Judgments of Taste - Transcedental Experience or Neuropsychological Process

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SVEUČILIŠTE U RIJECI
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Judgments of Taste – Transcendental Experience or Neuropsychological Process

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SUMMARY

The problematic relation between the judging and the pleasure presented in §9 of the Critique of the Power of Judgment (CPJ) is announced by Kant as the key to the critique of taste, but it is also the key to the question of whether or not can Kant's aesthetic theory be subjected to empirical investigation. The latter question separated Kant scholars into two camps: (1) scholars who advocate empirical interpretation of the CPJ and claim that Kantian aesthetics can be amenable to scientific investigation and (2) scholars who advocate transcendental interpretation of the CPJ and claim that Kantian aesthetics cannot be grasped by empirical sciences. In this paper I shall present two distinct reading of the §9 – one-act and two-act reading. In accordance to these readings, I shall examine which interpretation – empirical or transcendental – is doing more justice to Kant's theory as presented in the third Critique.

Key words: *aesthetic experience, Critique of the Power of Judgment, empirical interpretation, Immanuel Kant, neuroaesthetics, transcendental interpretation*

1. INTRODUCTION

Imagine that you are standing in front of the Pablo Picasso's *Weeping Woman*[1]. Facing this painting, a feeling of pleasure arises, but a kind of feeling that is not concerned with any interest towards the artwork and its aesthetic properties. This disinterested feeling arises from the harmonious state of mind, free from conceptual constraints. Perceiving the angular and overlapping fragments on the painting, we feel the coordination of our cognitive faculties, a play between the myriad of concepts and the faculty which synthesizes sense data. Faculties coordinate with each other, yet without finding an appropriate concept for the distorted object (i.e. woman's face). Thus, the play carries a variety of interpretation which cannot be synthesized adequately. Here the concept "face" enters the synthesis, but it is not being applied to the object of the painting. All humans share identical cognitive faculties, and therefore the same process of the play is elicited when judging the *Weeping Woman*. Consequentially, when one judge: "Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful.", one expects that due to the same structure of human cognitive apparatus, everyone engaged with this painting *ought* to feel the same feeling of pleasure and agree with the aesthetic judgment.



[1] The „Weeping Woman" (Tate Collection) is an oil on canvas painted by Pablo Picasso in 1937. It is the last and the most elaborate work from a serie of portraits of weeping women, that followed Picasso's „Guernica". Some others include: "*Weeping Woman*" (1937, oil on canvas, National Gallery, Victoria); "*Weeping Woman*" (1937, oil on canvas, Musee Picasso, Paris); "*Weeping Woman*" (1937, Graphite and crayon on paper, Tate Collection); "*Weeping Woman*" studies (1937, pen and Indian ink on paper, Musee Picasso, Paris).

The presented example sums up the aesthetic theory of Immanuel Kant, as presented in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment (CPJ)*. Given that the whole theory is based on the activity of our cognitive faculties, one can presuppose that it can be psychologically and biologically tested. On the other hand, Kant's notion of aesthetic experience is somewhat obscure, as it is not grounded on concepts, but on a subjective feeling. However, it is not clear which stage comes first: whether the feeling of pleasure precedes the judging of the object (i.e. the activity of our faculties) or the judging precedes the pleasure. This issue, discussed in §9 of the *CPJ,* presents not only a problem that needs to be solved in order to fully understand Kant's theory, but it also withdraws the question: *Is Kant's aesthetics amenable to empirical investigation, or is it something that cannot be explained in terms of natural sciences?* For it is not clear whether the judgment "Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful." is a result of the activity of psychological mechanisms that underlie all human experiences, or is it a transcendental experience with features that cannot be psychologically explained.

Scholars do not offer a univocal answer. Rather, the debate separated Kant scholars into two camps: (1) scholars who advocate empirical interpretation of the *CPJ* and claim that Kantian aesthetics can be subjected to empirical scientific investigation and (2) scholars who advocate transcendental interpretation of the *CPJ* and claim that Kantian aesthetics cannot be grasped by empirical sciences, due to its transcendental character. [2]

Scholars who advocate (1) made attempts to reduce Kant's aesthetic theory on empirical grounds, claiming the psychological basis of aesthetic reflective judgments. The most notable attempt was made by Paul Guyer, who states that aesthetic judgments are result of two distinct acts: mental activity which induces a feeling of pleasure and the reflection of the pleasure felt in the process of judging. Given that the mental activity engages the feeling of pleasure, Guyer suggests that Kant's aesthetics presents a contribution to the empirical psychology of taste. According to his position, free and harmonious play of the faculties represents a natural psychological process, taking place in time, and is thus subject to causal laws. A step further was made by Jennifer McMahon, who takes Kant's aesthetic theory as a starting point for her investigation of systematic principles of perception and cognition, claiming that it is subject to psychological and neurophysiological examination. One of the

[2] Empirical interpretation of the *CPJ* tries to establish the nature of aesthetic experience and aesthetic judgments independently of any transcendental or metaphysical presuppositions. On the other hand, transcendental interpretation of the *CPJ* investigates aesthetic experience and aesthetic judgments in the light of Kant's overall transcendental philosophy and his idealism.

most ardent critics of this approach is Hannah Ginsborg, who rejects (1) on the basis of the issue of §9. She argues that Kantian notion of the aesthetic judgment is a one-act process which cannot be psychologically or biologically explained. Accordingly, she suggests that the interpretation of Kantian aesthetics needs to be grounded on textual evidence, and thus demands transcendental interpretation, an interpretation which offers an account of the conditions for the possibility of pure judgments of taste. This type of interpretation incorporates transcendental inquiry of an *a priori* kind into the conditions under which experience is possible. In doing so, transcendental interpretation rejects psychological inquiry, and investigates judgments of beauty as a part of Kant's transcendental idealism. Besides Ginsborg, the advocators of this interpretation are Beatrice Longuenesse and Robert Wicks.

In this paper I shall try to examine which interpretation – empirical (advocated by Guyer and McMahon) or transcendental (advocated by Ginsborg, Longuenesse and Wicks) – does more justice to Kant's aesthetics presented in the *CPJ*. I shall start my examination with the empirical interpretations offered by Guyer and McMahon. While Guyer tries to interpret Kant's theory of taste as grounded on psychological features, McMahon proposes a new aesthetic theory grounded on Kant's aesthetic notions and naturalized philosophy of mind. Both attempts encounter with criticisms over the discrepancies with the third *Critique,* as neither of them give justice to §9, paragraph which Kant proclaims as worthy of full attention. Furthermore, none of these interpretations are able to explain Kant's "ought" requirement of judgments of taste. It is important to remember that the primary problem that Kant sets to solve with his aesthetic theory is the complicated nature of judgments of taste which are universally communicable and necessary, but are at the same time subjective. Given that Guyer's and McMahon's interpretations cannot explain the necessity of judgments of taste, I conclude that they are not plausible interpretations of the *CPJ*. Nevertheless, this does not withdraw that the empirical interpretation of the *CPJ* in general is not a valid interpretation of the third *Critique.* Rather, I propose a new approach that will investigate the possibility of naturalizing Kant's aesthetics, i.e. the investigation of judgments of taste through neuroaesthetics. Neuroaesthetics is imposed as the last opportunity to defend the empirical interpretation, as it is a new and innovative approach to aesthetics, grounded on empirical investigations of the connection between brain activation and aesthetic experience. Guyer examined Kant from the perspective of empirical psychology, and McMahon did it from the perspective of cognitive sciences. Science in general evolves with time, and new scientific achievements could explain phenomena which are left unexplained. This is why I shall

examine if a new science, i.e. neuroaesthetics, could explain what Guyer and McMahon couldn't – the necessity of judgments of taste. Given that Kantian aesthetic notion of necessity haven't been examined through neuroaesthetics, I shall investigate the efficacy of this examination for the sake of preservation of the empirical interpretation of the *CPJ*, and conclude that although some aspects of Kant's aesthetics are amenable to empirical investigation, his overall aesthetic theory cannot be grounded on psychological, biological and neurophysiological accounts. However, the exclusion of the empirical interpretation does not mean that the transcendental interpretation is the most plausible interpretation of Kant's aesthetics. Therefore I shall examine transcendental interpretations of the *CPJ*, and show that only this type of interpretation successfully explains the nature of aesthetic judgments as necessary, universally valid, and subjective.

The structure of the paper is as follows: in *Chapter 1*, an overview of Kant's aesthetic theory will be presented. Special emphasize will be given to interpretative issues that arises in connection with Kant's account of pure judgments of taste which are relevant for the debate over the possibility of empirical investigation of Kantian aesthetics. This debate will be presented in *Chapter 2*, describing firstly the attempts of Paul Guyer and Jennifer McMahon to reduce Kant's aesthetics to empirical sciences, and secondly, the criticisms and propositions for transcendental interpretation. A relatively new field of neuroaesthetics provides a different way towards the investigation of the possibility of naturalizing Kant. Therefore, in *Chapter 3* I shall examine the efficacy of this investigation by connecting Kant's aesthetic notions with the findings about brain functioning in the process of aesthetic judging. On this basis, I shall argue that neither neuroaesthetics account can provide a fair treatment of aesthetic reflective judgments, as they require elucidation through transcendental inquiry. There is no psychological, physiological, or neurobiological account that could explain why the judgment: "The Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful." implies that everyone "ought" to judge it as beautiful. However, this does not mean that the transcendental interpretation is the most plausible interpretation of the *CPJ*. The validity of this interpretation shall be examined in the final chapter of the paper. After this examination I shall conclude that although transcendental interpretation raises some difficulties, it still recognizes and explains (in fashion of the *CPJ*) the most important elements of Kant's aesthetic theory – universal communicability, disinterested pleasure and the claim of necessity.

2. KANT'S AESTHETIC THEORY

The *Critique of Aesthetic Power of Judgment*, the first part of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, incorporates Kant's overall aesthetic theory based on three elements: (1) judgments of taste and aesthetic appreciation, (2) sublime and judgments of sublime, and (3) genius and the production of fine arts. These elements are incorporated in the broader discussion concerning the *power of judgment*, the faculty "for thinking the particular under the universal" (CPJ, IV, 5:179)[3]. In judgment we grasp the world with the understanding, that can determine particulars using general concepts, and reflect upon particulars in order to form a new concept. There are two types of judgments: *determinative* and *reflective*. Determinative judgments subsume particulars under already given universal[4] (as for example, judgments "Cats are mammal." and "When the sun shines on a stone, the stone becomes warm."). On the other hand, if only the particulars are given and universal has yet to be found, than the judgment is reflective. The importance of the reflective judgment can be seen in various roles and responsibilities it carries: (1) it is associated with the formation of all empirical concepts, (2) it makes cognition possible, enabling us to regard nature as lawlike, (3) it is responsible for cognitive tasks involved in empirical scientific inquiry, in particular, the hierarchical taxonomy classification of genera and species, and (4) it is responsible for theory building. Furthermore, it is responsible for two additional kinds of judgments – aesthetic (judgments about the beautiful, the sublime, and the agreeable) and teleological judgments (judgments which ascribe purpose to natural things).

[3] All references to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (hereafter cited within the text as "CPJ") are from the English translation of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, (Cambridge University Press, 2000), which includes the "First Introduction" (arabic number after the „§" will refer to main text and the roman numbers will refer to sections from the published Introduction; sections from the "First Introduction" will be marked with „FI"). References to the *Critique of Pure Reason* are to the standard A and B pagination of the first and second editions. References to the *Lecture on Metaphysics* (*LM*) are from the English translation, ed. and trans. Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon (Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[4] For the detailed definition of the term „universal" in both Kant's epistemology and his aesthetic theory, see Ginsborg, H., 2006. "Thinking the Particular as Contained Under the Universal", in Rebecca Kukla (ed.), *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aesthetic judgments are judgments about the beautiful and the sublime, based on the feeling of pleasure or displeasure. We will focus hereon on judgments of taste, and their features that differs them from other kinds of judgments (namely, judgments of the agreeable and judgments of the good).

Judgments of taste are analyzed in the first section of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* – the *Analytic of the Beautiful* – under four headings, or, as Kant call them, "moments". A special emphasize has been given to these judgments, as they are, as Kant argues, distinct from, "judgments of the agreeable" (judgments which express that the subject is liking something or finds it pleasing) and "judgments of the good" (judgments about the moral goodness, and goodness in general). This is because judgments of taste are grounded on the subjective feeling of pleasure, but a kind that differs from everyday pleasures (e.g. food or drinks), in so far as it is *disinterested*. The disinterested character of pleasure is implicit in the core definition of taste:

"Taste is the faculty for judging an object or a kind of representation through a satisfaction or dissatisfaction without any interest. The object of such satisfaction is beautiful" (CPJ, §5, 5: 211).

