essence of the soul and what can be derived from that essence, empirical psychology considers what could be known of the soul by means of observation. In the rationalist tradition, empirical psychology goes beyond what is immediately given to observation- positing distinct faculties of the soul. On this point, see also P. Frierson, *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014.

⁴ I. Kant, *Lectures on Anthropology*, ed. by A. W. Wood, R. B. Louden, Cambridge 2012, p. 80

⁵ *Ibidem*

background knowledge, accumulated over time and ordered by imagination, does not assume a fundamental importance. In the transcendental analysis, Kant considers, for example, the activity of memory within those transitional operations of reproductive imagination and the empirical laws of association in the inner sense, which produce unified representations through the stabilizing activity of transcendental schematism. Imagination, moving between presence and absence, at this level, does not abstract but rather aggregates, holding back and giving temporal duration and shape to the matter of experience. According to Kant, especially in the 1781 edition, no gnoseological operation would be possible without the power to preserve previous representations, a possibility given by the activity of the imagination that moves from mnemonic reproductions to conceptual recognitions. Imagination, therefore, is an important faculty of unifying the manifold given in time.

The discovery of the origin of the categories arises the problem of how a priori and universal concepts can refer to a manifold, making it necessary to demonstrate how these concepts have a necessary reference to the experience. The transcendental deduction of the concepts of understanding, based on the demonstration of their validity and on the claim that they are necessary for the construction of objects of experience, is a demonstration that Kant does not necessary consider in the context of transcendental aesthetics, because space and time refer directly to sensitive objects. The transcendental deduction of the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is divided into a *subjective deduction*, which underlines the faculties involved in the cognitive process, and an *objective deduction*. The subjective deduction explains the objective validity of the categories through a “[...]threefold synthesis, which is necessarily found in all cognition: that, namely, of the apprehension of the representations, as modification of the mind in intuition, of the reproduction of them in imagination; and of their recognition, which make possible even the understanding and, through the latter, all experience as an empirical product of understanding”⁶. Firstly, through the senses, the soul perceives the single impressions that in themselves are dispersed and separated from one another; then, sensations come to the soul individually and are perceived, following a temporal order, one by one.. Since all knowledge is

⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. By P. Guyer and A. Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998, p. 228; A98.

based on a nexus of connected representations, through a first level of unification defined synopsis, sense joins the manifold of representations. In order for the synopsis of the senses to take place, a synthesis is required, so that what is only joined at a first level in the senses becomes connected: “[...] our cognitions are in the end subjected to the formal condition of the inner sense, namely time, as that in which they must all be ordered, connected, and brought into relations. [...] in order for unity of intuition to come from this manifold, it is necessary first to run through and then to take together this manifoldness, which action I call synthesis of apprehension”⁷. This connection of the representations of the sense is given by the reproductive imagination, which manages to aggregate previous impressions. In fact, to be aware of the partial units of an entire psychic process, that is for example the totality of all the impressions that exist between two numerical extremes or between two temporal events, it is necessary to have a faculty capable of realizing a connected whole, i. e., a capacity able to conduct every degree of the thought process through all the preceding phases. The synopsis of apprehension, then, will be linked to that of reproduction, an activity of the imaginative faculty necessary to form an image in sensible intuition: “the synthesis of apprehension is therefore inseparably combined with the synthesis of reproduction. And since the former constitutes the transcendental ground of the possibility of all knowledge in general, the reproductive synthesis of the imagination belongs among the transcendental action of the mind, and with respect to this we will also call this faculty the transcendental faculty of imagination”⁸. The connection derived from the activity of aggregation offered by imagination could never form a totality without the addition of the consciousness that conceives all representations as a single concept, an operation that Kant calls synthesis of recognition. In fact, it is not sufficient that the representations be reproduced and aggregated, according to empirical laws of association, but also that the movement of subjective thought that leads from the primary and partial synthesis obtained to the new content is always subject to a specific rule. To obtain the production of a number, for example, it is not enough that the lower units be repeated moving towards the higher units but it is necessary to identify the rule, a logical function of progress, which regulates the passage from one unit to the other. This

⁷ Ibidem, pp. 228 -229; A98 - A99.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 230; A102.

function is explained by the category and its application to the synthesis of imagination and sense: for example, the genesis of a line is given by the union of all the points and their conservation in an identity is offered by the principle of a norm that, in this case, is the concept of direction. In this sense, only the consciousness of the successive production of the manifold, which operates through a logical principle, allows the delimitation of the defined units within the continuous and regular flow of representations in the internal sense «without the consciousness that that which we think is the very same as what we thought a moment before, all reproduction in a series of representation would be in vain».⁹ Kant recovers the psychology of Tetens in the distinction between simple comparison of perceptions and the active production of thought: what gives unity to sensitive representations is the concept of an object considered as a work of thought [*Denkskraft*]. Without the intervention of the formal unity of consciousness there cannot be a connection of knowledge: Kant defines the transcendental unity of apperception as the foundation that makes all phenomena possible in a whole of connected representations according to universal laws and rules. The final achievement of subjective deduction is therefore the possibility of an interconnected experience based on the activity of the sense, imagination and apperception. The sense represents empirical objects through intuition in the perception, imagination in the association and in the reproduction, and finally transcendental apperception in the empirical consciousness, which recognizes that representations reproduced by the imaginative faculty are identical to those of intuition. The unity of the manifold of different representations of a subject is unique and apperception is the foundation of every possible intuition. However, if the manifoldness of intuitions must be unified for the formation of this unity of apperception, understanding must produce this unification. But the unity of apperception, mediated by the unifying activity of the categories, always presupposes an original activity of synthesis. The synthesis of imagination, then, will be the condition a priori from which the manifold comes to be reunited to form a whole defined as knowledge. This productive synthesis of imagination, through which the synthesis of intuitions is produced originally, is not simply reproductive. As Kant says: “thus the transcendental unity of apperception is related to the pure synthesis of imagination, as an a priori condition of the possibility of all composition of

⁹ Ibidem, p. 230 - 231; A103.

