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Edited by Connell Vaughan and Iris Vidmar

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The Felt Syllogism of Taste – a Reading of Kant's Sensus Communis

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ABSTRACT. The Kantian judgment of taste famously claims necessary universality. To ground this claim, Kant introduces the *sensus communis*. Moreover, the *sensus communis* is also supposed to solve a certain paradox consisting of non-conceptuality and necessary universality. However, how exactly it can serve these functions is unclear and highly disputed. In this article, I will suggest that the *sensus communis* should be interpreted in analogy to the categories and the principles of pure reason: Including the disposition for a cognition in general, the *sensus communis* has a kind of *a priori* and transcendental status. Moreover, it functions as the major premise in a quasi-syllogism whose minor premise is the pleasure being felt and whose conclusion is the judgment of taste. This is only a felt syllogism or quasi-syllogism because its premises are non-conceptual.

The *sensus communis* (SC) is one of the core elements of Kant's theory of beauty, as it is supposed to explain why the judgment of taste is endowed with necessary universality. It is also the object of great confusion, for both what it is and its role in the judgment of taste remain highly opaque. In this article, I will focus on the role of the SC. It is my overall aim to demonstrate that it functions as the major premise in a quasi-syllogism and has an analogous status to a transcendental and *a priori* principle. Thereby I will

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make intelligible why the SC provides the judgment of taste with necessary universality. I will proceed as follows: In the first section I will unfold a certain paradox concerning the fact that the judgment of taste is endowed with necessary universality while being non-conceptual. In the second section I will explore what the SC consists of. Therefore, I will investigate its two components of being a ‘sense’ and being ‘communal’. In the third section I will make a digression to Kant’s theoretical philosophy by investigating the role of the *categories* and the *principles of pure reason*. I will show that they function as the major premise in a syllogism, which yields a necessary universal judgment of experience as its conclusion. In the fourth section I will draw a parallel between the role of the SC and the role of the categories. I will suggest the SC also functions as the major premise in a quasi-syllogism, which yields a necessary and universal judgment of taste as its conclusion. This syllogism is only a *quasi-syllogism* because its premises are non-conceptual and non-propositional.

1. The Paradox of Non-Conceptuality and Necessary Universality

In the *Analytic of the Beautiful* Kant puts forward an analysis of the judgment “x is beautiful”, i.e., the judgment of taste. He starts this analysis by characterizing this judgment as *aesthetic*. Thereby, he roughly means that the predicate “is beautiful” expresses a state of feeling of the subject – namely, a state of (disinterested) pleasure – and that the judgment “x is beautiful” can only be justified by relying on that same pleasure. The fact that the judgment of taste has the status of being an aesthetic judgment

implies several further characterizations, which can be subsumed under the label of *non-conceptuality*:

- The predicate “is beautiful” is non-conceptual: it is not a concept by which a property of the object or the judging subject is grasped. (Still, it is a kind of concept by which we grasp our current state of pleasure.)
- The judgment of taste cannot be derived from a (conceptual and objective) principle, i.e., a principle of the form “All objects that possess the property p are beautiful”.
- The pleasure in the beautiful itself is not obtained by a concept: it is neither directly evoked by a concept nor is it based on a property of the beautiful object that could be grasped conceptually.

The non-conceptuality of the judgment of taste would not pose any problems if this judgment – just like the judgments about the agreeable – were only endowed with private validity. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Rather, the judgment of taste is endowed with universal validity or universality and, furthermore, it is endowed with necessity or, rather, “necessity of universal assent” (CJ: 239),² i.e., *necessary universality*. But this leads to a kind of paradox: the judgment of taste is non-conceptual, but also necessarily universal. For how could a judgment – within a Kantian

² Citations to the *Critique of Judgment* (CJ), the *Logic* (Log) and the *Prolegomena* (Prol) are to the page number of the ‘Akademieausgabe’, citations to the *Critique of Pure Reason* (CPR) to the A/B page numbers of the first and second editions.

