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The Architectonic of Intermediacy.
The Dynamics of Faculties in the System of Transcendental Idealism

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

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SUMMARY

Modernity seems to have settled, in the logic of history, under the form of a project of separation. The legacy of the Enlightenment¹ seems to take shape, in the shadow of the savagery and inhumanity of the last century, as an irresponsible and endless tyranny of the separating intellect, which could see in nature or in man nothing but a chaotic and heterogeneous mass that must be rationally organized and, implicitly, hierarchized. The victory of reason has not succeeded in making possible the promised way out of nonage, but it has succeeded in portraying a triumph of calamity instead of one of moral vocation, which should have sketched the portrait of a new world. In the shadow of such an inheritance, the Kantian project may present itself to a contemporary mind, at first sight, as separation par excellence.

Of history we will keep silent. But, as far as Kant's thought is concerned, we want to argue that the legacy of the system of critical philosophy is not *separation*, but *unity* understood as the possibility of a grounding that does not enclose. The division is, for Kant, merely a methodological compromise initially necessary for the grounding (of the domains of nature, freedom, truth, etc.), which is taken up, each time and without exception, in the form of a unity of another order. The architectonic debt produced by the violence of distinction always produces a *triton genos* that not only overcomes the logic of separation but makes it possible.

The system of the three *Critiques* contains, therefore, in the form of a *dynamic*² of faculties, a continuous management of the thinking subject's unity. We consider that this can be recovered and reconstituted within the framework of an *architectonic of intermediacy* of the system of critical philosophy. The method by which such a reconstitution can take place involves, in an initial step, identifying the moments of the system's central divisions,

¹ We have in mind the argument of M. Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno from *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente* (1944)

² From *δυναμικός* (*dunamikós*), meaning of the study and calculation of motion according to the laws of force; applied, in this case, to the system of faculties.

followed by outlining the resulting architectonic debt, and finally, by capturing and reconstructing the way in which Kant articulates a transgression of the principle of separation.

Kant is a founder through the way he separates, but profound through the way he unites. The true measure and legacy of Kantian philosophy is not so much the *separation*, that is, the *grounding*, but the *unity* and its *order*. The gesture of separation is, in a sense, the result of a methodological compromise necessary to grounding, but which is always recovered *at* and *as* the limit of a unity of another order, through an *als ob* that makes the very logic of separation possible. The function of a dynamic of intermediation takes shape within the system of critical philosophy in the form of the possibility of a *grounding that opens*, in contrast to one that would *confine* thought within the conditioned and freedom outside of nature.

Kant acquires *truth*, but not at the cost of a finished and closed nature in a mere categorical coherence with itself and nothing else. The second *Critique* acquires *the good* (*das Gute*), but not at the cost of a hope that can't take place in this world. Lastly, the rational will gains the possibility of a harmony between nature and freedom, which, determined as aesthetic experience – which is not mere separation – shapes nothing else than the sense of its own supersensible vocation. The power of judgment, by means of which the fracture between the universal and the particular can be overcome in the form of an architectonic of the beautiful, has also produced, through its reflexivity, the sense of a purposiveness of nature in which the final end of creation is established as the rational will itself as the subject of morality, closing the Kantian system with the possibility of a hope that the *final end of nature can only be freedom*.

The first *Critique* was therefore able to ground the domain of truth. The initial price of the grounding was shaped, within the *Analytic*, through the separation between receptivity and spontaneity or, more precisely, between the subject and the predicate of discursive thought. Kant manages such a separation by means of a transcendental imagination which, in the form of the dynamics of a *triton genos*, makes the very logic of separation possible. The architectonic of discursivity does not imply a hierarchy of faculties, but rather takes shape around a topic that reclaims, as intermediacy, the fact that thinking is not an archetypal understanding, but neither a radical nor heterogeneous separation.

If the topic of imagination is the degree in which the *Analytic* engages the architectonic debt of the separation of sensibility and understanding, then the *Dialectic* is the point in which the management of the interplay between the conditioned and the unconditioned is articulated as a dynamic of rational and systematic unity (*systematische Einheit*). Intellectual unity has produced, following the *Analytic*, the possibility of a lawful nature, but by enclosing thought hermetically within its own conditions of possibility. The function of the *Dialectic* has thus become not merely the portrayal of reason's ideas as chimeras producing transcendental illusions, but rather the delineation of the necessity of complementing intellectual unity with their system. This takes shape as a rational unity which, through the prosyllogistic progression in the series of conditions, has completed intellectual unity – making thought worthy of a science that does not enclose, as well as nature worthy of the hope of a rational will capable of determining its intelligible causality within it. The very central contrast of the *Dialectic*, in the form of the dynamic between the constitutive and the regulative, has been transgressed in its limit through a subjective and unconditional necessity of systematic unity (*systematische Einheit*), which established, as openness, the meaning of a truth that was outlined as the unconditioned that makes the series of conditions possible.