a manifold in a cognition. But only the productive synthesis of the imagination can take place a priori; for the reproductive synthesis rests on conditions of experience. The principle of a necessary unity of the pure (productive) synthesis of the imagination prior to apperception is thus the ground of the possibility of all cognition, especially that of experience”¹⁰. About what concerns the psychological function that Tetens attributes to imagination, for Kant imagination has a transcendental function and its capacity of productive synthesis is applied to the matter of an a priori intuition, thanks to which it can also indirectly stimulate the empirical reproduction of memory, through the forms of empirical reception. The centrality of imagination in 1781 is clear: according to Kant, no experience exists without the productive synthesis of transcendental imagination, which no knowledge is possible without because it is the pure a priori form through which all objects must be represented in possible experiences. The active faculty of synthesis of the perceptive manifold is imagination, which exercises an action of connection on the perceptions that, in its turn, takes the name of apprehension. This reproductive power of imagination, which connects a precise representation with another one in its specificity through the principle of association rule, results in a connected whole and not an unregulated aggregate. However, according to Kant, the rule called *affinity*, as an objective principle of association capable of subduing representation to a law that can be extended to all phenomena, stands exclusively in the unity of transcendental apperception. In order to the accordance of all representations to the synthetic unity of apperception to take place, the synthesis of pure imagination is fundamental, which has the role of true foundation of all knowledge a priori and that makes the connection of the manifold with the stable and permanent subjectivity possible, through a rule of the understanding. Kant, taking up the concept of Baumgarten, believes that imagination cannot create content by itself but has the power to rearrange the information of sense. The imagination in the pre-critical phase guides the human being in his experience in the world, realizing an ordinary perception and engaging in the construction of a sense in a productive way. In this sense, Kantian *Bildungskräfte* has a formative productivity in the connection between the concept of understanding and the intuitions of space and time.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 237; A118.

Kantian imagination in Critique of Judgment: beauty, freedom, spontaneity.

If imagination plays a central role in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, its meaning of spontaneous activity emerges much more strongly in the *Critique of Judgment* (1790). Indeed, the aesthetic imagination is very interesting for a rethinking of some questions concerning practical spontaneity. In fact, in addition to proceeding beyond the claims of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the aesthetic imagination is important not only for gnoseological but above all for practical purposes. Let us analyze how the spontaneous activity of aesthetic imagination resembles practical spontaneity, first of all considering the difference of the theme between 1787 and 1790.

The judgment of taste is based on the formal and subjective condition of every judgment, that is, on the faculty of judging, which requires the agreement between imagination and understanding, the former conceived in its freedom and the latter in its legality. The specificity of the judgment of taste, in fact, is based on a relation that connects the representation of the beautiful object to the free play of the cognitive faculties. Understanding has a legislative function, because it is the faculty of rules and a faculty of concepts and, more generally, a faculty of knowledge, which is able to connect to a unity of apperception the manifold of given representations. Understanding is also a spontaneous and non-receptive faculty of producing representations. Imagination, on the other hand, is an eccentric cognitive faculty. The action of the faculty of judgment [*Urteilkraft*] must guarantee the relation between imagination and understanding and control the former from dispersing into absurdity and illusions. In fact, the faculty of judgment guarantees a form of legality of the imagination, a singular conformity to a rule. In this sense, Kant is able to distinguish the *Einbildungskraft* from the *Phantasie*¹¹, which is the involuntary play of images and, in this sense, Kantian's conception of fantasy has a relation with the Aristotelian φαντασία.

¹¹ For the theme of Kantian *fantasy* connected to fanaticism and enthusiasm (in an anthropological and political sense), I refer to R. Clewis, *Fanaticism*, Forthcoming in *The Cambridge Kant Lexicon* (Cambridge Univ. Press), edited by Julian Wuerth.

The faculty of judgment, in this sense, regulates both the determining and the reflective judgment, that is, it is normative both for the relationship of the faculties in a theoretical judgment and in an aesthetic and teleological judgment.

Aesthetic imagination is an essential element of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* and does not appear in the *Critique of teleological Judgment* instead, because the treatment of imagination, connected with the activity of Judgment, belongs to the specificity of the human, and not to the teleological interpretation of nature. Imagination belongs to the sensibility and to the understanding because it is the faculty of intuitions that allows the apprehension of the manifold of intuition, that is, is able to connect representations according to the empirical laws of association. Imagination always derives the matter of one's activity by the senses and yet it is much richer in representations than the first. This productive character appears clearer when imagination, rather than being considered the faculty of intuitions, pure or empirical, is understood as *Vermögen der Darstellung*, that is, the faculty of exhibition. Exhibition is a very particular form of demonstration: to demonstrate, to exhibit, means to present a concept in intuition. The object that corresponds to each concept of the understanding must always be given in the intuition, since only in this way an objective knowledge is possible. On a cognitive level, the exhibition is possible through the doctrine of schematism, as the transcendental scheme is the product of the imagination, through which the imagination offers its image to the concept. A different case is given for the judgments of taste, where the exhibition is not aimed at knowledge but at the feeling of pleasure. As a faculty of exhibition, imagination can go beyond experience, realizing the ideas of reason, to which no intellectual concept is ever completely adequate. This tension towards the inexpressible is clear in the talent of poets or artists, and it derives from an activity of the imagination¹². In this sense, aesthetic representations, not adequate to any concept of the understanding, are called *aesthetic ideas*. Aesthetic and rational ideas can never become the object of possible knowledge, the former because they are intuitions of the imagination to which it is not possible to offer an adequate concept, the latter because they contain a concept of the supersensible, to which an intuition does not correspond.

¹² On the creative capacity of imagination, I refer to D.W. Crawford, *Kant's Theory of Creative Imagination*, in AA. VV. *Essay in Kant's Aesthetics*, P. Guyer - T. Cohen, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1982, pp. 151 - 178.