framework – be endowed with necessary universality if it is neither itself a conceptual, objective and *a priori* principle or derived from such a principle? At the least, Kant's aesthetics, as put forward in the *Critique of Judgment*, is nothing but an attempt to provide an answer to this question and, thus, to solve the paradox of non-conceptuality and necessary universality. As this answer is developed in multiple steps all over the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*, I cannot deal with all of its facets in this article. Rather, I will focus on one element of this answer which is put forward in the fourth moment of the *Analytic of the Beautiful*. In this moment Kant reveals *necessity* as the modality which holds for judgments of taste. Having characterized this necessity as “exemplary”, “subjective” and “conditioned” (CJ: 237), he identifies the (aesthetic) *sensus communis* as “[t]he condition of the necessity that is alleged by a judgment of taste” (CJ: 237). Obviously, the SC is supposed to explain how and why the judgment of taste can rightfully claim necessary universality. In that way, it is supposed to help solve the paradox of non-conceptuality and necessary universality. In order to better explain this role of the SC, I will seek to answer the following questions:

- i. What is the SC? And what does the SC consist of?
- ii. Why is the SC called a “subjective principle” (CJ: 238)?
- iii. How does the SC function so that it can provide the judgment of taste with necessary universality?

- iv. How does the SC help solve the paradox of non-conceptuality and necessary universality?

Even though it is not the main topic of this article, I will also touch on the following question:

- v. In what sense is the judgment of taste a synthetic judgment *a priori*?

2. How to Interpret the *Sensus Communis*

Unfortunately, Kant is far from clear on what exactly the SC is. Stepping away from the Kantian text, a *sensus communis* must contain two elements: (1) it should be a faculty that is somehow associated with sensibility (*sensus*), and (2) it should be common to all people, i.e., every human being should possess this faculty, it should function the same way and lead to the same results (*communis*).³ In what follows I will briefly illustrate both of these aspects.

The aspect of sensibility: Kant claims that the aesthetic SC is a better candidate for a common sense than the common or healthy understanding, “if indeed one would use the word ‘sense’ of an effect of mere reflection on the mind: for there one means by ‘sense’ the feeling of pleasure” (CJ: 295). Thus, the word “sense” in “*sensus communis*” refers to the feeling of

³ Zhouhuang calls these elements ‘extensional universality’ and ‘intensional emotionality’ (Zhouhuang 2016, p. 77).

pleasure: the SC is a faculty to have a certain feeling – namely, the pleasure in the beautiful. Whenever we experience a pleasure in the beautiful, this pleasure is an instantiation of this faculty. This fits well with Kant's saying that by the SC "we do not mean any external sense but rather the effect of the free play of our cognitive powers" (CJ: 238); for, the effect of the free play is nothing but the pleasure in the beautiful.⁴ To be more precise, the state of the free play of the imagination and the understanding is characterized by an "animation of both faculties" (CJ: 219). Only due to this can we experience the free play as a feeling of pleasure.⁵ In that spirit Kant claims in § 21 that the SC is a disposition of the cognitive powers "in which this inner relationship is optimal for the *animation* of both powers of the mind (the one through the other) with respect to cognition [...] in general; and this disposition *cannot be determined except through feeling*" (CJ: 238 f.; my emphasis).⁶ So, the SC as the faculty of the pleasure in the beautiful must be characterized by an animation of the imagination and the understanding – and it is this animation which is the reason for the SC being 'determined...through feeling'.⁷

⁴ See CJ: 218 f.

⁵ I hold the theory that every inner activity (of our organs as well as our intellectual faculties), when being enlivening, is experienced as a feeling of pleasure, i.e., a "feeling of life" (CJ: 204). For similar interpretations see Allison 2001, p. 122; Guyer 2018, pp. 158-162; Makreel 1997, pp. 119-130.

⁶ Unlike some interpreters I assume that in § 21 the *sensus communis* is to be understood solely as an *aesthetic* faculty, precisely because Kant refers to the 'animation of the powers of the mind' which is central to the free play of the faculties (for contrary positions see Allison 2001, pp. 154 f.; Fricke 1990, pp. 168 ff.).