The "disinterestedness" is defined as negation of "interest". Therefore, in order to understand "disinterestedness" we need first to understand what "interest" itself means. Kant defines "interest" as "the satisfaction that we combine with the representation of the existence of an object" (CPJ, §1, 5: 204). However, for aesthetic judgments of taste, the existence of the judged object is not necessary. Interest is related to empirical judgments of taste, i.e. subsumption of an object under a concept (e.g. the fragments of the weeping woman in Picasso's painting under the concept "face") which gives us pleasure or displeasure. For the account of aesthetic judgments, neither the interest in the judged object, nor its aesthetic properties are criteria for claiming its beauty. No interest is involved in judgment: "Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful." as the judgment is not based on our desire or interest in that very painting, but on the feeling which arises in engagement with it. This disinterested character is to be explained with the judgment's transcendental ground, which is to be understood by means of the investigation of the affection of the mind and the activity of cognitive faculties, rather than objective attributes of the object itself. The disinterestedness of aesthetic judgments counts as the *First moment*. The *Second moment* claims the universal character of judgments of taste, referred to as "universal communicability", "universality" or

"universal validity". This feature of the aesthetic judgment distinguishes it from the judgment of agreeable, as the latter is restricted to the subject alone (what I judge as agreeable is agreeable for me), while the previous claims intersubjectivity (what I judge as beautiful, everyone else ought to judge it as beautiful). Therefore, universal communicability presupposes that when one makes judgment of beauty about the *Weeping Woman* – "Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful." – he or she takes it that everyone else *ought* to judge it as beautiful. Correspondingly, one takes that everyone shares the same feeling of disinterested pleasure toward the *Weeping Woman* as he or she does. However, this universal character is not based on concepts of the judged object, but on the feeling of pleasure felt in making an aesthetic judgment about the object. Therefore, aesthetic judgments of taste are subjective, as they are grounded on the feeling of pleasure, and are not objective, as they are not based on the object itself. Nevertheless, even though not objective, aesthetic judgments are universal, as they are valid for everyone. A feature of judgments of taste closely related to their universality is their lack of *end* or *purpose* [*Zweck*] of the judged object, i.e. the absence of "the object of a concept, in so far as the concept as seen as the cause of the object". Nevertheless, judgments of taste claim *purposiveness* [*Zweckmässigkeit*], "the causality of a concept with respect to its object" (CPJ, §10, 5: 220). Judgments of taste involve purposiveness as they take the form of a cognitive judgment, but because they do not include concepts, they are not directed towards fulfillment of a goal. More specifically, on the one hand, aesthetic judgments claim purposiveness, due to their attempt to grasp the aesthetic object with a concept, but on the other, they do not involve an end or a purpose because they can never achieve this aim. Therefore Kant calls this type of purposiveness "merely formal purposiveness" or "the form of purposiveness". This feature is claimed in the *Third moment,* and is assigned both to the judged object itself and the activity of our cognitive faculties – imagination and understanding – induced when engaging with the aesthetic object.

The account of the activity of the two faculties is introduced in §9 of the *CPJ,* by the name of "free play":

"The powers of cognition that are set into play by this representation are hereby in a free play, since no determinate concept restricts them to a particular rule of cognition Thus the state of mind in this representation must be that of a feeling of the free play of the powers of representation in a given representation for a *cognition in general*. Now there belongs to a representation by which an object is given, in order for there to be cognition of it in general, imagination for the composition of the manifold of intuition and understanding for the unity of the concept that unifies the representations. This state of a *free play of the faculties* of cognition with a

representation through which an object is given must be able to be universally communicated, because cognition, as a determination of the object with which given representations (in whatever subject it may be) should agree, is the only kind of representation that is valid for everyone." (CPJ, §9, 5: 217).

The roles of imagination and understanding in the process of cognition are firstly described in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. In this activity, imagination's role is synthesizing the manifold of intuition under the rules prescribed by the understanding. Imagination is involved in our sense perception and formation of representations of objects here and now. Thus, the imagination collects sensory material, arranges it in space and time, and produces the spatiotemporalized sensory materials. This action is guided by the rules prescribed by the understanding, a spontaneous capacity by means of which we are able to think about the objects. But now in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Kant introduces a new status of imagination, namely its free and unsuppressed activity. Thus, in the free play, imagination's activity is harmonized with the activity of the understanding, in so far as imagination is not constrained by the understanding. The result of this play is not the subsumption of the object under a given concept, as is the case in cognition, but the imagination and understanding "play" without bringing the object under any concept in particular. Rather, the play is non-conceptual: in the free play, concept do not prescribe any rule to the imagination, making it free and governed by "free-lawfulness" or "lawfulness without a law"[5]. Kant argues that when

"the imagination (as the faculty of intuitions *a priori*) is unintentionally set into harmony with the understanding (as the faculty of concepts) through a given representation, and a feeling of pleasure is thereby aroused, the object must be regarded as final for the reflective judgment" (CPJ, §39, 5: 292).

Therefore, the representation of an object disposes the harmonious play of imagination and understanding, which triggers the feeling of disinterest pleasure in the beauty of judged object. The imagination's activity is "unintentional", as it does not follow the rule provided by a particular concept. This kind of attuned interplay between the faculties is something that all rational humans share. Given that all humans have same cognitive apparatus, all human experiences share certain essential structural features. When it comes to aesthetic judgments,

[5]According to Kant concepts present rules by which imagination organizes sense data, and by stating that imagination functions without concepts, Kant claims that imagination functions in a rule-governed way but without the government of any rule in particular. Therefore, the free play manifests "free lawfulness" or "lawfulness without a law.", which is often interpreted by Kant scholars as a paradox. For interpretations of the problem of the „lawfulness without a law", see Guyer (1979), Ginsborg (1997), and Crowther (1989).

all humans ought to share pleasure and agree with judgment. This feature is incorporated in *fourth Moment* and it involves the idea of "necessity" of judgments of taste. The necessity of judgments of taste withdraws the notion of community with others who ought to share our state and capacities to judge the beauty of an object. This community is not based on concepts, or social and historical coherence and general agreement. Rather, it is based on the "common sense" (*sensus communis*), an inner sense of the coordinating activity of the faculties.

The notion of the common sense is confusing for Kant scholars[6], as in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* Kant defines the term in three ways. The first two are found in §20, where Kant states that *sensus communis* is a "subjective principle" that functions as a condition for the necessity of aesthetic judgments. It is subjective, and not objective, given that it "determines only by feeling rather than by concepts" (§20, 5: 238). In the second section of §20, Kant offers a second definition of the common sense, namely, that it is a feeling or an "effect arising from the free play of our cognitive powers" (§20, 5: 238). Kant claims that this is the minimum capacity we should expect from any human being, but in a matter of fact, it is not an intellectual capacity at all, but is a *sensuous* capacity, or a capacity for *feeling* the activity and coordination of the cognitive faculties in judgment. Accordingly, common sense presents an *a priori* principle of every judgment of beauty, as it explains why we presuppose

[6] Kant scholars treat the notion of common sense in different manner. Alexander Nehams called it a "nightmare" which leads to "a desolate, desperate world" where everyone likes and loves the same thing (see Nehams, A., 2007. *Only a Promise of Happiness: The Place of Beauty in a World of Art*, Princeton University Press.); Patrick C. Hogan suggests that the common sense is another example of Kant's "normative absolutism" (see Hogan, P. C., 1994. "The Possibility of Aesthetics", in *British Journal of Aesthetics* 34. 4, 1994, pp. 337-350.); Beatrice Longueness and Donald Crawford argue that Kant's common sense can never be more than provisional (a "regulative", as opposed to "constitutive" principle) (see Longuenesse, B, 2006. "Kant's Leading Thread in the Analytic of the Beautiful," in Rebecca Kukla (ed.), *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.; and Crawford, D., 1974. *Kant's Aesthetic Theory*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.); Rachel Zuckert clams that the common sense is a presupposition for the conception of non-conceptually governed community, which is „a sphere of shared meaning – i.e. culture (in the nonKantian meaning of the word)". (see Zuckert, R., 2007. *Kant on Beauty and Biology*: An Interpretation of the Critique of Judgment, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.); Zinkin (2006) explains the notion of the free play in terms of the common sense, which she understands as an intensive form of sensibility, whereas the extensive forms of sensibility is represented by space and time (see Zinkin, M., 2006. "Intensive Magnitudes and the Normativity of Taste," in Rebecca Kukla (ed.), *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.)

that our aesthetic judgments will be shared by everyone else. It is important to note that without the *a priori* character, universal communicability of aesthetic judgments could not be claimed:

"Thus, it is not the pleasure but the universal validity of this pleasure perceived in the mind as connected with the mere judging of an object that is represented in a judgment of taste as a universal rule for the power of judgment, valid for everyone. It is an empirical judgment that I perceive and judge an object with pleasure. But it is a judgment that I find it beautiful, i.e. that I may require that satisfaction of everyone as necessary" (CPJ, §36, 5: 289).

Therefore, without the common sense as an *a priori* principle that functions as a condition for the necessity of judgments of taste, there would be no pure judgments of taste, as the pleasure alone can be claimed with the empirical judgment. However, the "ought" requirement can only be claimed in the judgment of taste. So far, the definition of the common sense is not incomprehensible. Nevertheless, Kant offers another definition of the term. In §40 the common sense is not defined as a principle, but rather as a faculty of taste:

"By *sensus communis* however, must be understood the idea of a *communal sense*, i.e., a faculty for judging that in its reflection takes account (*a priori*) of everyone else's way of representing in thought (…) "taste can be called a sensus communis (…) and th[is] aesthetic power of judgment deserves to be called a shared sense." (CPJ, §29, 5: 294, 5: 295).

Even though defined in the two mentioned paragraphs, the notion of the common sense is defined in Kant's earlier work, in the *Lectures on Metaphysics (2001)*:

"But how can a human being pass a judgment according to the universal sense, since he still considers the object according to his private sense? The community among human beings constitutes a communal sense. Out of the intercourse among human beings a communal sense arises which is valid for everyone. Thus whoever does not come into a community has no communal sense. – The beautiful and the ugly can be distinguished by human beings only so far as they are in a community. Thus whomever something pleases according to a communal and universally valid sense, he has taste." (LM 28: 249)

Concerning the interpretation of the role of the common inner sense, I agree with Linda Palmer's interpretation according to which the common sense "feels the coordination or "attunement" (*Stimmung*) of the generalizing and particularizing function of the mind (understanding and imagination) in judging" (2013, p. 195). Accordingly, she claims that

Kant suggests that the play of the faculties is accompanied by an internal signal, a sense that the imagination and understanding are in coordination in the process of judging. This sense is shared, making judgment of beauty implicitly referring to a virtual community[7] of judges.

The notion of the common sense is not the only element of Kant's aesthetic theory that raises interpretative issues. The notions of the free play and the disinterested pleasure, and in particular, their relationship, also came across various interpretative problems, debated among Kant scholars.

[7]For the elaborated interpretation of the notion of community in Kant's Critical philosophy, see. Payne and Trophe (eds.), 2011.*Kant and the Concept of Community*, University of Rochester Press.

2.1 Interpretative issues

When dealing with Kant's aesthetics, the most notorious issue is concerned with the relation of the feeling of pleasure and the act of judging. The concernment is presented in §9 in the form of question: *Whether in the judgment of taste the feeling of pleasure precedes the judging of the object or the latter precedes the former?*

The solution of this problem is the "key to the critique of taste, and hence worthy of full attention" (CPJ, §8, 5: 216). After very short discussion, Kant proclaims that it is the judging of an object that precedes the pleasure. Thus, rather than the intuitive implication that the pleasure precedes the judging, Kant states that "merely subjective (aesthetic) judging of the object" both "precedes the pleasure in the object and is the ground of this pleasure" (CPJ, §9, 5: 218).

Kant's puzzling answer did not solve the issue, but induced debates among scholars. Stating that the judgment precedes the pleasure, Kant appears to be claiming that we feel pleasure in a beautiful object on the account of judging that the object is beautiful. In this manner, I first judge that the Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful, and then, in addition to this judgment, I feel the pleasure in the *Weeping Woman*. This view is not only contra-intuitive, but it also seems to be in conflict with Kant's claims made in other passages of the *Critique*, namely, with the suggestion that the feeling of pleasure precedes the judgment of taste.[8]

Secondary sources are rich with various responses to this difficulty. Nevertheless, two scholars made the most notorious impacts, as they offer two distinct readings of the §9 in whole. Thus, in what follows I shall briefly present (1) the "two-act reading" proposed by Paul Guyer and (2) the "one-act reading" by Hannah Ginsborg.[9] In order to examine the

[8] Hannah Ginsborg defines the two kinds of indications that Kant suggested that the feeling precedes the judgment: the first is that the pleasure we feel in a beautiful object is the ground or the basis for our judging that it is beautiful, and the second is that a judgment of taste makes reference to a prior feelling of pleasure, in that it claims that one's feeling in a judged object is one everyone ought to share (see. Ginsborg, H., 1991. "On the Key to Kant's Critique of Taste," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 72(4)).