Imagination cannot be totally understood within the sphere of sensibility but must also be considered a function of creativity and spontaneity, because it is able to present objects that are not present and to abstract from the data immediately offered by the senses. Imagination is able to work independently of the laws of association of the data given by experience. Kant admits a differentiation between reproductive and productive imagination. The first kind of imagination is subject to the laws of association and always presuppose an empirical intuition; the productive or inventive imagination is instead an original *exhibitio*, because it precedes experience and contributes to the explanation of the possibility of an a priori knowledge. In this sense, imagination is independent of associative laws and elaborates the manifold for something further with respect to nature, precisely the aesthetic idea. The activity of productive imagination as imaginative creativity is distinct from that of creation, as *creatio ex nihilo*: the creativity of imagination is an individual capacity that always needs a material that can be transformed; in fact, this capacity allows us to grasp relations between things in different ways and to arrive at intuitions that go beyond the pre-established logical criteria.

The *Critique of Judgment* presents imagination as an active and passive faculty, a function of sensibility but connected with spontaneity and creativity. While sensibility brings man near to the animal and rationality connects him with spirits, imagination is strongly related to life, because the manifold of experience can be transformed but not created, highlighting its finite and limited nature. In judgment of experience there is an agreement between imagination and understanding but this connection is a subsumption of intuitions to concepts, for the building of empirical objects. In aesthetic judgment, this agreement is not conceived as a schematization of a concept, but there is a free play between understanding and imagination to the subjective state, that is to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure: here, intuition is not subsumed from the concept, but more in general, is the faculty of imagination which is subsumed under the conditions of the understanding. Understanding and imagination, in a judgment of taste, are together in their freedom, that is, the imagination does not exhibit concepts of the understanding, nor does the understanding impose its own concepts on the imagination. Imagination, which is not forced to exhibiting and schematizing intellectual concepts, is free. Understanding does not impose its own

concepts on the imagination, but presents itself under the sign of legality. In a judgment of taste, imagination appears regulated, affirming its conformity to the understanding, without however receiving any concept from it; moreover, imagination will become independent from the laws of association that govern its empirical use, and will manifest itself in its freedom to produce forms. Imagination proceeds with a lawless regularity, as if exhibiting a concept, but without the concept being present. The understanding, not manifesting itself in its cognitive activity, serves the imagination, accepting the material offered and, in a free play, entertains with imagination a relationship of legality without determination.

Imagination is a mediating faculty of finite human beings that participates in two natures and represents the exemplification of his freedom. The freedom of imagination, in the free play with understanding, is not an absolute freedom but a free regularity. Kant believes that imagination in judgment of taste, considered in his freedom, cannot be reproductive imagination, linked to the empirical laws of association. This imagination will be the productive imagination. Kant therefore argues that the character of autonomy does not belong to imagination but to the judgment of taste. The judgment of taste is characterized by autonomy, a property that in the artistic ambit leads us to follow models and authors, but not to copy or imitate them. When judging the beauty of something, the criteria of such judgment cannot derive from empirical evaluations but from a principle that is found through an activity of reflective judgment. The judgment of taste is free and autonomous, a property pertaining to the aesthetic Judgment as a reflective Judgment; the determining Judgment, on the other hand, is not autonomous, but simply subsumes the particular under a law or a universal principle. Now, admitting that imagination in its free play with understanding is free but not totally autonomous, and that autonomy belongs only to the reflective Judgment that finds a principle of normativity, Kant goes further the meanings of autonomy and freedom offered in *Critique of Practical Reason*¹³.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* offers a cosmological, transcendental meaning of freedom and a practical one. In the first case, cosmological or transcendental freedom emerges where the

¹³ According to G. Prauss, *Kant über Freiheit als Autonomie*, Frankfurt a.M. 1983, the concept of autonomy cannot be limited only to moral autonomy, but extended to the concept of spontaneity which, in the knowing and acting subject, is a form of intentionality.

solution to the third antinomy is proposed, through the discovery of a double causality, by nature or by freedom. Cosmological or transcendental freedom is identified with the concept of absolute spontaneity, that is, as that faculty capable of absolutely beginning a state. Practical freedom, theorized in the *Canon of pure reason*, finds its foundation in the transcendental freedom, and designates the independence of the will from the constraint of sensitive stimuli. But, says Kant, this independence could not emerge if everything in the world happened only through natural causality, in a mechanical and determined way. In this regard, practical freedom presupposes transcendental freedom as absolute spontaneity and as its condition of possibility. Practical freedom is conceived in a negative and a positive modality: in a negative sense, practical freedom is the independence of the will from the matter of the law; in a positive sense, practical freedom is the faculty of the will to be a law to itself, and therefore autonomy. In this way, the concept of autonomy is not totally identified with that of freedom but only a modality of freedom, which is the practical freedom understood positively. The concept of freedom in a cosmological or transcendental sense is, then, an absolute spontaneity. In this sense, therefore, autonomy is characterized as a mode of absolute spontaneity, which can include the activity of the imagination understood aesthetically¹⁴.

Having clarified the relations between autonomy and freedom, we can understand and overcome the complexity of conception of imagination, which is at the same time free but in itself accordant with laws. The *freedom* of imagination is an act of spontaneity, an aspect that brings it closer to the understanding, whose universal laws derive from its spontaneity; also the agreement of imagination and understanding is characterized by the spontaneity of the free game; lastly, in the teleological conception and in the variety of forms of nature, Kant presupposes the spontaneity of a cause without which no reason could be given for those forms. In the first and third cases, the notion of spontaneity connotes an absolute beginning, a causality that is not found in another cause; in the second case, spontaneity suggests the sense of a free agreement, produced outside the constraint of particular cognitive rules or technical-practical purposes.

¹⁴ On the distinction of the two forms of freedom, M. Heidegger in his *Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit. Einleitung in die Philosophie*, Gesamtausgabe. II Abteilung: 1923 - 1944, Bd. 31; Frankfurt a.m. 1982, distinguishes absolute spontaneity, as the faculty of starting a state from oneself, from that of self-autonomy, as the capacity of a rational will to give itself laws and defines autonomy as a modality of absolute spontaneity.