⁷ See CJ: 238, f., 295

The aspect of communality: There are feelings, and faculties to have certain feelings, which are not communal, e.g., all pleasures in the agreeable and the corresponding faculty – namely, “the taste of the senses” (CJ: 214). That every human being merely possesses the same faculty, does not automatically render it communal. Rather, this faculty should function in every human being the same way and should lead to the same outcome given the same situation. Following Kant’s argumentation in § 21, it is the notion of “the disposition of the cognitive powers for a cognition in general” (CJ: 238) which is the basis of the communality of the SC.⁸ We should distinguish two questions: What exactly is ‘the disposition for a cognition in general’? And why should it be communal? Kant’s answer to the second question is that the ‘proportion...for a cognition in general’ is the “subjective condition of cognizing” (CJ: 238). If it were not present in a judging subject, she would not gain any cognition. Now, “[c]ognitions [...] must [...] be able to be universally communicated” (CJ: 238) – otherwise skepticism would prevail. For cognitions to be universally communicable, the conditions being necessary for every cognition must be universally communicable as well and so must the subjective condition of cognizing. Being ‘universally communicable’ means that every subject can *participate* in the ‘subjective condition for cognizing’,⁹ i.e., every subject has the same

⁸ See also CJ: 290 Fn.

⁹ In 18th century German the word ‘mitteilen’ (communicating) has the basic meaning of sharing something or letting someone participate in something, which is confirmed by Adelung’s *Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der hochdeutschen Mundart*: „Theil an etwas nehmen lassen, einen Theil seines Eigenthumes einem andern übertragen, demselben eigen machen, am häufigsten von Dingen, welche man andern ohne Lohn oder Vergeltung eigen macht“ (Adelung 1808, p. 251).

state of ‘proportion’ of her intellectual faculties ‘for a cognition in general’ when cognizing. In this way the subjective condition for cognizing is *communal*; but what is a ‘the disposition for a cognition in general’? Kant also calls it an “agreement of the two powers of the mind” (CJ: 295).¹⁰ This ‘agreement’, I submit, should be understood as:

- i.a unification of both faculties, in terms of the forms apprehended by the imagination being subsumed under a (determinate or indeterminate) concept of the understanding. Thus, the ‘proportion for a cognition in general’ signifies the agreement of both faculties in an activity of *subsumption*.¹¹
- ii.a state of *purposive interaction of the imagination and the understanding*. In that manner Kant speaks of the “internally purposive disposition of our cognitive faculties” (CJ: 259).¹²
- iii.*the faculty of judgment as functioning properly*. For, “[t]he subjective condition of all judgments is the faculty of judging itself, or the power of judgment. This, employed with regard to a representation by means of which an object is given, requires the *agreement* of two powers of representation: namely, the

¹⁰ See also CJ: 217, 219, 256; FI: 220

¹¹ See: “And this [disposition of the cognitive powers for a cognition in general; L.B.] actually happens every time when, by means of the senses, a given object brings the imagination into activity for the synthesis of the manifold, while the imagination brings the understanding into activity for the unification of the manifold into concepts” (CJ: 238).

¹² See also CJ: 295, 344, 350

imagination [...], and the understanding [...]" (CJ: 287; my emphasis).

Relying on this, the SC as including the 'proportion for a cognition in general' is constituted by a state of subsumption, of purposive interaction, and of a proper-functioning faculty of judgment. Such a 'proportion for a cognition in general' makes up another characteristic of the free and harmonious play of the faculties.¹³ Hence, once again, the SC can be understood as "the effect of the free play of our cognitive powers" (CJ: 238).

All in all, the SC being a 'sense' means that it is the ability to have a feeling of pleasure and that this pleasure is based on the aspect of 'animation' in the free play of the faculties. The 'communality' of the SC is based on the proportion for a cognition in general that is included in the free play.¹⁴ Both aspects belong to the same mental state – namely, the free and harmonious play of the faculties. Thus, in the SC – the 'effect of the free play' – the aspects of being a sense and of being communal are united, which is just to say that the SC is the faculty to have a communal or universal feeling of pleasure.

¹³ See CJ: 217 f.

¹⁴ It is important to take into account both aspects of the SC in order to understand it as the specific principle of judgments of taste. If, however, one focuses on the aspect of communality, one will easily make the SC "the objective principle of the faculty of judgment", which "is presupposed in all judgments" (Crawford 1974, p. 130 f.).