[9] The *t*wo-act reading is first presented by Paul Guyer in *Kant's Theory of Taste* (1979), claiming that the issue of the primacy of judgment and pleasure is to be solved in consideration of the time frame, as it is absurd that the pleasure is both preceding and proceeding aesthetic judgment. Similar view is offered by Rachel Zuckert (see. 2007, Ch. 8), although she dismiss that there are two acts involved in making aesthetic judgment. Rather she claims that there are two kinds of pleasure, and one act of judging. The objection against the „two-act" reading is raised by Hannah Ginsborg in *On the Key of Kant's Critique of Taste* (1991). She proposes the „one-

possibility of reducing Kant's aesthetic theory to empirical sciences, we need to have a clear picture of the notions of the free play of the faculties and disinterested pleasure, and this is why the elaboration of both Guyer's and Ginsborg's interpretations is relevant.

According to Paul Guyer, all judgments of taste are results of two acts of reflective judgment: (1) the free play of the faculties and the feeling of pleasure which is a consequence of this state, and (2) the act of reflection of pleasure resulting in the claim of universal communicability.[10] These acts match the distinction between aesthetic response and aesthetic evaluation, as the first act, i.e. the harmony of the faculties, explains how aesthetic response toward the judged object arises, while the second act, i.e. the reflection about the circumstances and causal antecedents of the pleasure, explains the making of aesthetic judgments. As can be assumed, the two-act process is complex and has intermediate stages. The judging begins with the mental activity Guyer refers to as "simple reflection" upon the object, which stimulates free play of imagination and understanding. When the feeling of disinterested pleasure occurs (as a consequence of the harmonious state of mind), the first stage of the judging is complete. The second stage begins with conscious act of deliberation upon the circumstances and causal precursors of the feeling of pleasure. In this stage, we become aware that the feeling is universally valid, and thus, that the judged object is beautiful. Correspondingly, the beauty is not in the object itself, but rather in the subject that is judging it. To carry a judgment of beauty, the feeling alone is not suffice, in so far as there is nothing that differs this feeling from any other ordinary feeling of pleasure. This is why the second stage is needed. By ruling out possible interest as a cause, we may, in this stage, judge that the pleasure is a result of the harmony of the faculties. It is in this stage that I become aware that the feeling I feel is a result of the free play, and is therefore universally communicable.

The problem with the "two-act" reading of §9 consists in the second stage, and more specifically, in the reflection upon the causal cause of the first stage. This reflection requires the usage of concepts, which goes against Kant's claim that aesthetic judgments are not based on concepts, but on the feeling of pleasure. Hannah Ginsborg (1991) recognizes this problem

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act"reading, which is in accordance with the textual evidence in the *CPJ*. However, her reading, as Guyer's, raises criticisms (For criticism, see. Allison (2001), Ameriks (1998) and Palmer (2008)). For more interpretative solutions of the §9 see. Allison (2001) and Longuenesse (2003).

[10] See. Guyer,P., 1979., *Kant and the Claim of Taste*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 110-119.

and offers "one-act" reading of §9, where the free play of the faculties and the aesthetic judgment are the same process. In this conception of aesthetic judgment, the judging precedes the pleasure, meaning that the judging is based on the feeling of pleasure, which is in turn the result of the free play. Ginsborg claims that one act is sufficient for the rise of pleasure and the carry of aesthetic judgment, but only if it is defined as a *self-referential act of judging* which claims its own universal validity. In §8 of the *CPJ,* Kant presents distinction between logical and aesthetical universality: the logical universality is incorporated in the judgment "All ravens are black.", in so far as the feature "black" is necessary for the entire set "ravens". However, the judgment "Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful.", is a singular judgment about the painting I perceive here and now, and thus it does not claim logical universality (as would the judgment "All Picasso's paintings are beautiful."). Kant claims that in their logical quantity all judgments of taste are singular judgments, meaning that they are valid only for the particular object. Therefore, universality of judgments of taste does not imply that it is valid for all the member of the class of the judged object, but that it is valid for all judging subjects. This is exactly what Ginsborg understands by the term *self-referential act of judgment* – namely, that the judgment of taste about the painting is nothing but the claim that everyone who perceives that painting ought to feel the pleasure in it. When involving in the self-referential act of aesthetic judgment, I demand that everyone judge the way I do. If everyone judge as I, then everyone ought the share my mental state which corresponds with my act of judging. This state is consisting out of awareness that I ought to be in that very mental state every time I judge that object. At the same time, I demand that everyone who enters in the act of judging ought to be in that mental state. Correspondingly, Ginsborg claims that this mental state is actually a disinterested feeling of pleasure.

The disagreement between Guyer's and Ginsborg's reading of §9, a paragraph which is central for Kant's overall aesthetic, as it presents the "key to the critique of taste", comes out from the disagreement of the interpretation of the notions of the free play and the disinterested pleasure.[11] Guyer's two-act reading requires revision of the notion of the free play: the

[11] When it comes to various accounts of the free play, Guyer (2006) classifies them three heads: (1) According to "precognitive" interpretation of the harmony of the faculties, the free play is to be understood as a state of mind in which "the manifold of representations furnished by the perception of an object satisfies all of the conditions for normal cognition of an object except for that of the actual application of a determinate concept to the manifold" (Guyer, 2006, p. 165). According to this interpretation, the play of imagination and understanding satisfies all the condition for cognition, except the final stage required for actual cognition; (2) "Multicognitive"

harmonious activity of imagination and understanding is tied with the first two stages of the threefold synthesis in the process of cognition, with an exception that the recognition of the manifold is missing. In ordinary cognition, the connection of imagination and understanding is recognized through the application of a concept to an object. Kant's theory of pleasure, Guyer argues, implies that we feel pleasure when the goal of cognition is attained by finding unity in the manifold "apprehended by sensibility and presented by imagination to the understanding" (1978. p. 455). This goal can be characterized from both objective and subjective aspect. Characterized objectively, the goal presents the "discovery or acquisition of true beliefs and objectively valid judgments" (p. 85). On the other hand, characterized subjectively, it is synthesis of manifolds of intuitions, or how Guyer claims, a *psychological prerequisite* of objectively valid judgments. The free play of the faculties satisfies this prerequisite and fulfills the cognitive goal as characterized subjectively. The goal is thus achieved without the use of an empirical concept as a rule for unifying a manifold. The fulfillment of the goal withdraws pleasure, and with it, the first act of the two-act process is complete.

Therefore, Guyer claims that every stage of perception that precedes this harmonious state is the same as in ordinary cognition, which means that the freedom of the faculties lies in the absence of constraint by concepts, and not in the absence of usual perceptual conditions.

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interpretation claims that the free play represents the application of a multiplicity of concepts: "Instead of suggesting no determinate concept for the manifold of intuition that it furnishes, a beautiful object suggests an indeterminate or open-ended manifold of concepts for the manifold of intuition, allowing the mind to flit back and forth playfully and enjoyably among different ways of conceiving the same object without allowing or requiring it to settle down on one determinate way of conceiving the object." (2006, p. 166); (3) Last group of interpretation is called "metacognitive," and it is the interpretation which Guyer favors. According to this interpretation the manifold is represented as having a unity which goes beyond conditions required for ordinary cognition. "On such an approach, the free and harmonious play of imagination and understanding should be understood as a state of mind in which the manifold of intuition induced by the perception of an object and presented by the imagination to the understanding is recognized to satisfy the rules for the organization of that manifold dictated by the determinate concept or concepts on which our recognition and identification of the object of this experience depends. It is also a state of mind in which it is felt that – or as if – the understanding's underlying objective or interest in unity is being satisfied in a way that goes beyond anything required for or dictated by satisfaction of the determinate concept or concepts on which mere identification of the object depends." (2006, p. 183).

Furthermore, under Guyer's view, the free play of imagination and understanding goes beyond ordinary cognition, as it is *metacognitive*[12]. We could not make the judgment "Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful", unless

"our aesthetic judgments were compatible with our ordinary classificatory judgments, and gave expression to the way in which some objects but not others occasion a free play of imagination and understanding that goes beyond the relation between them that is required for ordinary cognition (…) We can, indeed we must be able to have ordinary cognition of the object, but we experience it as beautiful precisely because we experience it as inducing a degree or type of harmony between imagination and understanding – between the manifold it presents and our desire for unity – that goes beyond whatever is necessary for ordinary cognition." (2006, p. 183).

Therefore, as Guyer argues, in order to judge an object as beautiful, the application of the predicate "beautiful" has to be compatible with the recognition of the satisfaction of the determinate conditions necessary for the application of the concept. The pleasure then would be understood as a type of the harmonious play of the cognitive faculties that goes beyond whatever is necessary to satisfy the ordinary cognition.[13] This approach may seem rather unusual and complex. This is why Guyer offers the following example:

„For example, a successful novel may suggest a host of thoughts about character, virtues, vices, choice and chance, and so on, that are not required simply for the work to count as a novel, and that are not dictated by any further particular rule, such as for novels of a particular period or genre, yet that nevertheless seem to stimulate the imagination in their variety and yet satisfy the understanding in their coherence. We enjoy freedom in a play of concepts that goes beyond the minimum organization required for classification of our object, and, we enjoy such play only when it does not degenerate into chaos; so we can describe what we enjoy as a play of concepts that nevertheless satisfies the understanding's general requirement of unity." (2006, p. 188.)

Revising the range of the free play, as well as the notion of the free play itself, Guyer also revises the feeling of disinterested pleasure, and claims that it occurs when one becomes aware of the universal validity of that very feeling. This will be further elaborated in the next chapter, given that Guyer's account is incorporated in his attempt to reduce Kant's overall aesthetic theory to empirical psychology. On the other hand, Ginsborg suggests that

[12]Guyer argues that there are textual evidence for both the precognitive and multicognitive approaches to the interpretation of the harmony of the faculties, but only the multicognitive approach is consistent with Kant's epistemology. (See Guyer 2006, p. 192).

[13]Guyer, P., 2006. "The Harmony of the Faculties Revisited," in Rebecca Kukla (ed.), *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 184.

judgments of taste differ from empirical cognitive judgments, as the previous claim universal agreement without invoking a specific concept, and are self-referential. Furthermore, Ginsborg claims that the self-referential act of judgment can be thought of as manifesting a necessary feature of all empirical cognition. Ginsborg concludes that this is exactly what Kant had in mind when initially characterizing the free play of the faculties in terms of "cognition in general" (CPJ, §9, 5: 217). The very character of the aesthetic judgment, i.e. its self-referential character, is recognized through the feeling of pleasure, which arises as a consequence of the harmonious activity of imagination and understanding. The free play is, Ginsborg argues, regular (in accordance with rules) activity in which understanding relates to imagination without imagination's being constraint by concepts. The imagination displays "regularity" and "lawfulness" associated with understanding, as it conforms to general conditions for applying concepts to manifolds. However, no concept is ever applied to the manifold, but

"in spite of the fact that my act of judgment is neither based on, nor gives rise to, a concept of an object, it makes a claim to universal validity. For in taking my imagination to function as it ought to function in the perception of the object [in so far as it conforms to general conditions of applying concepts], I take that everyone ought to perceive the object the same way I do. I take my activity of imagination, that is, to exemplify a universal standard to which everyone ought to conform." (1997, p. 70).

Note that both Guyer and Ginsborg establish connection between aesthetic judgments and cognitive judgments, and in general, aesthetics and epistemology. However, while Ginsborg advocates transcendental interpretation of Kantian aesthetics, Guyer proposes interpretation based on empirical psychology. With respect to Guyer's interpretation, some Kant scholars embrace the view that the free play of the faculties represents a psychological process, subject to causal laws. But it is important to notice the difficulty of reconcile this interpretation of the free play with Kant's justification of the legitimacy of aesthetic judgments, and more generally his transcendental account of judgments of taste, according to which judgments are founded on an a subjective *a priori* principle. In the following chapter, I shall examine two attempts to naturalize Kant's aesthetics: the first section of the chapter will be dealing with Guyer's efforts to naturalize Kant's aesthetic theory by using empirical psychology of taste. As a follow-up for his theory of the aesthetic judgment as a two-act process, Guyer develops an interpretation of Kantian aesthetics grounded on psychological features. Namely, he claims that the aesthetic feeling of pleasure is a psychological fact, felt by everyone who engages

with the beautiful object as a consequence of shared psychological mechanisms. The second part of the following chapter will focus on McMahon's attempt to create a new aesthetic theory by combining Kant's naturalized aesthetics and naturalized philosophy of mind. By combining aesthetics with computational theory within philosophy of mind, McMahon provides an interesting approach for naturalization of Kantian aesthetic theory through cognitive sciences. However, both approaches are subject to criticisms, which will be presented in the third part. Finally, after examination of the criticisms that strike Guyer's and McMahon's interpretations, I shall conclude that their attempts to naturalize Kant's aesthetics are unsuccessful. Nevertheless, this does not withdraws the conclusion that the empirical interpretation of Kant's aesthetic theory (i.e. interpretation through reference to empirical sciences), is yet to be rejected. Guyer tried to interpret Kant's aesthetics through psychology, McMahon through cognitive sciences and theories of perception. However, the combination of psychology, cognitive sciences and (neuro) biology could succeed where Guyer and McMahon failed. Therefore, I suggest that the last opportunity for the defense of empirical interpretation of Kant's aesthetics is its naturalization through the neuroaesthetics, a relatively new field within neurosciences which investigates the connection between brain activity and aesthetic experience. This attempt will be examined in the section 3.1. of the following chapter.