Now, in moral freedom the subject submits himself to the moral law that is objectively valid. The rational realization of practical freedom understood as autonomy lets the rational essence of human being emerge and his personality overcome what is passive and finite in his soul. The freedom of imagination, which enters in the judgment with its lawless regularity, cannot be assimilated to the practical concept of accordance with the moral law. Therefore, if imagination must be free, it is a non-absolute freedom, since the reference to the matter of sensitivity is essential. The particular freedom of imagination, similar to the concept of spontaneity absolute, is articulated in the agreement of imagination and understanding in the judgment of taste. Here, in fact, it is a question not only of an absolute beginning of something starting from itself, but of a concordance which does not refer to another cause and takes place not intentionally, outside the imposed rules from the outside. In this sense, we could say that the freedom of imagination is a way of being spontaneity and not of autonomy. It is important to emphasize that the imagination that forms the judgment of taste is not without restraints, but has its own free regularity. This free regularity is shown in a finalistic agreement between imagination and understanding, not bound by concepts. The regularity that characterizes freedom of imagination, to prevent it from falling into illusions, is not the submission to a law. In the unintentional agreement between the imagination in its freedom with the understanding in its legality, the understanding is at the service of the imagination, and not vice versa, otherwise the agreement would be finalistic with respect to the production of knowledge (and therefore there would be a feeling of pleasure linked to the achievement of a purpose). In the case of the free game of faculty, pleasure comes instead from the representation of an object and from lingering in its own contemplation, a fruition that enlivens the faculties and intensifies the general sense of existence.

The Supersensible Substratum: a possible metaphysical agreement between the faculties?

In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant more decisively affirms the existence of a *noumenal substratum* into which nature and freedom come together¹⁵. Already the antinomy of taste forced a looking beyond the sensible and nature in search of a level of supersensible, understood as the union of all ours a priori faculty¹⁶. This *supersensible substrate* cannot be categorized starting from rules or concepts of the understanding and cannot be theoretically determined, although it constitutes the only foundation able to put reason in agreement with itself. In relation to the subject, this substrate represents the conceptually indeterminable basis of the agreement of the faculties. Kant describes the idea of the supersensible substrate, but clarifying its unknowability: "First of all, the idea of the supersensible in general, without any other determination, as the substratum of nature; secondly, the idea of the supersensible, as the principle of the subjective purpose of nature for our faculty to know; third, the idea of the supersensible, as the principle of the ends of freedom and as the principle of the agreement of those ends with that freedom in morality". According to Kant, the idea of the supersensible is the foundation of our way of thinking about nature and the freedom in agreement, without taking up the Leibnizian theory of pre-established harmony. Only by admitting the idea of a noumenal substratum, Kant believes that it is possible to think that nature is finalistically oriented to our faculty of knowing and, in this way, that the abyss of nature and freedom is therefore conciliated. Obviously, this is a *possible* agreement, that is neither likely to understand (*verstehen*) nor to explain (*erklären*) and precisely this link in the idea of a noumenal substratum is the condition to be able to think about the double legislation of nature and freedom. Through the analogical and the symbolic knowledge, Kant tries to approximate, even in the finitude of an intellect limited to space and

¹⁵ For E. Cassirer, *Kants Leben und Lehre*, cit. p. 371, the idea of the supersensible substratum is an ultimate principle of things, a projection of an unattainable goal in experience, beyond the confines of experience. Only by admitting the idea of this noumenal substratum is it possible to think that nature is finalistically oriented with respect to our faculty of knowledge.

¹⁶ It is no coincidence that a chapter of the study of P. Guyer, *Kant and the claims of taste*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1979, is titled "The Metaphysics of Taste A Supersensible Substratum" (p. 331). Guyer in fact writes, underlining the evident ambiguity of the supersensible concept: "the concept of the supersensible, by contrast, is neither an epistemological nor a psychological concept, not being a concept of the property or state of any phenomenal object. Rather, it is an ontological concept, a concept of an object - an object of which, to be sure, we know little, but which we nevertheless think to be that which both empirical object and empirical subjects are in themselves, or the ground of their existence. [...] The supersensible is a concept not of epistemology but of ontology, and, it must be noted, of an ontology which did not have to be invoked earlier in Kant's argument." (cit. p. 340)

time, to this supersensible. The supersensible, with which the transcendental investigation opens up to a metaphysical discourse, is defined by Kant as a completely *indeterminate* idea, such as not to can be clarified in any way, and which is defined as the "supersensible substratum of humanity". The reference to the idea of the supersensible is fundamental for reason, forcing it to its theoretical limits and disclosing a possible *extension* to it only on the level of moral faith. The reference to the idea indeterminate of the supersensible indicates, in general, a representation of an unknowable object. Generally, with regards to the ideas of reason, they contain supersensible concepts of which an intuition cannot be provided corresponding, thoughts not demonstrable through examples. Aesthetic ideas, on the other hand, are intuitions of the imagination, of which an adequate concept can never be provided, being representations unexposed of the imagination. Kant finds three determinations of the supersensible: 1. The idea of supersensible in general, as the substratum of phenomenal nature, that is, of everything that appears. 2. The idea of the supersensible as a principle of the finality of nature for all our faculties cognitive, that is, to be understood as the unknowable foundation of the unity of our faculties cognitive; 3. The idea of the supersensible as a principle of the ends of freedom and the agreement of freedom with nature in morality. Ultimately, the idea of the supersensible substratum makes agreement possible with nature: with this concept, which Judgment determines through finality, the fundamental problem of the *Critique of Judgment*, that is the passage [*Übergang*] between nature and freedom. is partially solved.

The metaphysical discourse of the supersensible substrate that unites the faculties is a reflection on the possible reunification of the antinomic unity that lives in the subject and characterizes it. Phenomenon and noumenon, nature and freedom, are the duplicities that Kantian philosophy tries to harmonize in the *Critique of Judgment*. And, because this concept of supersensible substratum concerns *humanity* as a foundation that makes possible the union of humanity in the *sensus communis*, it will more broadly concern the progress of the genre towards the accomplished realization of the civilization process, made possible by culture (including aesthetics) and cosmopolitanism. In this sense, this "metaphysical" concept is to be understood as a feasible ideal from an aesthetic and moral point of view, as the junction point that accords

human perspectives into a unity. If Kant excludes metaphysics as a possible knowledge in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in the *Critique of Judgment* he rehabilitates the metaphysical knowledge as a “problem” of a different order, concerning man in the totality of his possible experiences.