3. The Role of the Principles of Pure Reason for Judgments of Experience

Kant identifies the SC as the “subjective principle” of the judgment of taste (CJ: 238). In order to understand this role I will, via analogy, make a digression to the role of the (objective) principles of pure reason for judgments of experience. I will primarily focus on Kant’s analysis of judgments of experience as put forward in the *Prolegomena*.¹⁵ Kant unfolds this analysis by contrasting judgments of experience with judgments of perception. Both kinds of judgments are empirical, i.e., “they have their basis in the immediate perception of the senses” (Prol: 297). However, unlike judgments of perception, judgments of experience can rightfully claim “necessary universality” because they “demand [...] special concepts originally generated in the understanding” (Prol: 298), i.e., the *categories* of pure reason. Here, I am primarily interested in how we apply the categories to a judgment of perception, thereby creating a judgment of experience. As is well known, the categories themselves cannot be applied to perception, because being pure concepts they are too different in kind.¹⁶ Thus, they must be mediated by a *schema* which is “intellectual on the one hand and sensible on the other” (CPR: A138/B177). Still, the schema cannot be applied to perception immediately, but only as being included in the so-called *principles of pure reason*. But how exactly do we apply the principles

¹⁵ I explicitly do not want to dig into the problematic status of the distinction between judgments of perception and judgments of experience. For an overview see Prien 2015, p. 535.

¹⁶ See CPR: A137 f./B176 f.

of pure reason to perception? Kant writes: “A completely different judgment [...] occurs before experience can arise from perception” (Prol: 300). It is obvious that this ‘completely different judgment’ is a *principle of pure reason* and that Kant refers to the subsumption of the given perception under categories. Following Michael Wolff, I take Kant to describe in the passage just quoted the following form of a *syllogism*:¹⁷

Major premise: principle of pure reason (containing a category)

Minor premise: instance of perception (judgment of perception)

Conclusion: judgment of experience

That we should assume such a syllogism can be confirmed by a proper understanding of the term “principle” in Kant. Broadly understood, every cognition that serves as the major premise in a syllogism is a principle – such judgments are principles because of their *usage*; narrowly understood, only synthetic cognitions *a priori* that serve as major premises in a syllogism are principles – such judgments are principles, i.e., first beginnings, because of their *origin*.¹⁸ In any case, the principles of pure reason function as major premises in syllogisms – and being synthetic cognitions *a priori* they even fulfil the requirements for principles in the narrow sense.

Now, the crucial question is: how does all of this explain why the judgment of experience is endowed with necessary universality? I suppose that this status is due, firstly, to the fact that this judgment is the conclusion

¹⁷ See Wolff 2012, p. 145.

¹⁸ See CPR: A148/B188, A300 f./B356 ff.

of a syllogism, i.e., an inference of reason. For “[a]n inference of reason is the cognition of the *necessity* of a proposition through the subsumption of its condition under a given universal rule” (Log: 120; my emphasis). Secondly, the conclusion’s status of necessary universality is due to the fact that it was derived from a *synthetic judgment a priori* (a principle in the narrow sense), which is famously characterized by “[n]ecessity and strict universality” (CPR: B4). The principles of pure reason and the categories are the preconditions of experience – Kant calls the latter the “formal and objective condition[s] of experience” (CPR: A96 & A223/B271) – and, thus, *a priori*.

We should keep the following in mind: judgments of experience are necessarily universal because (a) we gain them by an inference in a syllogism and because (b) the major premise of this syllogism is a principle *a priori* which includes a category, i.e., an objective condition of cognition.

4. The *Sensus Communis* as the Major Premise in a Quasi-Syllogism

We should turn back to judgments of taste and the SC. Kant argues that judgments of taste must have “a subjective principle” (CJ: 238). I propose that we should take this talk of a ‘*principle*’ seriously: we should assume that judgments of taste are derived from a principle that is the major premise in a syllogism. (Remember that in both its broad and narrow meaning the term “principle” signifies the major premise in a syllogism.) Now, it is the SC which functions as the subjective principle of judgments of taste and, hence, as the major-premise in the syllogism whose conclusion is the

judgment of taste.¹⁹ But what about the minor premise? Taking into account that the major premise is the faculty to have the pleasure in the beautiful, the minor premise can be nothing but the pleasure in the beautiful as being felt by the subject.²⁰ All in all, we can reconstruct the following form of a syllogism:

Major premise: *sensus communis*

Minor premise: instance of the pleasure in the beautiful

Conclusion: “x is beautiful”

Obviously, this syllogism is quite different from any ordinary syllogism. For the SC is not a proposition, but a faculty that is a “*matter of sensation*” (CJ: 291; my emphasis) and, therefore, non-conceptual. Moreover, the minor premise is also not propositional, but is an *instance of feeling*. Hence, the peculiarity of the syllogism consists in the fact that we subsume an instance of feeling under a faculty, which is a ‘matter of sensation’. Therefore, I will call this syllogism a “*quasi-syllogism*.”

