

Cosmopolitan *Sensus Communis*: The Common of Sense – Sense of the Common

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Kant's idea of cosmopolitan right is closely related to aesthetic judgement that, in turn, is invoked for conceptualising a sensus communis. Kant turns 'the common of sense' of his predecessors into a 'sense of the common' without, however, cancelling out the former. A relationship is posited between the common of sense and a sense of the common in a focus imaginarius, giving rise to a non-idiopathic sensus communis.

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One of the most famous philosophical elaborations of the cosmopolitical to date remains Kant's 1795 treatise on *Perpetual Peace (Zum ewigen Frieden)*. In Kantian-characteristic manner, one of the central tenets of that treatise is tucked away in a footnote to the introduction to the Second Section containing the definitive articles on perpetual peace among states. In this lengthy footnote, Kant outlines the possibility of perpetual peace within a constitution comprising a system of law/right at three levels:

- at the level of “the state citizens’ law of men in a people” (*ius civitatis*)
- at the level of “the law of nations, of states in relation to one another” (*ius gentium*)
- at the level of “cosmopolitan right”,¹ “so far as men and states standing in an external relation of influence on each other are to be regarded as citizens of a universal state of men” (*ius cosmopolitanicum*) (“*Weltbürgerrecht*”). (Kant [1795] 1984: 11 n. – 2. Abschnitt; English transl. Kant [1795] 1988: 61).

Kant attempts to explicate the relationship of these three levels to each other through an analogy that distributes the same attributes to each one of these three levels, i.e. across an ascending and progressively increasing order of magnitude: Just as members of a polity should organise them-

selves into a lawful civil state on the basis of a social contract formalised in a republican constitution, so, too, should states form themselves into a confederation. And just as peace should be safeguarded within a republican state, so a league of nations should regulate a peaceful co-existence of different states in relation to each other. And the rights of a world citizen should pertain to all states and citizens. A simple equation – or so it seems.

If we take a closer look at this edifice, however, it turns out that it is extremely fraught and fragile. What remains is its foundation – namely a civic-republican constitution for the individual state. But even this basic requirement cannot be transferred to the next higher level – the second, middle level outlined above. A state within a comity of nations, or federation, is not bound by law in the same way as an individual citizen is to the laws of one particular state. States entering into a comity with each other, each already have a constitution informing a set of laws internally, and thus are relieved of the obligation to establish a constitution at the next higher level – i.e. in inter-state relations (Kant [1795] 1988: 74, 77).

Kant comes to reject the model of the state for the form of organisation of a comity of nations. A comity of nations cannot, without the risk of contradiction and self-elimination, organise itself into a polity of the form of the national state. A united world state would annihilate all sovereign liberties of individual states, and would undermine the obligations of individual states toward their respective citizens (see Kant [1795] 1988: 74).

Instead, Kant postulates a federal consociation of free states based on a peace covenant (see Kant [1795] 1988: 77). But such a consociation of states has no state-guaranteed legal basis, and no civil society as a critical counter to the state.

At the third level, that of cosmopolitan right, the edifice, so far held together by a fragile analogy, threatens to collapse altogether. It is instructive to see how Kant switches registers here – from practical reason to imagination (Kant [1795] 1988: 64).

While cosmopolitan right is a “necessary complement of the unwritten code of both the law of the state and the law of nations” (Kant [1795] 1988: 87), and therefore forms an analogon to the law of nations, it adheres to a different cognitive principle. In eluding our understanding, and even our capability of deducing it, we have to add it in our thinking, “in the manner of artifice” (“*nach der Analogie menschlicher Kunsthandlungen*”) (Kant [1795] 1984: 25 – Dritter Definitivartikel, Erster Zusatz; English transl. Kant [1795] 1988: 88), i.e. through imagination. In relation to the right of citizens within a state, and a state within a confederation of states, the cosmopolitanism of Kant’s idea of eternal peace contains a critical excess.