Elena Bartolini, PhD

1. *Heidegger turns to Kant*

In *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*¹⁷ — also referred to as the *Kantbuch* — Heidegger continues his engagement with the philosophical project of his predecessor, a commitment already begun a couple of years before with the course he held on a phenomenological interpretation of Kant's first *Critique*.¹⁸ In the firstly mentioned treatise, in particular, Heidegger tries to demonstrate how in the work of Kant there are already hints of a more fundamental role for temporality, although not as explicit as in his own philosophical account further developed in *Being and Time*. In order to demonstrate and support such a reasoning, Heidegger reads the *Critique of Pure Reason* in terms of a foundation [*Grundlegung*] for metaphysics. Subsequently, at this stage of his philosophical inquiry, Heidegger understands the problem of metaphysics as an issue concerning fundamental ontology, i.e., a fundamental account on 'what' we address when we state that 'something' *is*. In turn, fundamental ontology is interpreted *qua* an ontological analysis of the human beings acknowledged however not fixed in their finitude:¹⁹ only in a philosophical horizon where the human being is understood as a subject of knowledge able to engage with knowable objects, in fact, metaphysics finds its sense, its scope, its reason to exist. In other words, only in the encounter with alterities intended in their discontinuity, in their separateness, human beings can experience their own limits, their finitude and, therefore, be in search of non physical explanations for the physical manifestation. Indeed, metaphysics was born as an exploration of causes, as we learn from Aristotle.²⁰ However, Heidegger demonstrates his intent to understand metaphysics in a more essential way, that is, by

¹⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

¹⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Parvis Emand and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1997).

¹⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 144 and 162-173.

²⁰ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. Joe Sachs, (Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 2002), 29 (993b20-31) and 37-38 (996b1-19).

overcoming the issue of beings in favour of turning to a meditation about the connection between Being as such and the finitude in human beings.²¹

Let us linger on the just mentioned aspect for a moment. In order to situate the *Kantbuch* within the context of Heidegger's philosophical project so to better understand his engagement with the predecessor, it is crucial to point out that, according to Heidegger, the first Kantian critique must be read as a foundation of metaphysics through a fundamental ontology. In other words, Heidegger attests that the *Critique of Pure Reason* is the displaying of an ontological attempt partially succeeded where, although not equally unequivocal as he himself shows in his own writings, it is there traceable a philosophical hyperbole leading beyond that which is usually claimed to be metaphysics.²² To be missed or completely unrecognized in Kant's ontological considerations, from Heidegger's perspective, it is the appropriate role of time and temporality. At a first glance, Kant basically seems to assure the same importance to space and time as *a priori* elements able to frame human being's sensible experience, therefore trying to ground the possibility of metaphysics as a kind of knowledge — or, even better, a type of science — shared by all; on the other hand, Heidegger sees and sets the priority of time, which he thinks to be in a stricter correlation with Being. The interpretation of the same text by Neo-Kantian thinkers contemporary to Heidegger, on the contrary, sees the work of Kant in terms of a theory concerning science and knowledge, that is, regarding the way in which we apprehend through our gnoseological transcendental structure.²³ In their view Kant, then, far from a proposal of purely ontological nature, would be strictly attentive to demonstrate the process through which the human being, universally understood, interacts with the world, that is, with the world they can relate or say to know. According to Heidegger, this latter position represents a mistake due to the unquestioned issue about the human being, an issue usually relegated to the sphere of attention of anthropology, which, in its turn, considers *Dasein* as an entity among other entities.

²¹ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 155.

²² Martin Heidegger, *Logik: Die Frage nach der Wahrheit* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Vittorio Klosterman, 1995), 354ff.

²³ Franco Volpi, *Guida a Heidegger* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2005²), 164-165.

Moreover, by avoiding the question of the being of *Dasein*, their temporal dimension comes to be severed, in favour of an atemporal definition. Given what stated in *Being and Time* — a work whose title already gives clues in this sense — it is clear that Heidegger can not accept such a consequence.

This interpretative element is not at all secondary: Heidegger is determined to propose a plausible alternative to the Neo-Kantian account and is also resolute in posing himself in the descendant line of Kant's heritage, thus gaining philosophical esteem as well as a solid, respectful reference. Such a hypothesis like the one just presented would give reason for the use that Heidegger continues making of the term 'metaphysics.' In effect, during this period he does not avoid the word, nor discredit it, he actually plays with it, grounding metaphysics on ontology and re-enforcing ontology through metaphysics. In effect, the same dynamics between the two is still at play, for example, in *What is Metaphysics?*.²⁴ In the latter work, for example, Heidegger affirms:

“The question of the nothing puts us, the questioners, ourselves in question. It is a metaphysical question. Human *Dasein* can comport itself toward beings only if it holds itself out into the nothing. Going beyond beings occurs in the essence of *Dasein*. But this going beyond is metaphysics itself. This implies that metaphysics belongs to the «nature of the human being.» It is neither a division of academic philosophy nor a field of arbitrary notions. *Metaphysics is the fundamental occurrence in our Dasein. It is Dasein itself.*”

And, again, as a conclusion of the text and of his reasoning:

“If the question of the nothing unfolded here has actually questioned us, then we have not simply brought metaphysics before us in an extrinsic manner. Nor have we merely been «transposed»

²⁴ Martin Heidegger, “What is Metaphysics?,” trans. David Farrell Krell in Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, edited by William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 82-96.

into it. We cannot be transposed into it at all, because insofar as we exist we are always already within it.”

Heidegger demonstrates to consider metaphysics as absolutely inevitable, almost necessary, for *Dasein* — as if metaphysics constitutes *Dasein* themselves. Hence, metaphysics guides most of the dynamics concerning *Dasein*'s engagement with the world. In other terms, during these years of his philosophical inquiry, according to Heidegger philosophy itself comes to coincide with metaphysics;²⁵ at the same time, thinking, i.e., the profound questioning concerning Being, may demonstrate an overcoming of metaphysics for how it has been previously conceived. In fact, Heidegger's attempt is also addressed to emancipate philosophy from science and actually demonstrate the priority of the second over the first.