Two questions may arise: (1) How can we apply the SC to an instance of pleasure? Do we need – here, too, – something like a ‘schema’ that mediates between the two? (2) Why does this quasi-syllogism yield the conclusion “x is beautiful”? At which point does the beautiful object enter

¹⁹ See CJ: 238

²⁰ This fits well with the minor premise in general including an instance of the condition that is expressed in the major premise (see Log: 120); for the pleasure in the beautiful as being felt is an instance of the SC, i.e., the faculty to have the feeling of pleasure in the beautiful.

into the story?

(1) How can we apply a *faculty* to a *feeling*? It seems as if the two are too different in kind and that we are in need of something like a ‘schema’ which mediates between them. I suggest that this mediating role can be fulfilled by *the pleasure in the beautiful generally understood*.²¹ The pleasure in the beautiful generally understood equally bears a relation to the SC – the faculty to have a pleasure in the beautiful – and to felt instances of this pleasure. Thus, it can take over the same basic mediating role as the ordinary Kantian schemata.

(2) Since the conclusion of the quasi-syllogism is the judgment “*x* is beautiful”, the object *x* should somehow be included in the minor premise, i.e., in the pleasure being felt. Yet if this pleasure was opaque – as Paul Guyer²² suggests – the minor premise would lack any connection to this object. This problem, however, does not arise if the pleasure is *intentionally* directed towards the object. In short, I interpret the following: The pleasure in the beautiful is nothing but the free play of the faculties inasmuch as it is felt. Moreover, the pleasure and the free play do not stand in a causal relation, but rather the pleasure is just what it is like to have a free play.²³ Therefore, if the free play is directed towards something, then the pleasure is equally directed towards that something, i.e., the pleasure too is intentional.

²¹ For an analogy think of a case in which a person identifies a feeling she currently feels as sadness. She might use her conception of sadness generally understood to mediate between her concept of sadness and her current feeling.

²² See Guyer 2018 and Guyer 1979, pp. 116-119

²³ For the so-called ‘causal reading’ see Guyer 1979, pp. 106-111. For a critique of the causal reading see Aquila 1982 and Allison 1998.

Now, the free play is an intellectual treatment of the given representation of the object and, hence, directed towards this object. Consequently, the pleasure, which is the minor premise, is also directed towards the object,²⁴ and this is where the object enters the syllogism.

Relying on our reactions to (1) and (2) we can now adjust the model of the form of the quasi-syllogism:

Major premise: *sensus communis* mediated by the pleasure in the beautiful generally understood

Minor premise: instance of the pleasure in the beautiful intentionally directed towards the object x

Conclusion: “x is beautiful”

Eventually, we are prepared to answer the question of how the judgment of taste gains the status of necessary universality. Concerning judgments of experience, I have shown that they are necessarily universal because (a) we

²⁴ The intentional understanding of pleasure in general can be confirmed by Kant’s explanation of “pleasure” as “[t]he consciousness of the causality of a representation with respect to the state of the subject, for maintaining it in that state” (CJ: 220). – In general, I defend the more sophisticated view of a double-directedness of the free play and the pleasure towards the beautiful object *and* the subject. Due to space limitations, I cannot unfold this view in this article. Note that there can be different understandings of the intentionality of the pleasure in the beautiful. For example, Allison takes the pleasure to be intentionally directed towards the harmony of the faculties (see Allison 2001, p. 53 f.). Similarly, Zuckert assumes a directedness towards the mental state of the subject, ‘but a state of reflecting on the object’s form’ (Zuckert 2002, p. 249). Thus, she proposes a kind of indirect directedness towards the object.