To be able to trace the source of this excess, I would like to revert to those writings of Kant that have informed the thinking of ‘cosmopolitan right’. This would lead me to explore the sense of human commonality in conjunction with imagination and aesthetic judgement, and the judgement of taste in particular. In this exploration, I shall embark on a winding path, moving between Kant’s pre-critical writings of the 1760s, the three Critiques of the 1780s, and of 1790. I am interested in following the twists and turns in the conceptualisation of a *sensus communis* to find resources to address some of our contemporary questions, and to spell out their implications for imagining and thinking the cosmopolitical.

The distinct and non-legal status of ‘cosmopolitan right’ emerges if we read it within the parameters of a theory of judgement. For Kant, judgement mobilises cognitive powers through the capacity of representation (*Vorstellung*), imagination (*Einbildungskraft*), and the understanding. What gives the imagination a central role in the theory of judgement is its capacity of becoming independent, i.e. not subservient to understanding. The imagination can, of its own accord, find a general term for the particular. This is what the imagination shares with the aesthetic: the capacity to make sensorily palpable what reason cannot determine through subsumption under a rule, and what understanding cannot cognise through a concept (Kant [1790] 1994: 145 – para 15).

Aesthetic judgement, as subjective judgement, claims general validity not in relation to a concept of the object, but in relation to that which emerges from the contemplation of the object for every subject – i.e. a “subjective universality”:

[Aesthetic judgement] has this similarity to a logical judgment that we can presuppose its validity for all men. But this universality cannot arise from concepts Consequently the judgment of taste ... must claim validity for every man, without this universality depending on objects. That is, there must be bound up with it a title to subjective universality. (Kant [1790] 1951: 46 – para 6)²

Kant adds, significantly, that this “subjective universality” does not simply turn a subjective condition of judgement into an ‘objective’ one; but that it validates judgement that itself contains an ‘ought’, making of it an ideal norm, a case of exemplary validity (Kant [1790] 1951: 76).

This latter aspect approximates aesthetic judgment to moral judgement: under the presupposition of an accord with *sensus communis*, aesthetic judgement gestures toward the moral law. In such a presumed accord, *sensus communis* itself attains the character of an ideal norm, under which the judgement, that is thought in accordance with it, could become universally regulative (Kant [1790] 1951: 76 – para 22). This pertains not only to the

content of such judgement; it is the very “feeling in the judgment of taste [that] comes to be imputed to everyone ... as a [moral] duty” Kant [1790] 1951: 138 – para 40).

In contradistinction to a “vulgar” kind of common sense, Kant says,

... under the *sensus communis* we must include the idea of a sense *common to all*, i.e. of a faculty of judgment which, in its reflection, takes account (*a priori*) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought, in order, as it were, to compare its judgment with the collective reason of humanity This is done by comparing our judgment with the possible rather than the actual judgments of others, and by putting ourselves in the place of any other man ... (Kant [1790] 1951: 136 – para 40) (Emphasis added by underlining – UK).³

The ability peculiar to judgment, “to put ourselves in thought in the place of everyone else” (Kant [1790] 1951: 136 – para 40) is what Kant calls “enlarged thought” (“*erweiterte Denkungsart*”); it entails reflection upon one’s own judgement “from a universal standpoint” (“*allgemeinen Standpunkt*”) (Kant [1790] 1951: 137 – para 40).

Thus, to sum up my argument up to this point: Kant’s switch of register at the level of *ius cosmopolitanum* goes to the effect of embedding cosmopolitan right within a theory of judgement, and with it, in the imagination, aesthetic judgement, and the judgement of taste. The link between cosmopolitan right and judgement is established with the *sensus communis*.

However, with the imagination and the judgement of taste featuring prominently in the *sensus communis* of cosmopolitan right, the plot thickens: the judgement of taste is an exemplary instantiation of the apparent paradox of subjective universality.