2. *Definition of imagination*

Within such a framework, the reflection on the topic of transcendental imagination assumes a crucial role: in fact, in this feature — described by Kant as a point of mediation between empirical experience and theoretical knowledge within the human being's cognition — Heidegger glimpses the anticipation of both temporality and freedom.²⁶ Temporality, for imagination anchors the human being in a given situation; freedom, given that imagination is characterized by a spontaneous productive connotation driving the human being's agency.

Without delving more deeply into to the debate about the contrasting placement of imagination in the two different editions of *The Critique of Pure Reason* and, at the same time, overlooking Heidegger's thoughts on regard of this specific placement, what is debated here is the very definition of the faculty of imagination and the consequences on Heidegger's account

²⁵ Martin Heidegger, “What is Metaphysics?,” 96: “Φύσει γάρ, ὃ φίλε, ἔνεστί τις φιλοσοφία τῆ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς διανοία. [«For by nature, my friend, a human being's thinking dwells in philosophy»] (Plato, *Phaedrus*, 2719a). As long as human beings exist, philosophizing of some sort occurs. Philosophy — what we call philosophy — is the getting under way of metaphysics, in which it comes to itself and to its explicit tasks.”

²⁶ For a more extensive analysis in this sense, see Martin Weatherston, *Heidegger's Interpretation of Kant: Categories, Imagination, and Temporality* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

about metaphysics. In the German thinker's opinion, the introduction by part of Kant of the imaginative function is less naive than Kant himself makes it to appear: at the starting point of his philosophical inquiry, in fact, Kant distinguishes between two — and two only, it must be underlined — sources of knowledge, that is, sensibility and intellect. Sensibility is a matter for transcendental aesthetics, concerning space and time, while intellect is investigated by transcendental analytics given that it is structured into categories whose purpose is framing intuitions so as to produce judgements. The receptivity for impressions and the spontaneity of concepts both rule the gnoseological access to the world for the human being. Although Kant, in Heidegger's own words, "gives a remarkable characterisation of the two basic sources which goes beyond their mere enumeration,"²⁷ also demonstrating to suppose a common root for them both,²⁸ at the same time he does not pursue a more transcendental feature nor does allude or cite any other cause of knowledge. Until the moment in which Kant needs to call imagination into question, with the aim to ground ontological knowledge and transcendence to each one's personal experience.

Heidegger clearly follows Kant's definition of imagination as "an independent function of the soul," "a faculty of intuition, even without the presence of the object".²⁹ Considering Heidegger's reflections, imagination is described in terms of "the faculty which in a certain way gives itself such [looks]."³⁰ Imagination shows that, although in need of sensibility and of the physical perception of things, the human being can also detach from things themselves and yet have them re-presented:³¹ even in their absence, things can stand in front of or before human

²⁷ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 25.

²⁸ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 26: "Here the «sources» are understood as «stems» which spring forth from a common root. But whereas in the first passage the «common root» was qualified with a «perhaps,» in the second the «common root» is reputed to exist. Nevertheless, in both passages this root is only alluded. Kant not only fails to pursue it further, but even declares that it is «unknown to us.»"

²⁹ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 90.

³⁰ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 91.

³¹ What just described is specially suitable for empirical imagination. Kant, and Heidegger following him, perhaps paraphrasing Aristotle's distinction (as we are about to see), also attests the presence of a transcendental imagination which, differently from the empirical one, connects together the concepts of the intellect with intuitions.

beings.³² Consequently, given the representational role of imagination interpreted together with its immediate creative aspect,³³ this faculty contributes to build our own vision of the world, literally: again, quoting Heidegger's, "imagination forms the look of the horizon of objectivity as such,"³⁴ moreover it could also do so "in advance, before the experience of the being."³⁵ Kant's and Heidegger's definition of imagination follow in the footsteps of Aristotle who, in *On the Soul*, describes imagination — *phantasia* in Greek language — by affirming that it is that "by which we speak of some images as becoming present to us."³⁶ To be precise, in Aristotelian terms, imagination is, indeed, the faculty that recalls imaginings, *phantasmata*, of entities previously sensed although actually not before us at the present moment, however it is also a faculty of movement.³⁷ Therefore, it is crucial to recall the collocation of the treatise about the *psyché* in the Corpus of the ancient philosopher: *On the Soul* concerns a topic of the *physis*, that is, of the natural movement and, in particular, the one of ensouled entities, which are characterized by autonomous locomotion. Hence, even though, as recalled by Heidegger himself,³⁸ according to their predecessor imagination had already an intermediate function

³² In Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Volume III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics. Volume IV: Nihilism*, edited by David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 89, Heidegger will claim: "If knowing has traditionally been taken as *re*-presentation, this essence of knowing is retained also in Nietzsche's concept of knowledge" (author's emphasis). And again, 92: "Representing beings and thinking rationally are the praxis of life, the primordial securing of permanence for itself" (author's emphasis).

³³ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 91: "This «formative power» is simultaneously a «forming»." Interesting to notice that Heidegger's analysis on imagination rotates around the term '*Bild*', using a terminology maybe closer to the one adopted by Plato *vis à vis* the terminology Aristotle employed in *On the Soul*, where the emphasis is actually on light, i.e. not on vision as form.

³⁴ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 92.

³⁵ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 92.

³⁶ Aristotle, *On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, trans. Joe Sachs (Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 2004²), 135 (428a1-2).

³⁷ Aristotle, *On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, 137 (428b10-18): "But since it is possible when one thing is moved for another thing to be moved by it, while imagination seems to be some sort of motion and not occur without perception, but in beings that perceive and about things of which there is perception, and since it is possible for a motion to come about as a result of the being-at-work of sense perception, and necessary for it be similar to the perception, then this motion would be neither possible without perception nor present in beings that do not perceive, and the one having it would both do and have done to it many things resulting from this motion, which could be either true or false."