gain them by an inference in a syllogism and because (b) the major premise of this syllogism is an *a priori* principle which includes a category, i.e., an *objective condition of cognition*. As I just argued, we similarly yield judgments of taste by an inference in a quasi-syllogism. But surely the major premise of this quasi-syllogism, the SC, is not a synthetic judgment *a priori* – at least, it is not a judgment at all. Nonetheless, it has a very similar status. I argued that the SC's aspect of communality is based on the *proportion for a cognition in general* as being instantiated in the free play of the faculties. As already noted, this proportion for a cognition in general is the “subjective condition of cognizing” (CJ: 238), and, thus, it has a *transcendental function*. In this way it is very similar to the categories which are the ‘objective conditions of cognizing’. Hence, the SC including the ‘subjective condition of cognizing’ plays a similar role as the categories.²⁵ And even though it is not a *proposition* or a *concept*, it is very similar to a synthetic judgment *a priori* which takes over a transcendental function. This analogy can be confirmed by the following passage:

If, however, a judgment gives itself out to be universally valid and therefore asserts a claim to necessity, then, whether this professed necessity rests on concepts of the object *a priori* or on subjective conditions for concepts, which ground them *a priori*, it would be absurd, if one concedes to such a judgment a claim of this sort, to justify it by explaining the origin of the judgment psychologically (FI: 238).²⁶

²⁵ Kant himself several times parallels the role of the categories to the role of the subjective principle of taste respectively the SC. See CJ: 191, 287 f.

²⁶ See also: „if one evaluates it [the judgment of taste; L.B.] as one that may at the

Kant claims that the ‘subjective conditions for concepts’, which are clearly nothing but the subjective conditions for cognizing, have an *a priori* status. Thus, they are similar to the categories, i.e., the ‘concepts of the object *a priori*’. Like the categories, the subjective condition of cognizing is a precondition of cognition and, thus, universal and necessary; so is the SC. Hence, the ‘professed necessity’ of the judgment of taste rests on the SC as including the ‘subjective conditions for concepts’.

Finally, we have arrived at the point where we can fully unfold the analogy between the principles of pure reason and the SC. Once again, judgments of experience are necessarily universal because (a) we yield them by an inference in a syllogism and because (b) the major premise of this syllogism is an *a priori* principle which includes an *objective condition of cognition*. Analogously, judgments of taste are necessarily universal because (a) we yield them by an inference in a quasi-syllogism and because (b) the major premise of this quasi-syllogism includes the *subjective condition of cognition*.

Let me briefly show that my theory of the (quasi-)syllogism of taste makes Kant’s characterizations regarding the SC and the peculiar necessity claimed by judgments of taste much more intelligible. As already shown, it illuminates why Kant calls the SC a “subjective *principle*” (CJ: 238; my emphasis). Moreover, the theory of the (quasi-)syllogism explains why Kant calls the necessity of judgments of taste “exemplary, i.e., a necessity of the assent of everyone to a judgment that is regarded as an example of a

same time demand that everyone should consent to it, then it must be grounded in some sort of *a priori* principle (whether objective or subjective)” (CJ: 278; see similarly FI: 239).

universal rule that we are unable to state” (CJ: 237).²⁷ For the SC understood as a major premise does serve the function of a *rule*, but because it is non-conceptual and just “a matter of sensation” (CJ: 291) it *cannot be stated*. As Kant puts it, it is “the common sense, of whose judgment I [...] offer my judgment of taste as an example and on account of which I ascribe exemplary validity to it” (CJ: 239).²⁸

One objection: the theory of the quasi-syllogism seems to render the act of forming a judgment of taste too intellectualized and abstract. Thus, it seems to depart from our ordinary experiences of making judgments of taste. However, if we reduce this theory to its core idea, it clearly is not. What the quasi-syllogism stands for is nothing but the act of identifying and conceptually grasping a given pleasure *as a pleasure in the beautiful*. It is by this act that I identify the pleasure I feel as a pleasure in the beautiful (and not as a pleasure in the agreeable or the good) and by which I consequently apply the concept “beautiful”.²⁹ Hence, it is the act of identifying a pleasure

²⁷ See also CJ: 239

²⁸ When Wenzel discusses the notion of ‘exemplary necessity’ he refers to an ordinary syllogism (“by subsuming ‘Socrates’ under the concept ‘human,’ we can derive ‘Socrates is mortal’ from the premise ‘Humans are mortal’”; Wenzel 2008, p. 80). Despite he also links the SC to the notion of ‘exemplary necessity’, Wenzel does not seem to assume a syllogism or quasi-syllogism of taste.