3. NATURALIZING KANT?

As foreshadowed in the last section of the previous chapter, some scholars tried to understand Kant's aesthetic theory from perspective of empirical psychology. However, his aesthetic theory, due to its transcendental character, eludes from any psychological explanation. Kant's attitude toward psychology is clearly presented in both first and third *Critique*. He explicitly claims that empirical psychology cannot contribute to *a priori* knowledge, and, furthermore, that empirical psychology itself can never be a proper natural science. With this in mind, Kant's following statement in §9 of the *CPJ* does not come as a surprise:

"In this modality of aesthetic judgments, namely, their presumed necessity lies a principal moment for the critique of the power of judgment. For it makes us cognizant of an *a priori* principle in them, and elevates them out of empirical psychology, in which they would otherwise remain buried among the feelings of enjoyment and pain (only with the meaningless epithet of a more refined feeling), in order to place them and by their means the power of judgment in the class of those which have as their ground *a priori* principles, and as such to transpose them into transcendental philosophy." (CPJ, §29, 5: 266).

Considering the quotes passage, it is rather surprising that Kant scholars embrace the idea of reduction of the free play to empirical psychological account. However, the majority of Kant scholars agree that Kant's approach to aesthetics is "highly psychological, on the one hand, in investigating the feeling of pleasure or displeasure, but very rational, on the other hand, in considering aesthetic questions to be analogous to general logics" (Sgarbi, 2012, p. 80). Thus scholars, especially from the Anglo-American tradition, embraced the view that empirical construes are integrated in Kant's aesthetics. In this manner, Harold Osborn claims that Kant was in fact working "through a cloud of inappropriate psychological terms towards the modern conception of Gestalt and perhaps organic unity" (Osborn in Ginsborg 1991, p. 48). According to the psychological account, the occurrence of the harmony is explicable in terms of psychological mechanisms that underlie the process of perceiving the object that occasions it. Given that we presuppose that everyone is psychologically constituted in the same way, I can assume, or even predict that everyone will judge the way I do. To this point, Kant's aesthetic can easily be described in terms of empirical psychology. However, the problem arises in the second moment of aesthetic judgment, namely, the claim of universal validity of judgments of taste. While I can predict that everyone will agree with my aesthetic judgment, I cannot require that everyone judge the way I do, and thus I cannot claim universal validity of my judgment. Eva Schaper recognizes this problem, while attempting to provide content for

the play of the faculties in empirical terms. According to Schaper, the problem lies in Kant's theory itself, as Kant combines psychological account of aesthetic judgments (i.e. the notion of the harmonious activity of imagination and understanding), with transcendental presuppositions (i.e. the claim of universal validity of aesthetic judgments). She describes the notion of the harmonious play as a psychological description of the processes in mind involved when making the judgment of taste, which cannot claim necessity. Another interpretation is proposed by Paul Guyer, who takes psychology as the genuine feature of Kant's theory of judgment of taste. The starting point for Guyer's account is Kant's following claim:

"A merely reflecting judgment about a given individual object, however, can be aesthetic if (before its comparison with others is seen), the power of judgment, which has no concept ready for the given intuition, holds the imagination (merely in the apprehension of the object) together with the understanding (in the presentation of a concept in general) and perceives a relation of the two faculties of cognition which constitutes the subjective, merely sensitive condition of the objective use of the power of judgment in general (namely the agreement of those two faculties with each other)." (CPJ, FI, 20:224).

According to Guyer, the "subjective" condition of the "objective use of the power of judgment in general", i.e. of cognition, is the synthesis of the manifold, since "from a psychological point of view the synthesis or unification of a manifold is what produces objectively valid judgments" (1979, p. 85). Guyer is convinced that the harmonious agreement of imagination and understanding, the general condition for cognition, is satisfied without the use of any concept. He founds reinforcement for his thesis in §35 and statement that the free play of imagination schematizes without a concept. In respect to the latter, Guyer concludes that the harmony of the faculties presents the first two stages of the threefold synthesis, namely, the *Synthesis of Apprehension in Intuition* (generation of temporal and spatial structure), and the *Synthesis of Reproduction in the Imagination* (association of spatiotemporally structured items), while the *Synthesis of Recognition in a Concept* is excluded. As a follow up to his account, Guyer incorporates the feeling of pleasure, as a consequence that arouses from the harmony. The synthesis of our manifolds is a subjective goal of cognition, and when the play of the faculties fulfills this goal, the feeling of pleasure arises. The pleasure, Guyer states following textual evidence from third *Critique*, is a feeling which arouses when imagination and understanding are in accordance. However, unlike Kant, Guyer claims that this feeling is a psychological fact and, because (not despite of) it should bear claim to universal validity. Thus, the feeling of pleasure is felt by everyone who engages

with the beautiful object, due to shared psychological mechanisms that underlie aesthetic experience. This is why Guyer's interpretation of Kant's theory of aesthetic judgment is often called "psychological" or "causal" interpretation:

"Judging that an object is beautiful on the basis of a feeling of pleasure is analogous to judging that an effect is caused by one sort of cause rather than another" (2006, p. 118).

The pleasure is a consequence of the harmonious play of the faculties, which, according to Guyer, achieves a prerequisite of objectively valid judgments, namely, the synthesis or unification of our manifolds of intuition. The fulfillment of this goal brings pleasure. Guyer is aware of possible criticisms over his account of the relationship between the act of judging and the pleasure, and states:

„I have never denied that there are some elements of Kant's view that speak against such an interpretation; in particular, in §12 he seems to deny that the connection between a particular object and our pleasure in it can be causal because a causal relation must be *a priori*, while this connection is a posteriori (CPJ, §12, 5:221–2). But this does not seem to be a serious problem: If we take Kant's appeal to the *a priori* here to be an expression of the necessary lawlikeness of causal connections, we could allow that the relation between the harmony of the faculties and the feeling of pleasure is lawlike, even though it follows from the very concept of an unintended and apparently contingent harmony that there can be no lawlike relation between the forms of objects that allow us to realize this harmony and the harmony itself." (2006, p. 118).

Besides this possible critique, Guyer successfully avoids the above mentioned issue of universality of judgments of taste, as he claims that universal character is claimed in accordance with a special kind of prediction. Namely, this prediction is "ideal" in a manner that it "presupposes ideal knowledge of one's own responses and ideal circumstances of response for other" (1979, p. 146)). Correspondingly,

"the judgment that a particular object x is beautiful amounts to the claim that everyone who perceives x should, apart from any prediction of a concept of it, take pleasure in it, or that, under ideal conditions – of noninterference from purely sensory pleasures and abstractions from any concepts that might affect an interested response - everyone who perceives x will take pleasure in it." (1979, p. 146).

Thus the claim for universality of judgments of taste lies in the claim about shared psychological mechanism. Note that with the notion of "ideal" prediction, Guyer avoids the difficulties addressed by Schaper.

Another attempt to naturalize Kant's aesthetic theory is provided by Jennifer McMahon in *Aesthetics and Material Beauty: Aesthetics Naturalized*. As Guyer recognizes, McMahon does not offer a comment on Kant's aesthetics, but rather takes the core ideas of his theory in order to develop a theory of aesthetic properties, called "critical aesthetic realism". McMahon uses Kant's notion of the free play of the faculties to elaborate the idea of aesthetic experience that is not a mere mechanical response to sensation, but rather "a second order perceptual engagement (…) that involves synthesis in imagination (hence perceptual) of elements made psychologically salient by the concept of the object" (2007, p. 24). McMahon does not follow Kant literary, and states that Kant's aesthetic account was not satisfactory, as it rests on a vague notion of indeterminacy. Rather, she proposes revision of Kant's theory within the frame of naturalized aesthetic theory which can accommodate all notions Kant suggested in a manner that they are complementary rather than contradictory.[14]

To start with, McMahon examines the common issues in aesthetics, namely, the problem of objectivity and autonomy of aesthetic judgments, their universal character, and genuine aesthetic disagreements and subjectivity in taste. She clarifies the notion of beauty as „deeply moving experience" (2007, p. 85), central key that characterizes us as human beings: „beauty is like looking at a universal feature of the human condition" (2007, p. 30), but is also the feature that distinct us as individuals „a person establishes who they are in their aesthetic engagement with objects" (2007, p. 120). Moreover, she argues that aesthetic experience can be understood in comparison with the way the visual system constructs the global perceptual form. Namely, our visual system, in order to recognize the object, transforms two dimensional retinal images into stable three dimensional representation of object shape invariant to changes in viewpoints. According to McMahon, aesthetic experience can be explained as an intuitive awareness of the rules included in this formation of perception:

> "In the spirit of Kant, we might hypothesize that when the object of perception deploys perceptual principles in a way which epitomizes or economizes on their normal operations, as when perceiving nature for example, or over-stimulus them, swapping the normal perceptual triggers, for example when perceiving some artworks (McMahon 2003), then we experience a third-person sensation (we apprehend ourselves perceiving) regarding the experience of perception." (2005, p. 316).

Thus, the first stage in aesthetic experience starts with perception and "structuring of the perceptual data according to some category or concept" (2005, p. 24). However, she still

[14] See McMahon, J., 2007. *Aesthetics and Material Beauty: Aesthetics Naturalized*. New York & London: Routledge, p. 49).

follows Kant in so far as she claims that "there is no determinate concept to guide the process" (2007, p. 10). Rather, in this process, rational ideas are invoked, but they do not come in mind as clear ideas, but as fragments, associations and nuance. Interestingly, the pleasure is "that gestalt which lends its object clarity, focus and unity" (2007, p. 50). In core of McMahon's approach is her attempt to combine her aesthetic theory with contemporary computational theory of mind:

"The mind works by seeking out the state of equilibrium. Each new stimulus (perception) throws the mind into a state of flux as the new information is made compatible with previously stored knowledge atoms. In effect this means that for every perception the mind provides a concept. However, in the case of aesthetic form, no concept is forthcoming, or not one that constitutes object recognition. The system finds a state of equilibrium by evoking rational ideas, concepts for which there are no perceptual stimuli." (2007, p. 23).

Aesthetic form do not equate with shape, melody, or movement, but with any imaginative unity that is expressive of aesthetic ideas. Accordingly, in aesthetic judgment, there is no concept that can fully apprehend the aesthetic form of judged object. However, when evoked through aesthetic form, they occur through imagination. The feeling aroused is pleasure, a sense of continuity with nature and community. McMahon deters Kant's notion of shared feeling of pleasure, i.e. the universal communicability of aesthetic judgments, and suggests that the aesthetics creates the conditions for community. When making a judgment of beauty, we are compelled to find a point of agreement with others, as when we share aesthetic judgments with other members, we also share a sense of community. The connection between individuals in society is thus to be found in shared appreciation of remarkable objects of beauty:

"The ensuing pleasure is like a feeling of confidence in our perceptual orientation to the world, an orientation shared with anyone with normal perceptual processing" (2005, p. 316).

Consequentially, aesthetic properties of objects judged beautiful are not real properties, in a manner that they are not recognized or prescribed by science. Rather, aesthetic properties are qualities we ascribe to judged objects based on our feelings towards them. Following Kant's theory, McMahon claims that aesthetic ascriptions are not merely subjective. But she does not claim that this is due to transcendental character of aesthetic judgments, as Kant claims, but rather because they are constrained by the kinds of configurations that can be perceived in the object. Thus, McMahon concludes that aesthetic experience

"is not some set of mind-independent properties unmediated by cultural understanding that is the object of aesthetic judgment but a characterization of the object influenced by background knowledge and experience" (2007, p. 67).

McMahon's aesthetic theory incorporates three points: (1) data input, (2) conceptual organization, and (3) experience of beauty. I shall present her theory through the example of aesthetic appraisal of Picasso's *Weeping Woman*. Experience of beauty begins as a sensory experience: the brain receives input from the retinal image, but "in making sense of perceptual stimuli, the system imposes perceptual structures that are compatible with our concepts" (2007, p. 132). This is, McMahon continues, "a necessary prerequisite of object recognition, which involves matching structured perceptual data with labels and their associated meanings" (Ibid.). She follows Kant's theory of the free play in a manner that she argues that imagination creates unities, or as she calls them, "aspects or imaginings", which are indeterminate concepts, such are expressiveness and loveliness. These concepts are aesthetic features of an object. Thus, the feature that defines the *Weeping Woman* is expressiveness: the expression of desperation and sadness of the weeping woman conjoins fragments together into an aesthetic idea.

Guyer in his review welcomes McMahon's approach to Kant's aesthetics through naturalistic account of philosophy of mind. Her account matches Guyer's notion of "metacognitive" approach to the harmony of the faculties, and his claim that Kant set in the *Critique of Pure Reason* a position that we cannot be conscious of an object without subsuming it under particular empirical concept structured in accordance with the understanding. Thus, they both claim that we cannot judge any aesthetic object without also subsuming it under some empirical concept.