The *Critique of Practical Reason*, on the other hand, considering a single faculty, more precisely the practical dimension of a reason already articulated within the framework of the first *Critique*, did not consider a dynamic of the relationship between faculties, but rather the foundation of distinct domains. The second *Critique* is not merely a delineation of the domain of freedom and the conditions of morality in the form of the categorical imperative, but rather a grounding of these through a dynamic whereby the subject's dual citizenship does not become schizophrenia, and through which nature can remain, in a different order than that of the logic of its foundation, permeable to the intelligible, as well as freedom permeable to truth. The grounding of truth presupposed a double interplay of the dynamics of closing and opening, where its possibility initially implied the closure of nature within itself, only to reopen by means of an unconditioned reason which, presenting itself as the possibility of a will to ground the latter through an intelligible causality, pays the price of being able to contradict itself within its own conditions of possibility. The establishment of freedom, therefore, had to manage, through the form and matter of its architectonic, a sense of morality that describes a return of the unconditioned to itself, as otherwise conditioned, through a manner in which rational will retains the hope that it can remain coherent with its own unconditioned conditions of possibility, within a conditioned nature. Freedom, as a

result of such a dynamic, became *the series of conditions that make the unconditioned of the will possible*, and the consideration of a clinical rupture between the domain of nature and that of freedom merely captured a deeper unity between them.

The complete management of the architectonic debts could only take place within the framework of the last *Critique*, through the delineation of the topic of a power of judgment, which was articulated as the point of mediation between the particular and the universal, and between the conditioned and the unconditioned, within a discursive understanding. The power of judgment, through its aesthetic reflexivity, has produced an architectonic of the beautiful, which, aiming at the legality of the understanding *as if* it were free, through an imagination that can freely play with the form of the latter, becomes a symbol of morality itself, in the form of a dynamic of reflexivity through which beauty becomes the freedom within law and the legality within freedom. The teleological power of judgement on the other hand, becomes the true conclusion of the Kantian system, identifying the possibility of a reflexivity that must, in its judgment, involve, in order to avoid closing truth within a dead nature, another type of causality – more precisely, that of final causes.

The power of judgment thus emerges, through the possibility of thinking of an archetypal understanding, as that which recovers, in a certain sense, the rupture between sensibility and understanding, and, consequently, between the particular and the universal. It becomes the site of an intermediation in which the fact that, in discursive thinking, the particular is not contained in the universal (i.e., the concept) and therefore cannot be analytically derived from it, is managed – alongside the recognition that a mind presupposing total separation would amount to an architectonic impossibility. Thought is neither absolute unity nor absolute separation. The faculty of judgment, especially through its reflexivity, is a *triton genos* that recovers, in an order other than that of the logic of separation, unity in the form of a mode of thinking that can nonetheless see the universal in the particular and, through its determinative judgment, can subsume the particular under the universal – though not in an analytic or productive way. Intermediation takes on the architectonic dynamics of an *als ob*, more precisely, in this case, of the purposiveness of nature (*die Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur*), but also of its systematicity (*systematische Einheit*).

The architectonic of purposiveness not only succeeds in managing the rupture between the particular and the universal within the framework of discursive thought, but by establishing the final end of creation as the unconditioned of the rational will, the

Methodology permanently closes the architectonic debt of systematicity and moral faith, producing the meaning of a nature whose final end is freedom itself. The system of Kant's philosophy thus closes with the hope that the human being is itself the *als ob* of the unconditioned, which determines itself as nature:

"The epilogue of the *Critique of the Power Judgment* is the Platonic vision: the universe is the sensible manifestation of Good, of Freedom, which is the intelligible principle of all things. It is only through freedom that reason, which is also spontaneity, goes beyond the sensible and knows the intelligible ground practically and contemplatively. *A theoretical knowledge would subordinate man to the Divine, thus suppressing, along with autonomy, morality. The Noumenon itself, as morality, prevents speculative knowledge from accessing itself. The intelligible is a mystery to understanding, precisely in order to preserve human freedom*; it is, however, lived in sanctity, in the purity of conscience, in the free act, Freedom is the essence of the world. Metaphysics is either ethically grounded or not possible at all."³

There is no abyss emerging between the starry heavens above us and the moral law within us, but rather an ever new and growing admiration and awe at the fact that we can grasp freedom in the heavens and law in our freedom.

³ Translated by the author. Original text: "Epilogul *Criticii facultății de judecare* este viziunea platonice: universul e manifestarea sensibilă a Binelui, a Libertății, care e principiul inteligibil al tuturor lucrurilor. Numai prin libertate, rațiunea, care e și ea spontaneitate, depășește sensibilul și cunoaște practic și contemplativ fundamentul inteligibil. *O cunoaștere teoretică ar subordona omul Divinității și astfel ar suprima, odată cu autonomia, morală. Însuși Noumenalul, ca moralitate, oprește accesul la sine cunoștinței speculative. Inteligibilul e un mister față de intelect, tocmai pentru a respecta libertatea omului*; el e însă trăit în sfințenie, în puritatea conștiinței, în actul liber, Libertatea este esența lumii. Metafizica sau e fundată etic sau nu e posibilă." Mircea Florian, *Studiu introductiv*, in *Critica facultății de judecare* by I. Kant, trans. Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu & Alexandru Surdu, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucharest 1981, p. 28

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