

## **The Aesthetic Dimension of Moral Faith**

One of the best-known questions Kant poses towards the end of the 'First Critique', which concludes his whole critical project, is "What may I hope?" (A805/B833) The answer should constitute the fundamental condition for man's ability to act in the world in light of the moral ideal. Put differently, Kant argues that one must hope, as a moral demand, that the moral ideal, the Highest Good, is indeed a practical possibility. The point, which in itself is interesting, if problematic, is that Kant links that practical possibility to the presupposition of the existence of God.

The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between the essential presupposition of God's existence and the ability to act morally from the aesthetic standpoint as it presented in the Critique of the Power of Judgment. This examination is highly different from the common interpretations on that relationship which mostly refer to Kant's discussion of the postulates of practical reason as it being presented in his 'First' and 'Second' Critiques. There Kant argues that although it is theoretically impossible to know God, His idea having no corresponding object in the world, the postulate of God's existence plays an essential regulative role in giving unity and organization to the world. One problem arising from Kant's discussion of the postulates is connected precisely to this claim, that it is a practical proof rather than theoretical, which means that the actualization of the moral ideal becomes a matter of faith rather than knowledge.

By focusing on the 'Third Critique', I wish to illuminate Kant's moral proof of God through the aesthetic prism, by demonstrating the affinity between the moral faith and the aesthetic experience of beauty in nature. My intention is not to identify the two, but rather to offer an interpretative direction: the necessity of the aesthetic experience of beauty in nature for the ability to give meaning to moral faith thus, to show that there is a sense where God can be inferred from our experience of such moral faith.

## Aesthetic Judgement and the double nature of Stimmung in Kant

In the Critique of Judgement, the key terms through which Kant describes the state and process of aesthetic judgement are Stimmung and Stimme. The free play of sensibility and understanding produces an enlivening accord (Zusammenstimmung) between the individual representation and the conditions for the universal, composing the Gemütsstimmung of aesthetic judgement which postulates nothing but the ideal existence of the universal voice (allgemeine Stimme).

A frequent feature of accounts of the Western philosophical tradition has been the description and the critique of sight centred interpretations of truth and knowledge. The Enlightenment is often pointed out as zenith for this perceptual and epistemological grid. The history of the ear however, has mostly been placed in the background. This could be one reason why the sonorous concepts presenting aesthetic judgement has not gained much attention. The question that sets the tone for this paper joins otherwise separated levels within discourse, such as Kant's discussions of tone and the form of sensations in music (harmony, melody) and the explication of the form of aesthetic judgement.

What unites Stimmung as a pitch of an instrument and as a philosophical concept denoting sensitiveness and the transcendental disposition of the Gemüt? Thematised in its duplicity as both a formal dynamic that decide our feeling of the beautiful and as a sensuous phenomenon related to the materiality of sensation, the figure of Stimmung opens for a renegotiation of Kant's systematizing separations of feeling/reflection and sensibility/understanding. The aim of this paper is, by attending to the complexity of Stimmung, to flesh out a less explored facet of the Kantian subject, rooting it not just in thinking and reason but also in sensibility and the body.