Are Guyer's and McMahon's interpretations credible examples of naturalized Kant's aesthetics? I claim that they are not. First of all, Guyer's interpretation of Kant's overall aesthetic theory is problematic, as it requires deviations of Kant's notions of the free play and disinterested pleasure. Guyer himself points out that §9 is resistant to the "two-act" reading, as it that paragraph Kant argues that the act of judging which precedes pleasure is the same act in which we claim that the judged object is beautiful. However, according to Guyer, this claim is a result of Kant's confusion and intrusion of the earlier theory of pleasure which he held. Guyer concludes that the solution offered in §9 is "obscured by intrusion of a theory of

pleasure distinct from and incompatible with that which it is intended to purpose" (1983, p. 53). Is it possible that Kant did made such a crucial mistake in a paragraph which is "worthy of full attention" (CPJ, §9, 5: 217)? I agree with Ginsborg's rejection[15] of this claim. §9 presents the key to the critique of taste, and it is a central paragraph of Kantian aesthetics. To claim that it is a result of Kant's mistake and confusion seems like a very strong statement which cannot be proven. The most concerning problem that emanates from Guyer's two-act reading and the characterization of §9 as a result of inattention is his understanding of the harmonious play as an activity directed towards achievement of a cognitive aim. Even if Guyer's hypothesis about §9 is correct, it still does not withdraws his claim that the play is intentional (i.e. directed towards a goal), as there are other paragraphs in the third *Critique* that claim otherwise. For instance, in §11 Kant argues that "no subjective end can ground the judgment of taste", and further, that "no representation of an objective end, i.e., of the possibility of the object itself in accordance with principles of purposive connection (…) can determine the judgment of taste" (CPJ, §11, 5: 221). Therefore, Kant concludes that

„nothing other than the subjective purposiveness in the representation of an object without any end (objective or subjective) (...) can constitute the satisfaction that we judge without a concept, to be universally communicable"(CPJ, §11, 5: 221).

The achievement of a cognitive aim is mentioned in the Introduction of the *CPJ*, but only when referring to actual achievement in cognition, such is the scientific discovery (CPJ, Introduction, VI). Again, Guyer, as an expert in Kant's philosophy, is aware of these passages, but still claims that his two-act reading provides a good and unproblematic (or at least less problematic) interpretation of the judgments of taste. In this manner, Guyer notes that his thesis provides a broader view of aesthetic judgments, rather than a basis for Kant's aesthetic theory, as it is an empirical thesis, and not transcendental.[16] Only this, he claims, can provide a solution to Kant's problematic vagueness concerning the relationship between judging and pleasure.

However, we cannot endorse Guyer's two-act reading of §9 for several reasons. First of all, there is no textual evidence that the judgments of taste involve two separate acts of reflection. Second, Guyer claims that the judgment whether the object is beautiful arises from an act of reflection about the universality of the feeling of pleasure. Clearly, this act of reflection about

[15] See. Ginsborg (1991, p. 35).

[16] See. Guyer (1979, p. 81).

my own feeling requires the use of concepts. At this point, Guyer again goes directly against Kant's statement that the judgment of taste "is not grounded on concepts at all" (CPJ, §32, 5: 282), and that the universality of judgments of taste "cannot originate from concepts", for there is "no transition from concepts to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure"(CPJ, §5, 5: 211). Also, in §38 Kant argues that "one who judges with taste may assume his feeling to be universally communicable, and that without any mediation of concepts" (CPJ, §39, 5: 293). Ginsborg (1991) notices that Guyer might respond to this criticism by saying that Kant is not claiming that the judgment of taste is not based on any concepts whatsoever, but that it is not based on the concepts of the judged object.[17] However, this answer can neither be Guyer's way out of criticism, as it cannot explain necessity of judgments of taste and the universal communicability. According to Kant, the pleasure felt in aesthetic judgment is "demanded [*zumuten*] by us from everyone else as necessary" (CPJ, §9, 5: 218). As shown above, Guyer claims that we share "ideal" prediction, and thus can presuppose how one judge under ideal circumstances. But this view is also problematic, because as Ginsborg states, "empirical consideration could never ground the contrasting claim that the pleasure is one that others *ought* to share" (1991, p. 296). Therefore, Guyer's account cannot explain the "ought" requirement of judgments of taste.

The last objection is directed towards Guyer's attempt to naturalize Kant. It is interesting that Kant explicitly rejects empirical psychology right after the explanation of the notion of the free play of the faculties in §9. This, however, does not present a problem to Guyer, for he finds a simple solution – he rejects §9 and proclaims that it is a result of Kant's inattention (1979, p. 140). Nevertheless, the objection that there are other passages in the third *Critique* that claim what is claimed in §9 can again be argued against Guyer's position. I shall now map some of the passages of the *CPJ*, in which Kant explicitly argues against empirical psychology:

„There is no practical psychology as a special part of the philosophy of human nature. For the principles of the possibility of its state by means of art must be borrowed from those of the possibility of our determinations from the constitution of our nature and, although the former consist of practical propositions, still they do not constitute a practical part of empirical psychology, because they do not have any special principles, but merely belong among its scholia." (CPJ, FI, 20: 199);

[17] See. Ginsborg, (1991, p. 296).

„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. For one would thereby be acting contrary to one's own intention, and if the attempted explanation were completely successful it would prove that the judgment could make absolutely no claim to necessity, precisely because its empirical origin can be demonstrated." (CPJ, FI, 20: 238);

„(…) aesthetic judgments of reflection (which we shall subsequently analyze under the name of judgments of taste) are of the kind mentioned above. They lay claim to necessity and say, not that everyone does so judge – that would make their explanation a task for empirical psychology – but that everyone ought to so judge, which is as much as to say that they have an *a priori* principle for themselves." (CPJ, FI, 20: 239);

„(…) if one wants to give the origin of these fundamental principles and attempts to do so in a psychological way, this is entirely contrary to their sense. For they do not say what happens, i.e., in accordance with which rule our powers of cognition actually perform their role and how things are judged, but rather how they ought to be judged and this logical objective necessity is not forthcoming if the principles are merely empirical." (CPJ, Introduction, V, 5: 182);

„(…) since the universal communicability of a feeling presupposes a common sense, the latter must be able to be assumed with good reason, and indeed without appeal to psychological observations, but rather as the necessary condition of the universal communicability of our cognition, which is assumed in every logic and every principle of cognitions that is not skeptical." (CPJ, §21, 5: 239);

„(…) this modality of aesthetic judgments, namely their presumed necessity, lies a principal moment for the critique of the power of judgment. For it makes us cognizant of an *a priori* principle in them, and elevates them out of empirical psychology, in which they would otherwise remain buried among the feelings of enjoyment and pain (only with the meaningless epithet of a more refined feeling), in order to place them and by their means the power of judgment in the class of those which have as their ground *a priori* principles, and as such to transpose them into transcendental philosophy." (CPJ, §29, 5: 266)

Guyer's position goes against all the above quotes passages, and not only against the §9. Thus, his conclusion that §9 is a result of inattention, when it comes to Kant's rejection of empirical psychology from the domain of aesthetic experience, cannot be valid. In order to claim that Kant's theory is a part of empirical psychology of taste, Guyer has to claim that all the mentioned passages are results of inattention, which seems highly unlikable.

Because of the mentioned interpretative issues that accompanies Guyer's reading of the third *Critique*, I claim that his two-act interpretation and his attempt to naturalize Kant do not give fair account to Kant's overall aesthetics.

McMahon in many ways follows Guyer's interpretation of Kantian aesthetic. It is, however, crucial to note that her theory presented in *Aesthetics and Material Beauty* is not an interpretation of Kant's aesthetics. Thus, in what follows I shall not criticize her theory, namely, *critical aesthetic realism* that is based on Neo-Kantian postulates, but will argue that her theory is not an evidence that Kant's aesthetic can be naturalized and subject to empirical sciences.

First of all, McMahon's theory is based on perception and perceptual principles. She claims that "perception generally, even the simplest perceptual acts, involves bringing data under a concept (2007, p. 44). On the ground of the theory of perception she deploys her interpretation of aesthetic notion, while arguing that "beauty (…) is a subpersonal response to the perception of properties whose construal in perception pleases us." (2007, p. 199), and moreover, that "when we judge something apt for our perception, as we do in aesthetic judgment, we are judging it relative to an assumption that underpins perception and cognition." (2007, p. 3). However, when speaking of aesthetic judgments, Kant's position is clear: no interest can be involved in judging that an object is beautiful:

"But if the question is whether something is beautiful, one does not want to know whether there is anything that is or that could be at stake, for us or for someone else, in the existence of the thing, but rather how we judge it in mere contemplation (intuition or reflection)." (CPJ, §2, 5: 204).

Kant offers a following example of the judgment of the palace, to argue that the existence of an object itself is not necessary for aesthetic judgment, but rather, in order to make an adequate aesthetic judgment, one must abstract away any deployment in material properties of an object. Only the abstraction of these extraneous elements leads to a pure *a priori* aesthetic judgment.

„If someone asks me whether I find the palace that I see before me beautiful, I may well say that I don't like that sort of thing, which is made merely to be gasped at (...)I might even vilify the vanity of the great who waste the sweat of the people on such superfluous things; (...) One only wants to know whether the mere representation of the object is accompanied with satisfaction in me, however indifferent I might be with regard to the existence of the object of this representation. It is readily seen that to say that it is beautiful and to prove that I have taste what matters is what I make of this representation in myself, not how I depend on the existence of the object. Everyone must admit that a judgment about beauty in which there is mixed the least interest is very partial and not a pure judgment of taste. One must not be in the least based in favor of the existence of the thing, but must be entirely indifferent in this respect in order to play the judge in matters of taste." (CPJ, §2, 5: 205).

It seems that while McMahon grounds her entire theory on the theory of perception, Kant's aesthetics pays the least attention to the process of perceiving the object itself, claiming that one must be completely indifferent to the mere existence of the judged object. Furthermore, from her claim that aesthetic experience always begins with the perception of determinate forms in object, McMahon concludes that "all beauty (…) falls somewhere in between Kant's notion of pure and dependent beauty". Even though the relationship between pure and dependent (or free and adherent) beauty is debated among Kant's scholars[18], Kant's position is that there are two distinct kinds of beauty – free or pure, and dependent or adherent:

"The first presupposes no concept of what the object ought to be; the second does presuppose such a concept and the perfection of the object in accordance with it. The first are called (self-subsisting) beauties of this or that thing; the latter, as adhering to a concept (conditioned beauty), are ascribed to objects that stand under the concept of a particular end. " (CPJ, §16, 5: 229)

Thus, all dependent beauty is perceived when the form of the object is cohering with its intended purpose. Here Kant suggests that all judgments of taste about representational art are judgments of dependent beauty, as they presuppose concepts of the objects represented in that kind of art. On the other hand, non-representational or abstract art is free from these concepts, and is thus pure. Therefore, claiming that the perception of object's determinate form is a crucial step for the proper aesthetic judgment, McMahon aims at Kant's notion of judgments of dependent beauty, but not free beauty. For if McMahon would take the Kant's notion of free beauty into her account, she would not be insisting on the importance of the perception of determinate forms of objects. Thus, no Kantian account of the free beauty is incorporated in McMahon's notion, and Kant explicitly claims that only the judgments of free beauty are pure judgments of taste. With this in mind, we can move forward to McMahon's association of the feeling of pleasure to the gestalt formation. Gestalt theory of perception tries to understand the process of acquiring and maintain perceptions in an apparently chaotic world, arguing that the mind holds self-organizing tendencies. In this manner, appreciation of beauty emerges from the interaction of the viewer's psychological processes and the artwork's form. McMahon follows Gestalt theory and claims that the matching of form and concept though imagination

[18]For discussions of the distinction between free and adherent beauty see Allison (2001), Kalar (2006), and Zuckert (2007).

is a source of pleasure.[19] Kantian notion of the feeling of pleasure cannot be examined by using principles from the Gestalt theory, as it does not involve any usage of concepts. For Kant, aesthetic experience is a cognitive process, in so far as it involves the activity of cognitive faculties, but it is not a conceptual, but rather non-conceptual process based on a feeling of pure pleasure.

Now, as noted above, my aim is not to criticize McMahon's theory *per se*, as the combination of aesthetic experience and Gestalt theory of perception is commonly accepted among neuroscientists. However, I argue that aesthetic notions implicit in her theory are not equal to notions presented by Kant in the *CPJ*. First of all, she gives great significance to the process of perception and the relation between the subject and the judged object, and defines the notion of the feeling of pleasure as a result of the match of form and concept. Now, even though Kant the pleasure in taste "is connected with the mere apprehension (apprehensio) of the form of the object" (CPJ, Introduction, VII, 5: 189), he clearly states that in the process of aesthetic judgment the form of the object is never conceptually determined. Therefore, McMahon's position that the pleasure arises from the form-concept match is not grounded on Kant's position. Secondly, McMahon blurs the distinction between Kant's notions of free and adherent beauty, as she proclaims that all beauty falls somewhere in between. Given that this distinction is important for Kant's theory of pure judgments of taste, McMahon's claim cannot be equated with Kant's definition of these notions. Lastly, McMahon's account incorporates universal communicability in a similar manner as Guyer's, i.e. through psychological explanation, but her, as well as Guyer's account, cannot explain the "ought" requirement of judgments of taste. No psychological or physiological explanation can provide an answer to why do I not only expect but *demand* that everyone ought to judge the same way as I do.