³⁸ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 91 (footnote 185).

between sensibility and intellection, the function of *phantasia* in Aristotle's account differs from the reading of the two successors. In particular, as I tried to argue, it does so because in the Greek thinker's opinion imagination was intended to be connected to locomotion and to desire,³⁹ whereas for Kant and Heidegger these aspects are not at all considered for the same faculty. Moreover, it should be recalled the distinction operated by Aristotle between sensory imagination and deliberative imagination: sensory imagination is shared by all animals, deliberative imagination appears instead only in those provided with reason.⁴⁰

3. *Transcendental imagination as an expression of temporality and finitude*

Within the scope of Kant's project, transcendental imagination — in its connection with transcendental schematism, which, let us remind it, is the very metaphysical essence of the human being as such in Heidegger's reading of Kant — defines a structural part of the gnosiological capabilities of the human, that is to say, it serves as a pivotal element in the process thanks to which the human being comes to understand and know. Therefore, transcendental schematism, together with the ethical implications that it inevitably entails, can be understood as the fundament of Kant's philosophical anthropology, well resumed in the famous four questions listed in his lectures on Logic.⁴¹ However, Heidegger demonstrates to be critical with respect to the formulation of a philosophical anthropology because, as already mentioned above, he sees the very question of anthropology to be still misleading with respect to a more essential questioning of *Dasein*, in fact continuing to consider this latter as a being among others, in the same way of other beings. Rather, Heidegger shifts from a 'philosophical anthropology' to a

³⁹Aristotle, *On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, 153 (433a9-14): "But it is obvious that these two things cause motion, desire and/or intellect, if one includes imagination as an activity of intellect, since many people follow their imaginings contrary to what they know, and in the other animals there is no intellect or reasoning activity, except imagination."

⁴⁰ Aristotle, *On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, 156 (434a6-10).

⁴¹ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 145:

"1. What can I know?
2. What should I do?
3. What may I hope?
4. What is the human being?"

more fundamental, i.e., ontological analysis. One could wonder why, in this type of consideration, the paragraphs devoted to imagination and finitude find a remarkable space in Heidegger's reading of the first Critique. A first — perhaps too quick — answer could be addressing the fact that such a placement may certainly be related to its intermediate position between pure intuition and pure thinking, as previously reported. However, the extensive interest demonstrated by Heidegger actually displays what he considers to be the limits of Kant's severe dichotomy, which in fact is unable to provide a trustful account of the actual commitment of *Dasein* to the world. In this ontological meditation, the focus is then on the relationship between that particular being that *Dasein* is and other beings, beings that make manifest the limitations of *Dasein*. What are, then, the consequences of such a philosophical awareness? In *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Heidegger claims:

“In man's comportment toward beings which he himself is not, he already finds the being as that from which he is supported, as that on which he has depended, as that over which, for all his culture and technology, he can never become master. Depending upon the being which he is not, man is at the same time not master of the being which he himself is.”⁴²

Therefore, at first *Dasein*'s finitude is encountered from an experience, the experience of other entities that are not *Dasein* themselves and on which human beings are convinced to be able to impose their power — “culture and technology,” Heidegger says —, which means that *Dasein* thinks to be in charge of beings. Given that for *Dasein* it is possible to perceive,⁴³ see, think and act on beings as separated one from the other, *Dasein* is deceived by the certainty of operating on beings. However, Heidegger suggests, it is not but an illusion: the destiny of *Dasein* is not in their hands, it is not up to them. Even more clearly: the interaction with the world is not at all

⁴² Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 160. I want to acknowledge that this exegetical interpretation is an idea I have originally heard from Guccsal Pulsar, MA, DePaul University.

⁴³ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Volume III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics. Volume IV: Nihilism*, 48: “What is perceived in such perception are beings; they have the character of that of which we say that it *is*. Conversely, beings as such open themselves only to such a perceiving. This is what Parmenides' saying means: To gar auto noein estin te kai einai. «Perceiving and Being are the same.» To be the same means to belong together in essence; beings are not in beings as *beings*, that is, as present, without perceiving. But neither can perceiving take hold where there are no beings, where Being does not have the possibility of coming into open” (author's emphasis).

guaranteed by a metaphysical undiscussed nature, i.e., a rational nature completely detached from temporality and unrelated to it, which would guarantee an effective power over other entities. Nevertheless, because of their peculiar placement in this world, *Dasein* can build a world, a world of meanings. And, to some extent, human beings hermeneutically interpret beings: in effect, human agency is explainable within a context of understanding, a context sense.

4. *As-Structure and imagination*

Although the references to *The Critique of Judgement* are only a few throughout Heidegger's analysis, we may attempt saying he reads the first critique — and especially the sections on transcendental imagination — having the last critique in mind. This could be attested by the very same interpretation of this faculty, which is in effect conceived in terms of a hermeneutical or interpretative dimension. Heidegger does not extensively or directly explain the connections co-implicating both imagination and the so-called 'as structure,' actually this latter is usually led back by some commentators to Husserl's phenomenological influence.⁴⁴ It is however clear that, given the particular synthetic features of transcendental imagination and of the role of the 'as structure' in *Dasein*'s hermeneutics, the two can be correlated. In the *Critique of Judgment*, in fact, while deepening the passage between the faculty of judgment of the beautiful to the faculty of judgment of the sublime, Kant attests that imagination and the faculty of concepts are connected one another. The philosopher claims:

“[...] but it [satisfaction] is nevertheless still related to concepts, although it is indeterminate which, hence the satisfaction is connected to the mere presentation or to the faculty for that, through which the faculty of presentation or the imagination is considered, in the case of a given intuition, to be in accord with the faculty of concepts of the understanding or of reason, as promoting the latter. Hence both sorts of judgements are also singular, and yet judgements that

⁴⁴ See for example Maxime Doyon, “The «As-Structure» of Intentional experience in Husserl and Heidegger” in T. Breyer & C. Gutland (eds.), *Phenomenology of thinking: Philosophical investigations into the character of cognitive experiences* (London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 116–133.

profess to be universally valid in regard to every subject, although they lay claim merely to the feeling of pleasure and not to any cognition of the object.”⁴⁵