²⁹ I defend a moderate version of the so-called ‘two acts model’. I neither think that the pleasure in the beautiful *is* the judgment of taste – a position held by Ginsborg (see Ginsborg 2015, p. 96) –, nor that *a second act of reflection* on the pleasure’s causal history is necessary to form a judgment of taste – a position held by Guyer (see Guyer 1979, pp. 110-119). For a recent discussion of the two different models see Guyer 2017 and Ginsborg 2017.

as a pleasure in the beautiful which is central to a judgment of taste being necessary and universal. Moreover, it is by this act that I *a priori* extend my pleasure to all human beings. I can do so, because I subsume my pleasure under the SC which is *communal*. Thus, it is the act of the subsumption in the quasi-syllogism through which the judgment of taste is rendered an *a priori* judgment, and it is the universality of the pleasure which is *a priori* added throughout this process. As Kant phrases it: “It is an empirical judgment that I perceive and judge an object with pleasure. But it is an *a priori* judgment that I find it beautiful, i.e., that I may require that satisfaction of everyone as necessary” (CJ: 289).

5. Concluding Remarks

In the first section of this article I put forward five questions. I will conclude by explicitly stating my answers to these questions. The first question was: what is the SC and what does it consist of? I have shown that the SC consists of two components – namely, being a ‘sense’ and being ‘communal’. As a faculty to have a feeling of pleasure, the SC can be characterized as a ‘sense’. This aspect can be traced back to the animation in the free play of the faculties. The aspect of being ‘communal’ is based on the free play of the faculties as including the proportion of the faculties for a cognition in general, which is the subjective condition of cognition and can be presupposed in every human being.

The second question was: why is the SC called a “subjective principle” (CJ: 238)? My answer to this question is that the SC functions as the major premise in a quasi-syllogism and bears a similar status as a

synthetic principle *a priori*, because it includes the subjective condition of cognition. Thus it is a principle in the narrow sense.

As a third question I asked: how does the SC function so that it can provide the judgment of taste with necessary universality? Here, I made use of the analogy between the SC and the principles of pure reason. I argued that the principles of pure reason function as major premises in syllogisms whose conclusions are judgments of perception. These conclusions are necessarily universal because (a) we yield them by an inference in a syllogism and because (b) the major premises of these syllogisms are principles *a priori* which include a category, i.e., an objective condition of cognition. Analogously, the SC functions as the major premise in a quasi-syllogism whose conclusion is the judgment of taste “x is beautiful”. This conclusion is endowed with necessary universality because (a) it was yielded by an inference in a quasi-syllogism and because (b) the major premise of this quasi-syllogism includes the *subjective* condition of cognition.

The fourth question was: how does the SC help solve the paradox of non-conceptuality and necessary universality? Remember that this question touches the core problem of Kant’s aesthetics. My answer to this question is that the SC is, on the one hand, non-conceptual because it is a faculty to have a feeling and belongs to sensibility; still, on the other hand it is similar to a synthetic judgment *a priori* because it includes the proportion for a cognition in general which has a transcendental function. Hence, it can provide the judgment of taste with necessary universality without challenging its status of non-conceptuality, i.e., without making the judgment of taste a derivation from a conceptual and objective principle and

without turning the predicate “is beautiful” into a concept by which a property of the object is grasped.

The final question was: in what sense is the judgment of taste a synthetic judgment *a priori*? My answer is that it is the universality of the pleasure in the beautiful which is added *a priori* to the judgment. And this universality is added by subsuming the pleasure I currently feel under the SC.

In the first section of this article I claimed that the paradox of non-conceptuality and necessary universality is unfolded in several steps. Let me highlight now that this paradox is not completely solved by the introduction of the SC. Still missing is a deduction of the SC, i.e., a proof that the SC really exists and is not a ‘figment of the mind’. This deduction is given much later in the *Critique of Judgment* – namely, in § 39. Even though this section is beyond the scope of this article, the sheer fact that there is such a deduction of the SC makes the analogy between the SC and the categories even stronger; for famously, the categories also require a deduction.

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