As presented in this chapter, all attempts to reduce Kant's transcendental aesthetic account to empirical sciences were unsatisfactory. However, this does not yet mean that one can claim with certainty that Kant's aesthetics cannot be naturalized. One possible way that has yet to be examined is the investigation of Kant's theory through neuroaesthetics, a new and emerging field in neurocognitive sciences. Even though closely related to McMahon's (as she connects Kant and contemporary cognitive sciences), this investigation is different in so far as it is based completely on Kantian aesthetic notions as presented in the *CPJ*.

[19]McMahon (2007, p.14).

3.1.Neuroaesthetic investigation of Kant's aesthetics

Neuroaesthetics is orientated towards the investigation of the connection between brain activation and aesthetic experience. The attempts to determine the neural mechanisms of aesthetic experiences originate from the eighteen century, but the neuroaesthetics as a field occurred in the twentieth century with Semir Zeki and Vilayanur Ramachandran's theoretical perspectives. According to Zeki art was perceived as an example of the variability of the brain, and the artist as a neuroscientist, because they both explore the potentials and capacities of the brain. Ramachandran, on the other hand, developed a speculative theory about "laws" of neural mechanisms when perceiving a beautiful object. From then on, areas of investigation within neuroaesthetics are diverse. Some researches continue Zeki and Ramachandran's theoretical approach and investigate the techniques and resources that artists use to engage certain neural processes. Others investigate the impact of brain damage on aesthetic production and aesthetic judgment. Neuroaestheticians are also interested in the evolutionary purpose of the neural underpinnings of aesthetic experiences. With its various research interests, neuroaesthetics is both descriptive and experimental, with observations and tests of hypotheses, aimed at understanding of how humans process beauty and art. In order to test theoretical proposals, and study the role of neural processes in aesthetic experiences, neuroaestheticians use neuroimaging methods (functional magnetic resonance imaging - fMRI and magnetoencephalography - MEG). With the help of these methods, it has been discovered that aesthetic experiences involve brain processes related with perception, memory, attention, emotion and pleasure. Thus neuroimaging techniques allow neuroaestheticians to trace empirical evidence of the aesthetic experience in the brain. In this section I shall investigate whether there is a place for Kant's aesthetic theory within the domain of neuroaesthetics. More specifically, I shall examine the possibility of naturalizing Kant through the methodology of neuroaesthetics.

I shall the examination with the notion of the free play of imagination and understanding, the central notion of Kant's overall aesthetics. It seems that it is hard to reconcile Kant's metaphorical notion with the methodology of natural and cognitive sciences, more specifically, neurobiology and neuroaesthetics. Nevertheless, harmony of certain cognitive centers – imagination and understanding – can be read in terms of contemporary science as a special way of processing information which differs from the way non-aesthetic information are processed. Thus, investigation of the processing of aesthetic information should differ

from investigation of processing other types of information. Investigation of visual aesthetic information starts with the process of seeing, an interconnected process of our sensory system. The object is just a stimulus coming from the external environment, which we experience as a sensation. Some neuroscientists note that we have to distinguish two systems that are involved in the path of sensory information from the mere stimulus towards its interpretation: (1) "sensory system", which detects objects in the world, and (2) "perceptual system", which interprets detected information.[20] While in everyday talk there is no distinction between these two notions, they are quite important for this investigation. Clear line between the end of sensory system and the beginning of the perceptual system cannot be made.

Theories of perception divide into two basic groups, according to the direction of information flow: (1) "bottom-up" (or data-driven), and (2) "top-down" (or concept driven), where:

„bottom-up processing is processing which depends directly on external stimuli, whereas top-down processing is processing which is influenced by expectations, stored knowledge, context and so on." (Eysenck, 1998, p. 152)

Most neuroaestheticians embrace the "top-down" theory of perception. The core idea of this theory is that perception depends on the stimulus and our internal hypothesis, prior knowledge and experiences and expectations. In this manner, when processing sensory stimulus, perception starts with "feeling" sensory data on receptors, but in order to process stimulus, we need to organize and conceptualize by the help of our prior knowledge. Further, some theorists of the "top-down" approach (namely, the theorists of indirect perception) claim that perception is possible only by means of mental representation, meaning that data must be organized by our cognitive apparatus and thus interpreted via collected knowledge and experience.

Interestingly, this theory is philosophically shod with Kant's theory of perception presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason.* Kant held that two faculties – imagination and understanding – play a crucial role in perception and cognition. Kant held that imagination is associated with memory, anticipation and perception. In *Metaphysical Lectures* he suggests that the imagination operates as a "faculty of imitations" insofar as it forms representations of objects we have encounter earlier in the past (i.e. previous knowledge and experience). However, the most crucial significance of the imagination lies in its involvement in our sense perception, and formation of representations of objects here and now (e.g. the cup of tea in front of me). Imagination collects sensory material, arranges it in space and time (in that order), and

[20] See Eysenck, M. (ed.). 1998. *Psychology: An Integrated Approach*, Pearson: England.

produces the spatiotemporalized sensory materials, called *intuitions*. Intuitions are representations related to objects through sensation, where sensations are subjective representations that refer to our state insofar as we are affected by objects. Further, a capacity which enables us to think about the objects given to us through intuitions is called *the understanding*. Thus, while sensibility is responsible for intuitions, understanding is responsible for concepts. Accordingly, Kant states that "thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (CPR A51/B74). It is only with the faculty of understanding that we are able to think about the object given to us through intuition (sensory material). At this point we can agree that the "top-down" theories of perception are suitable framework for the investigation of the free play of faculties, as it matches Kant's theory of perception. Let us further examine whether it matches Kant's theory of aesthetic judgments.

The most notorious theory of the "top-down" approach is the Gestalt theory of perception. The essence of this theory is that the parts of an image can be perceived as distinct components, with the whole being different that the sum of the parts. Gestalt made a large contribution to neuroaesthetics, as it emphasizes the connection between sensual perception and aesthetic dimension of organization: visual system operates in a way that it constructs order out of ambiguous stimuli received from the external world.

A great example of the Gestalt theory in neuroaesthetics research is provided by Muth, Pepperell and Carbon (2013), and their study of cubist artwork aesthetic appreciation. Several photographs of Picasso's, Braque's and Gris' artworks were shown to subjects who did not have any expertise in cubist art. The study was formed out of two parts: the first part was to rank the liking of the shown artworks, while in the second part, subjects were asked to rate their ability to identify the object within the work. The researchers used neuroimaging techniques, which indicate subjects' brain activity in a process of making the aesthetic judgments. The results showed a strong connection between the identification of objects and liking, thus indicating a relationship between object and form recognition and aesthetic appreciation.[21] The conclusion of this research was that Gestalt formation is closely linked to appreciation of artworks. Further, they investigated the pleasure felt in aesthetic appreciation and conclude that the pleasure derives from challenging stimuli, in which we try to detect order in disorder, and meaning in ambiguity. Thus, cubist artwork are highly ranked (meaning

[21] See Muth, C., Pepperell, R., and Carbon, C., 2013. "Give Me Gestalt! Preference for Cubist Artworks Revealing High Detectability of Objects", *Leonardo*, 46 (2013).

that they were “much liked” on a 7-point Likert-scale) not because the simplicity and immediacy of identification of the objects within them, but because of the presence of novelty, unpredictability, ambiguity and the rewarding feeling of the transition from the state of ambiguity to a state of increased clarity. In this manner, aesthetic appreciation does not lie in the recognition of the ambiguity of artwork, rather, the “struggling” with an ambiguous work of great or fine art is what brings pleasure.

In the context of art appreciation and perception itself, there are many neurobiological researches that confirm the Gestalt principles of aesthetic perception. Ishai et al. (2007) propose a correlation between the time needed to comprehend the work of art and its value. This is based on the fact that aesthetic experience is rooted in the prefrontal cortex, known for its roles in the perception, decision making, problem-solving, and memory. Further, Pepperell (2011) proposes a thesis that the higher the effort in recognition and ambiguity solving invested in an artwork, the higher the aesthetic value. This led Chatterjee and Vartanian (2014) to conclude that the aesthetic experience is interplay between brain systems, namely, neural systems involved in sensory-motor processes and the emotion-evaluation processes. Therefore, the interplay of brain systems is involved in the state of “decoding” an artwork.

Let us provide an example of how Gestalt-favorable theory of neuroaesthetics explains aesthetic judgment. Imagine that you are standing in front of a *Weeping Woman,* a Pablo Picasso’s painting. You perceive it, but you cannot meaningfully define what the painting represents. This is where the aesthetic experience starts. Involvement with an ambiguous work of art triggers emotions (which is accompanied with an increased activity of the amygdala), and encourages specific brain areas to “solve” the ambiguity, i.e. to recognize and identify the object on the painting. We want to recognize and subsume the object within the painting under a given concept, and the process of finding an adequate interpretation is count as an aesthetic experience. The specialization of our brain for face-processing (located in the fusiform face area), allows us to recognize the depiction of woman’s face in fragment. By including prior knowledge and experiences, we can now interpret the artwork, even though not all ambiguities are solved. However, given that everyone has unique prior experiences and cognitive background, we do not interpret the painting univocally. Thus, I can judge that the painting is beautiful and propose interpretation can be that the woman in the work is “broken” and fragmentary because she is sad, but I cannot expect (none the less, require) that everyone will interpret and appraise the painting as I do.

To sum up, the usage of the Gestalt theory of perception within neuroaesthetics contributed to the widely accepted view that aesthetic experience is connected with ambiguity solving. Accordingly, the process of aesthetic judgment starts with seeing a work of art, and its objects in various forms, but which cannot be fully and meaningfully identify. Here an unconscious ambiguity arouses, and the process of possible identification of the object starts. The latter is triggered by self-rewarding character of solving the ambiguities. However, ambiguities are never completely solved, i.e. the objects are never fully recognized, nor are subsumed under an appropriate concept. The feeling of pleasure arouse when we struggle to identify the given object, expecting the reward (self-pleasure). Triggered by this feeling, we make aesthetic judgment. When it comes to questioning the logical quantity of aesthetic judgment, Rolls, proposing his theory of aesthetics as based on neurology and empirical facts (but closely related to Gestalt approach to aesthetic experience), claims that "art is not universal or objective, but instead can be judged good art if it taps into many of the human rational and gene-based reward systems (...) with therefore individual differences expected" (2011, p. 158). Correspondingly, not only solving, but also detecting ambiguities in a work of art or beautiful object in the nature varies from person to person, and given that no one can claim wrong recognition, it seems that aesthetic judgments cannot be universally valid, but are rather subjective.

It is clear that the results from neuroaesthetics examination of the arousal of aesthetic experience and aesthetic judgments are not compatible with Kant's aesthetic theory presented in the *CPJ*. As presented in the example of judging the Picasso's *Weeping Woman*, one cannot claim universality of his aesthetic judgment, and cannot expect that his feeling of pleasure will be shared. The aesthetic judgment is thus merely subjective, as it depends on subject's background knowledge, experiences, engagement with the judged object and motivation. Namely, some neuroaestheticians agree that higher involvement in the object that is being aesthetically judged results with higher motivation for solving the ambiguity it incorporates, and, consequentially, higher feeling of pleasure. Thus, no universality can be demand, not of the state of mind, nor the pleasure. When judging the *Weeping Woman*, one does not "believe himself to have grounds for expecting a similar pleasure of everyone" (CPJ, §6, 5: 211), as the feeling of pleasure derives from subjective self-rewarding character of the aesthetic experience. Therefore, neuroaesthetics cannot embrace Kant's notion of judgments of taste as necessary and universally valid. Further, if one is guided by the desire to achieve a goal, i.e. to solve the ambiguity found in the judged object, then that judgment cannot be disinterested.

Thus, the notions of the free play of the faculties, as well as the disinterested pleasure, cannot be explained in terms of neuroaesthetics.

The notion which was not mentioned in this brief discussion is the notion of the common sense. It is interesting that for this notion neuroaesthetics hypothesis was provided. Namely, Linda Palmer (2008a) in paper *Kant and the Brain* proposes that a candidate for the common sense can be found in the brain. More specifically, Palmer suggests that the neurobiological substrate of Kantian common sense is the amygdala. She interprets Kant's notion of the common sense as an internal signal (of pleasure) which accompanies the coordination of imagination and understanding in judging. This signal is found both in aesthetic judgments, and in empirical cognitive judgments, which led Palmer to describe a candidate neuronal substrate for such a signal, and studies testing this idea in animal learning. While Palmer's attempt is praiseworthy, she based her hypothesis on animal studies, namely rat and monkey studies of the amygdala functioning. And while there can be correlation between animal and human studies when it comes to the role of the amygdala in the process of learning, I cannot agree with Palmer that the same is true when it comes to aesthetic experience. However, two things are concerning when it comes to Palmer's hypothesis. First, Kant in the *CPJ* clearly states that the notion of the common sense he uses in his aesthetic theory does "not mean any external sense but rather the effect of the free play of our cognitive powers" (CPJ, §20, 5: 238). Second, the common sense is crucial for aesthetic judgments, as it is subjective condition for universal communicability and necessity of the judgment of taste, the *a priori* principle which need to be presupposed, for "only under the presupposition of such a common sense, I say, can the judgment of taste be made" (Ibid.).