Here, Kant seems to be convinced that the faculty of imagination, i.e., “the faculty of presentation,” is related to pleasure and that, right away, this latter refers to unspecified concepts. The faculty of imagination, given its intermediate position, “promotes” the faculty of concepts or of reason, which means that the first, as soon as the intuition occurs, immediately searches for a link to the faculties of understanding through which trying to attempt a sort of interpretation. Moreover, the spontaneous tendency inhabiting us turns the singular judgements — arising from pleasure and imagination, in agreement with understanding — into universal judgments, precisely moving from “the feeling of pleasure.” The quotation just reported, together with the brief analysis of it, supports a plausible reading of Kant’s imagination in terms of an hermeneutical structure for Heidegger’s description of *Dasein*. Imagination unconceals beings in their ‘*Bild*,’ in their possibility of appearance; while the ‘as structure’ describes the way *Dasein* addresses to the worldly horizon, the meaning that beings come to re-present because of *Dasein*’s activity. Precisely for this reason, then, Heidegger can state:

With the existence of human beings there occurs an irruption into the totality of beings, so that now the being in itself first becomes manifest, i.e., as being, in varying degrees, according to various levels of clarity, in various degrees of certainty. The prerogative, however, of not just being among other beings which are also at hand without these beings becoming manifest as such to themselves, but rather [of being] in the midst of the beings, *of being surrounded to it as such, and itself to have been delivered up as a being* — for this prerogative to exist harbours in itself the need to require the understanding of Being.”⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 128. Thanks to Khafiz Kerimov for the bibliographical references about Kant.

⁴⁶ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 160.

Heidegger is explicit in his intentions to deepen the metaphysical questioning moving towards an analysis on Being and, he suggests, it is the very existence of the human being to cause the possible misunderstanding of metaphysics, as a sort of irruption into the totality of beings. In other words, it is the presence and the way of living specifically belonging to human beings to set the distinctions between entities *as* entities and not as a whole. The thinker suggests that, with the appearance of the human being and their way of accessing the world, a discerning happens as well, that is, an interaction with single entities — distinguished one by one — occurs: in this sense, the entirety of *physis* comes to be interrupted. It is only by an ontological reflection then, by really thinking philosophically, that it is possible to grasp the underlying correlation assured by Being, to acknowledge an original co-belonging within which the metaphysical distinction may be established. To some extent, according to Heidegger, metaphysics and its issues are subsumed to the ontological questioning. In order to accomplish this task, he says that even the discourse — the *logos* — concerning the *anthropos* must change, that is, he outlines the non-necessity of a philosophical anthropology. And yet, the elaboration of the features characterizing *Dasein* moves from the faculties thematized, in this case, by Kant. Moreover: the hermeneutical synthesis expressed by the ‘as structure’ retraces and follows closely Kant’s account on transcendental imagination, i.e., Kant’s anthropology. What just claimed is attested by the connection Heidegger sees between *Dasein*’s existence as finitude and the understanding of Being. In fact, Heidegger’s account leads to the following statement:

“As a mode of Being, existence is in itself finitude, and as such it is only possible on the basis of the understanding of Being. There is and must be something like Being where finitude has come to exist.”⁴⁷

Existence is a way of being that is expressed in its finite dimension, that is, in its structurally temporal arrangement. Imagination is the faculty that shows human beings in their involvement with sensible experience, i.e., in their strictly temporal existence, in their finitude. And yet, the same feature moves *Dasein* further, pro-jects *Dasein* beyond the immediacy of the here and now:

⁴⁷ Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 160.

imagination orientates *Dasein* in the middle of entities. In other words, transcendental imagination is the outcome of a first elaboration of the encounter between the finitude of the human being with the limits of other beings. These borders, although hazy and subtle, legibly stand. And not only: such borders are the only unescapable possibility for our worldly existence.

5. *Has Heidegger succeeded in overcoming Kant's metaphysics?*

Heidegger leads his reasoning by opening his way in the midst of Kant's pages, observing Kant's movements of thought, trying to draw from Kant's words another perspective on the same issues treated by him, with the willingness to demonstrate how the metaphysics of his predecessor lacked of an actual ontological consideration. Nevertheless, in this deconstruction, the kind of construction proposed returns to the same point. In other words, in order to critique Kant, Heidegger is eager to avoid a philosophical anthropology, and yet is that same anthropology — although declined in terms of *Dasein* — that he needs to understand the human being's faculties, i.e., *Dasein* in their relation to *Sein*. In his unwearied endeavor to escape a predefined or already fixed metaphysical structure of the human being by bonding it to time — or, actually, to time as Being or to Being as time —, Heidegger is not able to avoid a sort of metaphysical reflection on *Dasein's* transcendental nature. This result would pose even more questions than effective answers, first of all interrogating the very possibility of a philosophical description of the human being completely interwoven to time without any atemporal dimension and, secondly, how this explanation would be brought forth lacking of a proper account on *Dasein's* ontological faculties.

In conclusion, moving from the analysis presented by Heidegger about Kant's first *Critique*, it is possible to deduce the relation he detects between imagination, finitude, and metaphysics, with a particular focus on the foundation of the latter. Therefore, under a certain aspect, one could claim that, through the investigation about imagination, at this point of his life Heidegger states a codependency between finitude and metaphysics, and also the unavoidability of metaphysics itself — an unavoidability he tries to overcome with his later philosophical

project. Moreover, such an inevitableness is shown to be rooted in the philosophical anthropology presented by thinkers like Kant but escaped by Heidegger who, in fact, claims to be willing to think beyond these terms. Nevertheless, as demonstrated, he seems to be still dwelling in such a philosophical framework. In later writings, Heidegger will address imagination indicating it as the very source of representation, hence as the place for entities to be represented and “come to the fore” or, said otherwise, “come to presence.”⁴⁸ Imagination, thus, keeps assuming a pivotal role until, at least, the end of the Thirties. However, it remains questionable if Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant suits the intentions of Kant and his project alike. Most of all it is still dubitable if, in these works, Heidegger actually succeeds in completely overcoming Kant’s metaphysics.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Volume III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics. Volume IV: Nihilism*, 29.

⁴⁹ I would like to thank Marco Cavazza, PhD candidate at the University Cà Foscari of Venice, for the rich and fruitful conversations that helped me clarify the topics for the present paper.

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