To conclude, Kant's aesthetic theory cannot be imbedded into neuroaesthetics theories that appeal to Gestalt principles of perception, due to the fact that the latter demands the use of concept and describes aesthetic experience of a subject in relation to aesthetic properties of the judged object. Concepts are necessary for neuroaesthetics account of aesthetic experience, as we judge whether or not the object is beautiful in accordance to them. When engaging with the work of art, our mind seeks to find unity and harmonious representation, and thus tries to solve ambiguity that are implicit in every beautiful object of nature or art. This problem-solving activity triggers the feeling of pleasure, which increases with the reveling the ambiguous overall picture. The claim for universality is dismissed due to individual differences, different background knowledge, the absence of wrong recognition and wrong interpretation of ambiguities, as well as the absence of ultimate solution and meaning.

Therefore, Kant's aesthetic notions cannot be incorporated into neuroaesthetics Gestalt theories, nor can it be a subject of neuroaesthetics. With this examination, as announced in the Introduction of this paper, I showed that there are no candidates that could justify the empirical interpretation of the *CPJ*.

4. NEW AESTHETIC TRANSCENDENTALISM

In the previous chapter, the plausibility of empirical interpretation of the *CPJ* was examined, and was showed that neuroaesthetics, just like Guyer and McMahon, failed in the attempt to naturalize Kant's aesthetics. However, as announced in the conclusion of the previous chapter, this does not mean that the interpretation that should be embraced is the transcendental one. The plausibility of the transcendental interpretation of the *CPJ* is yet to be examined. Therefore in this chapter I shall question whether or not the transcendental interpretation of the *CPJ* is plausible. I shall focus on the transcendental interpretation suggested by Hannah Ginsborg grounded on her one-act reading of the §9, but will also incorporate interpretations of this type offered by scholars who disagree with some elements of Ginsborg's reading. Before the detailed elaboration of these interpretations, let us first see what the notion of transcendental interpretation itself means. Broadly speaking, transcendental interpretation of the *CPJ* is interpretation in the light of Kant's overall transcendental philosophical idealism. The notion of the transcendental presents a form of knowledge, not of objects themselves but of the way in which we are able to know them. More specifically, it presents the conditions of possible experience. This notion is elaborated in a detailed manner in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and in the *Critique of Power of Judgment*, Kant maps what is transcendental in aesthetic experience. Under the general heading "Deduction of Pure Aesthetic Judgments", Kant grounds the right to demand agreement upon the judgment of taste by showing that it derives from a subjective principle that is itself transcendentally grounded. Therefore, Kant's transcendental argument in the *Deduction* consists out of two steps: (1) the formulation of the *a priori* principle which underlies judgments of taste (in §35), and (2) the formulation of the transcendental grounding of this principle (in §38). The *a priori* claims of pure judgments of taste demand an interpretation of the *a priori* which makes universality and necessity plausible elements of aesthetic judgments. Therefore, the main sense of Kant's use of the term *a priori* relevant for the investigation of the pure judgments of taste is its marks of universal communicability and necessity, i.e. the *Second* and the *Fourth moment* of the *Analytic of the Beautiful*. The involvement of the *a priori* principle is set in order to explain how aesthetic judgments can claim necessity and universal validity:

"Thus it is not the pleasure but the universal validity of this pleasure perceived in the mind as connected with the mere judging of an object that is represented in a judgment of taste as a universal rule for the power of judgment,

valid for everyone. It is an empirical judgment that I perceive and judged 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." (CPJ, §37, 5: 289)

There is a normativity in the judgment of taste, based on the *a priori* principle. This normativity is incorporated in the feeling of pleasure. However, it is not clear whether the pleasure is the consequence of the universal communicability, or is it the former ground of the latter. §9 holds the key to answering this question:

"Thus it is the universal capacity for the communication of the state of mind in the given representation which, as the subjective condition of the judgment of taste, must serve as its ground and have the pleasure in the object as a consequence." (CPJ, §9, 5: 217).

The pure judgments of taste ought to include disinterested feeling of pleasure which is determined by the necessity of being universally communicable. This communicability of the pleasure felt in a judgment of taste is experienced as internal signal of coordination felt by the common sense. Pleasure signals the harmony, whereas displeasure signals disharmony of the faculties. Therefore, when stating that "universal capacity for the communication (…) must serve as its ground and have the pleasure in the object as a consequence", Kant claims two things: first that the communicability grounds on the pleasure, in so far as judgment of taste could not claim universal validity without the disinterested feeling of pleasure; and second, that the pleasure is a consequence of the universal communicability, in so far as only through universal communicability of my mental state can I estimate whether the felt feeling is disinterested or not, and this sense of universal communicability is felt by the common sense. Only in this sense the pleasure is a consequence of the universal communicability. Moreover, the universal communicability of the pleasure presupposes the claim to necessity:

"That being able to communicate one's state of mind, even if only with regard to the faculties of cognition, carries a pleasure with it, could easily be established (empirically and psychologically) from the natural tendency of human beings to sociability. But that is not enough for our purposes. When we call something beautiful, the pleasure that we feel is expected of everyone else in the judgment of taste as necessary" (CPJ, §9, 5: 218)

Given that aesthetic judgments include an "ought", they have to be grounded on *a priori* principle. As will be presents, the advocates of the transcendental interpretation claim that no psychology can ever justify the claim of "ought" of judgments of taste. Therefore, Kant insists

that the claim to necessity of judgments of taste rejects every empirical psychological treatment, and demands a transcendental inquiry. Kant clearly states that:

"In this modality of aesthetic judgments, namely their presumed necessity, lies a principal moment for the critique of the power of judgment. For it makes us cognizant of an *a priori* principle in them, and elevates them out of empirical psychology, in which they would otherwise remain buried among the feelings of enjoyment and pain (only with the meaningless epithet of a more refined feeling), in order to place them and by their means the power of judgment in the class of those which have as their ground *a priori* principles, and as such to transpose them into transcendental philosophy." (CPJ, §29, 5: 266)

The necessity of judgments of beauty requires elucidation through transcendental investigation, as he claims the *a priori* element of aesthetic judgments is irreducible to psychological processes. Therefore, the transcendental interpretation of the *CPJ* is based on un-psychological, transcendental inquiry of an *a priori* principle which is the conditions under which aesthetic experience is possible.

According to Hannah Ginsborg the *a priori* principle of taste is assigned to judgment in its reflective capacity. Therefore, she starts her interpretation with the comparison of reflective judgments and judgments of taste. The notion of reflective judgment is introduced by Kant in order to solve the problem of the empirical heterogeneity of natural phenomena, but it is also present in judgments of taste. Accordingly, Ginsborg argues that Kant takes that the judgment of taste rests on the same *a priori* principle which underlies scientific inquiry, in particular constructing taxonomies of natural kinds and hierarchical systems of empirical laws. This is an *a priori* principle of reflecting judgment that nature is purposive for our cognitive faculties or purposive for judgment, and is recognized as the *principle of the systematicity of nature*[22]. Reflective judgment is usually considered as the capacity to engage in empirical scientific

[22] This principle is formulated by Kant in a variety of ways: in some passages it is the principle of nature's systematicity, and in others is one of nature's purposiveness for our cognitive faculties. In this paper I use the terms "nature's systematicity" and "nature's purposiveness" as equivalent, even though Kant scholars are not univocal that Kant refers to the same principle with these two notions. In this paper I shall not engage in this debate. For discussion, see. Guyer, P., 2003. "Kant on the Systematicity of Nature: Two Puzzles", *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Jul., 2003), pp. 277-295.; and Ginsborg, H. 2015. „Why must we presuppose the systematicity of nature?" in *Kant and Laws*, Angela Breitenbach and Michela Massimi (ed.), Cambridge University Press.

inquiry by organizing particular concepts and laws into a unified theory of natural phenomena, but Ginsborg suggests a broader conception of reflective judgment as "the capacity to take one's perceptual states to be universally valid in relation to particular objects." (1990, p. 64)[23]. She states that

"to be capable of bringing objects under empirical concepts is to be capable of claiming that one's perceptions are universally valid with respect to the particular objects that occasion them." (1990, p. 70)

Such definition of reflective judgment in general can be employed for the purpose of cognition (i.e. in which it serves to bring particular objects under empirical concepts), and for the purpose which does not give rise to cognition (i.e. through which objects are experienced as beautiful). When employed for the purpose of cognition, reflective judgment rests on the principle of the systematicity of nature, a principle which allows scientists to recognize coherence and systematicity of the nature as a whole. Therefore, this principle is of nature's purposiveness, and is amenable to the activity of reflective judgment itself. Kant claims that this systematicity is not something that we cognize logically with concepts, but rather, we presuppose in an *a priori* and subjective fashion that the nature is systematically ordered in regard to our faculty of cognition. This presupposition is required for engagement in scientific inquiry, and for formation of empirical concepts. Accordingly, the account of empirical conceptualization can be used to explain what the notion of "reflection" means in a way that respects the transcendental role of the faculty of judgment. Ginsborg is very aware of this, as she claims that

"the act through which "judgment reflects on an object…in order to bring it under some concept or other" is the act of taking one's perception of the object to be universally valid." (1990, p. 70).

While in the empirical conceptualization, the act of judgment brings the object under empirical concept depending on the prior sensory content of one's mental state, in the judgment of taste, the universal validity of a mental state is claimed independently of any sensory content at all. Thus, the same act of reflection performed for all empirical

[23] Ginsborg also elaborates her interpretation of reflective judgments in Ginsborg, H. 2006. "Thinking the Particular as Contained Under the Universal," in Rebecca Kukla (ed.), *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, but I think that the grounds of this interpretation have been presented in her paper „Reflective Judgment and Taste", so in this discussion I primarily refer to the latter paper.

conceptualization is involved in judgments of taste, with an exception that this act is done in an indeterminate way, and thus fails to bring the object under a specific concept.
The motivation for claiming that the *a priori* principle upon which judgments of taste are grounded is the principle of the systematicity of nature comes from Kant's statements made in the *First* and the published *Introduction*. In regard to judgments of taste, in the *First Introduction*, Kant claims the following:

"Although they themselves are not possible *a priori*, yet *a priori* principles are given in the necessary idea of experience as a system, and these principles contain the concept of a formal purposiveness of nature for our judgment and reveal *a priori* the possibility of aesthetic judgments of reflection as judgments based on *a priori* principles" (CPJ, FI 20: 232–233);

while in the published *Introduction*, he equates the principle underlying judgments of taste with the principle of the systematicity of nature "in terms of its particular (empirical) laws, for our cognitive faculty" (CPJ 5: 193).

However, it is not completely clear how can the principle of systematicity of nature be responsible for the occurrence of the feeling of pleasure in judgments of taste.

This is why Ginsborg offers a unique characterization of the judgment of taste, based on §9 of the *CPJ* and Kant's claim that it is the aesthetic judging that precedes the pleasure in the judgment. Ginsborg grounds her theory on the last paragraph of §9 in which Kant makes clear that the mental state in the given representation is the feeling of pleasure, which is in effect a consequence of the universal communicability of the pleasure itself. On this ground Ginsborg develops her one-act reading of the §9 according to which the act of judgment which precedes the pleasure is identical with the act through which the pleasure is judged to be universally communicable. This judgment is to be explained as a formal and self-referential judgment which does not claim universal validity of an antecedently given feeling of pleasure, but rather its own universal validity. Therefore, according to her interpretation, judgments of taste are judgments about the normativity of one's mental state: when I judge that Picasso's *Weeping Woman* is beautiful, I demand that all others who perceive this artwork ought to agree with my judgment. The demand for agreement implicit in this judgment is simply the demand that this normativity be recognized by others. Now the *a priori* principle of the

systematicity of nature is implicit in my demand for universal agreement with respect to an object:

"If a judgment of taste is to be legitimate, then there must be some rule or principle in terms of which it can be justified. But because of its status as a purely formal act of reflective judgment, it cannot be justified, like any specific empirical judgment, on the basis of some feature of the object. Rather, it must derive its legitimacy from the general possibility of making empirical judgments about particular objects: that is, from the legitimacy of reflective judgment in its cognitive employment. Consequentially, the principle which makes judgments of taste legitimate must be the same principle which underlies, at the most general level, our capacity to bring objects under empirical concepts: and this is the principle of the systematicity of nature." (1990, p. 76).

Even though she explains the legitimation of the judgment of taste by claiming that self-referential judgments are grounded on the principle of the systematicity of nature, the connection between the self-referential judgment and the feeling of pleasure is not clear. Ginsborg, in order to clear this vagueness, turns to the statement that "the consciousness of a representation's causality directed at a subject's state so as to keep him in that state" (CPJ, §10, 5: 220). With this in mind, Ginsborg suggests that the pleasure of taste occurs due to the self-grounding character of one's mental state, where what makes it self-grounding is its normativity. Accordingly, I remain in that mental state because I recognize that I ought to be in it, and this is something that brings pleasure.

Ginsborg's interpretation is recognized by many commentators as highly problematic. The first group of critiques is directed towards the claim that aesthetic judgments are grounded on the *a priori* principle of the nature's systematicity. Here, according to commentators, several problems arise. First of all, the relation between the principle of nature's purposiveness and the aesthetic judgments is concerning, as the nature's systematicity is deduced as a principle of cognitive judgments, which do not involve a feeling inherent to judgments of taste.[24] Henry Allison stresses that Kant did made an attempt to show that a feeling of pleasure arouses when fulfilling a cognitive aim, but this kind of pleasure is completely different from the disinterested pleasure of taste. Another worry also recognized by Allison is about the validity of judgments of taste, as

[24]See Allison, H., 2001. Kant's Theory of Taste, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., p. 61

"the attempted grounding of aesthetic judgments in the principle of logical or formal purposiveness does not work, since the validity of the latter does not entail even the possibility of the validity of any instance of the former" (2001, p. 62).

In the same fashion, Guyer claims that even if the validity is granted, it could account only for the judgments of natural beauty, and not for artistic beauty. By stating this, Guyer actually criticizes Kant himself, claiming that Kant's mistake lies in the suggestion that the principle of judgments of taste must be one about natural objects of taste. [25] This is why both Guyer and Allison claim that Kant (as well as Ginsborg who follows him) was wrong when equating the principle of nature's systematicity with principle of taste. Allison offers a solution to the problematic connection between these two principles by claiming that Kant should have suggest that the "demonstration that judgment in its investigation of nature has an *a priori* principle unique to it raises the possibility that it also has one in its aesthetic capacity." (2001, p. 63). In other words, the deduction of the principle of nature's systematicity presents a sort of prelude to a deduction of taste, but does not itself constitute that deduction. Moreover, he notes that Ginsborg tried to provide an account for the key to the normativity of aesthetic judgments, but failed to do so, as the key must lie in the nature of judgment, and not in the nature of nature. Nevertheless, Allison himself does not reject the connection implicit in the relation of aesthetic judgments and principles of nature's purposiveness, but rather claims that the

"true relationship between formal or logical purposiveness and taste is not that the former is itself the principle of the latter; it is rather that the principle licensing the former (the conditions of a reflective use of judgment) is identical to the principle underlying the latter." (2001, p. 64).

He concludes that this type of reading is the only plausible, as it preserves the essential link between judgments of taste and the account of reflective judgments upon which Kant insists in both Introductions.

When it comes to Ginsborg's interpretation of §9, Allison partly endorses Ginsborg's criticisms of Guyer, but raises difficulties for her reading of the mentioned paragraph. He asserts that Ginsborg has gone too far when affirming that judgments of taste are essentially about their own normativity, and extracts four major considerations which speak against her

[25] See Guyer (1979, pp. 61–67).

interpretation of Kant's §9.[26] Firstly, Allison states that from Kant's rejection that the feeling of pleasure precedes the act of judging does not follow that we must view judgments of taste as self-referential, or that the pleasure of taste is a pleasure in the universal validity of a mental state. The second problem is actually a continuation of the first, and is consisted out of "its [Ginsborg's reading] apparent lack of accord with the main drift of the overall argument in §9." (2001, p. 114). The third problem strikes the notion of the disinterested pleasure. As Allison notices, in Ginsborg's account the pleasure seems to deprive of its disinterested nature. However, Ginsborg explicitly denies this possibility and states that the pleasure of taste is disinterested because it involves self-perpetuation without mediation by desire.[27] The fourth problem is the most worrying one, as it raises question about negative judgments of taste[28]. Allison is convinced that Ginsborg's reading does not allow room for judgments of ugliness, for if

"the pleasure of taste is literally in the universal communicability of one's pleasure, then there is no place for an analogous universally communicable displeasure, since universal communicability is itself a source of pleasure." (2001, p. 115).

Allison therefore claims that Ginsborg's interpretation is too problematic to be endorsed as the most valid interpretation of the *CPJ*. Rather, he suggests the intentional interpretation of the notion of the disinterested pleasure, where "intentionality"of pleasure is not cognitive:

"the relationship between the free harmony of the faculties and the pleasure in a judgment of taste is intentional as well as causal (...) the feeling of pleasure is not simply the effect of such a harmony (though it is that); it is also the very means through which one becomes aware of this harmony, albeit in a way that does not involve cognition." (2001, pp. 53-54).

Even though stating that the relation between the harmony and the pleasure is causal, Allison does not embrace Guyer's causal interpretation, claiming that Guyer's reading of §9 attributes to Kant "the thesis that what the judgment of taste demands (or predicts) of others is that they have qualitatively identical feelings in response to the same objects" (2001, p. 113).

[26] See Allison (2001, p.114).

[27] See Ginsborg, H., 1990. "Reflective Judgment and Taste", Noûs, 24, p. 73.

[28] The notion of the negative judgment of taste is rather problematic, as scholars disagree whether it claims that an object is not beautiful or that it is ugly. Furthermore, some scholars, for example Ginsborg (2003) and Guyer (2005, Ch. 6), have denied that there a pure displeasure in the ugly, or, correlatively a pure negative judgment of taste. For the overview of the discussion concerning negative judgments of taste, see McConnell, S., 2008. "How Kant Might Explain Ugliness". *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 48: 205–28.

Another criticism of Ginsborg's interpretation is offered by Linda Palmer, who agrees with Ginsborg about the insufficiency of the empirical-psychological explanations of the *CPJ*[29], but raises issues implicated in Ginsborg's interpretation. Palmer's criticism is based on the close-reading of §§6-9, and stresses the worry that "Ginbsorg's reading seems to pith the judgment of essential content, leaving it hardly recognizable as a judgment of beauty" (2008, p. 32). According to Ginsborg's reading of the §9 as presented in the paper "On the key to Kant's Critique of Taste" (1991), Kant's statement that the judging precedes the pleasure is implicitly interpreted in a temporal sense, rather than, as Palmer suggest, in a consequential or grounding sense. However, Ginsborg in a footnote of the essay "The Pleasure of Judgment: Kant and the Possibility of Taste" (2015) notes that her intention was to deny that the relation between the act of judging and the pleasure is temporal, and to claim that the subject feels pleasure in virtue of taking her state of mind to be universally communicable so that the pleasure is grounded on the judging.[30] In this footnote Ginsborg recognizes Palmer's account of the non-temporal, non-psychological character of the grounding of judgments of taste.

Despite of criticisms, some scholars agree with a great part of Ginsborg's interpretation. I shall now present two scholars – Beatrice Longuenesse and Robert Wicks – who follow Ginsborg's account, but do not endorse all aspects of her reading. Longuenesse embraces Ginsborg's one-act reading of §9, but is in partial agreement with Ginsborg, as she also defines pleasure in terms of subject's awareness of the universal communicability of her mental state. However, Longuenesse claims that judgment of taste should be regarded two judgments which are "implicit" in one another: judgments about the object are "the explicit judgment", whereas "the implicit judgment" is a claim on the judging subjects (which includes me as a judging subject and the claim on other judging subjects). However, Longuenesse does not claim that these two judgments are two distinct and separate acts of judgments of taste (like Guyer), but that these are two types of judgments that are implicit in one another. The part of Longuenesse interpretation of the *CPJ* that is the most distinct from Ginsborg's is her understanding that there are two types of pleasures in judgments of taste.

[29] "In this respect I fully concur with Ginsborg's very helpful critical analysis of Guyer's account as attempting to give an empirically naturalistic reduction of what she identifies as some of Kant's most irreducibly non-empiricistic claims." (2008b, p. 18).

[30] See Ginsborg, H., 2015. *The Normativity of Nature: Essays on Kant's Critique of Judgment*, OUP Oxford, p 123).

Longuenesse suggests that there is a first-order pleasure, which occurs in the harmonious play of the faculties. Accordingly, as the harmonious play is universally communicable, the second-order pleasure arises, taken in the universal communicability of the first-order pleasure. In this manner, Longuenesse claim matches Ginsborg's claim that there would be no feeling of pleasure in taste without the claim for universal communicability, as Longuenesse herself states that communicability is "a self-standing source of pleasure" (2003, p. 155).

However, I do not think that Longuenesse's account does more justice to Kant's aesthetic than Ginsborg's. Even though Longuenesse in some aspects follow Ginsborg, she proposes different interpretation of pleasure. It does not seem that Longuenesse's two different orders of pleasure are justified, as she claim that we feel pleasure in the universal communicability of a pleasure, but at the same time denies that we would feel pleasure in the universal communicability of the mental state. In my opinion, there is no reason why should I feel pleasure in the universal communicability of a pleasure, and not feel pleasure in the universal communicability of the harmonious mental state.

Another advocate of Ginsborg's transcendental interpretation is Robert Wicks, who, as the starting point of his interpretation takes Ginsborg's identification of the pleasure and the judgment. Wicks argues that the harmony of the faculties embodies the form of judgments of taste, and triggers the satisfaction taken in beauty. This satisfaction therefore must be construed as being grounded upon the act of judging of the object, "where this "judging" is none other than the harmony of the cognitive faculties itself" (2007, p. 44). However, unlike Ginsborg, Wicks does not explicitly claim that the pleasure or judgment must involve a claim to its own universal validity, but claims that a harmony that is universally communicable, since it is the expression of *cognition in general*.

Unlike Longuenesse's, Wicks' account is very keen to Ginsborg's interpretation of §9 and her one-act reading. However, Wicks does not endorse the consequence of Ginsborg's reading, that the pleasure or judgment must yield a claim to *its* own universal communicability. Ginsborg claims that this consequence is apparent and logically follows from her reading. Therefore, it seems that if Wicks wants to follow Ginsborg's reading, he needs to accept the consequence of that reading.

To conclude, even though transcendental interpretation proposed by Ginsborg encounters with certain difficulties, it is still a better account for interpretation of Kant's aesthetic theory, than is the empirical interpretation. Firstly, transcendental interpretation is grounded exclusively

on textual evidences found in the CPJ, with respect to the paragraph which presets the key to the critique of taste – §9. Secondly, transcendental interpretation incorporates the a priori grounding principle of judgments of taste, and only calling upon this principle the claims of necessity, universal communicability and disinterestedness could be explained.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper I made an attempt to examine which interpretation – empirical (advocated by Guyer and McMahon) or transcendental (advocated by Ginsborg, Longuenesse and Wicks) – is more favorable to Kant's aesthetic theory as presented in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. My examination started with the overview of Kant's aesthetics and the interpretative issues it raises, with special emphasize on the interpretative solutions of §9 offered by Guyer and Ginsborg. The importance of §9 for the sake of the plausible interpretation of the *CPJ* lies in Kant's insisting that the judging precedes the pleasure. This implies that the judging is based on the pleasure, which is in turn the result of the free play. The latter explanation is offered by Ginsborg in her one-act reading of the §9, a reading that sets the ground for the transcendental interpretation of the *CPJ*, which I find it to be the most favorable interpretation of the third *Critique*. This is because neither Guyer nor McMahon offer interpretations which are suitable for Kant's aesthetic theory, as they do not explain in a respectful manner notions of the universal communicability, disinterested pleasure and, above all, the claim of necessity. The most problematic notion of judgments of taste is its "ought" requirement. As presented in the paper, empirical interpretations offered by Guyer and McMahon cannot explain why do I, when making the judgment of taste, demand that everyone ought to share my mental state, my feeling of pleasure and my judgment about the object. Without referring to the a priori principle and the transcendental ground of the judgment of taste, the latter cannot be explained with respect to Kant's account presented in the CPJ. After rejecting their interpretations I examined the possibility of naturalizing Kant through neuroaesthetics, but this attempt also ends up in failure. Accordingly, neuroaesthetics approach grounded on the Gestalt theory of perception can neither explain the features of universal validity, disinterestedness and necessity of judgments of taste. These features can be explained only by invoking the *a priori* ground of judgments of taste, a maneuver performed by the advocators of transcendental interpretation. Therefore, even though transcendental interpretation as offered by Ginsborg has difficulties (recognized by Allison), judgments of taste cannot be explained in terms of empirical sciences, as no empirical science can explain the transcendental experience which yields necessity for every rational human agent. This unique nature of judgments of taste, namely their necessity, universality and subjectivity, is what inspired Kant to incorporate aesthetics into his Critical philosophy. And as I have shown in this paper, these features are only to be explained if we embrace aesthetic transcendentalism and define judgments of taste as unique transcendental experience.

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