The judgement of taste, probably the most radically idiosyncratic of the senses seems, at first glance, a paradoxical foundation for a sense common to all. In aesthetic judgement, a general term has to be found for a radically subjective and particular judgement. This difficulty presented by the case of aesthetic judgement is compounded by the antinomy peculiar to the judgement of taste: taste, as an internal sense, is highly particular and subjective, and yet has to be thought of as objectively purposeful, and under the presumption of what is generally agreeable (Kant [1790] 1951: 64 – para 15).⁴

It seems that Kant is revelling in this paradox to make the point that even highly subjective forms of an aesthetic sensorium presuppose sociality – not as an object of thought, but as one of its conditions. In implicating *sensus communis* in the judgement of taste, Kant’s Third Critique suggests that one of the most telling features of being human, and of being human freely, lies in the aptitude for grounding feeling in reason through beauty as pleasure not

directed by desire or interest. Therein lies the link between the aesthetic and the ethical; this link is not established cognitively, but symbolically.

In making ‘taste’ the paradigmatic internal sense highlighting the radical paradox of subjective universality that also defines the antinomy of taste, Kant relies heavily on the Scottish Enlightenment’s inner sense theory, notably that of Francis Hutcheson (elaborated in *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, 1726), which also informed Hume’s notion of taste. Hutcheson holds that ideas of beauty, virtue, etc. emanate from sense, rather than from reason. Moreover, this sense is not comparable to the five other senses; it is an internal sense relying for its stimulus on ideas presented by the five external senses. The two inner senses are those of the aesthetic and the moral. Hume referred to aesthetic judgement as internal sense, but postulated its outward direction towards accord with others, through sympathy.

In referring *sensus communis* to taste, as that radically particular, internal sense, Kant effects a demonstrable break with ancient, medieval, and Renaissance thinking on *sensus communis*. While he retains the connections that these thinkers variously posit, between *sensus communis* and the imagination, with fantasy, and with various formulations of faculties approximating judgement, understanding, and memory, he breaks with their anatomophysiological localisation of *sensus communis* and ‘virtualises’ the latter in a sense that I will demonstrate in the further course of my argument.

Kant’s implicit move from such localisations of the common of sense are made explicit in his response to Samuel Thomas Soemmering’s treatise *Über das Organ der Seele* (1796), which had localised the sensory apparatus responsible for synthesis of all perceptions in a particular part of the brain, called “*gemeinsamer Empfindungsplatz*” (*sensorium commune*). In an extremely diplomatic response that is nonetheless replete with well-placed punches, Kant points out that Soemmering’s treatise may fulfil all requirements of a natural science account, but that it does not address the concerns that metaphysics would bring to it.⁵ The medical account (in the anatomophysiological field) and the philosophical account (in the psychological-metaphysical field) of the soul, Kant cautions, are not easily reconciled.

In his response to Soemmering, Kant dismisses the localisations of *sensus communis*. On the other hand, he makes short shrift of the designation of *sensus communis* as a purely internal sense; he castigates as incomplete the idea that *sensus communis* can mediate between the senses exclusively by virtue of its capacity to combine the percepts from various senses. And he exposes the contradictions in those accounts insofar as they simultaneously hold both tenets regarding ‘*sensus communis*’ – that of its anatomophysiological localisation and that of its description as internal sense.

Against previous accounts, he formulates his own version of *sensus communis*, “*gemeinschaftlicher Sinn*”, i.e. “the idea of a sense *common to all*, i.e. of a faculty of judgment which, in its reflection, takes account (*a priori*) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought” (Kant [1790] 1951: 136 – para 40) (“*ein[...] Beurteilungsvermögen[...], welches in seiner Reflexion auf die Vorstellungsart jedes andern in Gedanken (a priori) Rücksicht nimmt*” – (Kant [1790] 1994: 225 – para 40).) In short, he turns the notion of *sensus communis*, conceived by his predecessors variously as ‘the common of sense’, into a ‘sense of the common’ (“*gemeinschaftlicher Sinn*”). However, he arrives at this turn by some detours, which do not simply cancel out ‘the common of sense’. Rather, they represent thought experiments in articulating a new relationship between the common of sense and a sense of the common. In the following, I would like to outline this series of thought experiments.

In establishing *sensus communis* as the sense of the common distinct from *sensorium commune*, and in establishing it on the ground of the judgement of taste, Kant demonstrates his divergence not only from the speculations localising the common of sense; doing so on the ground of taste marks a shift in his own mode of analysis and figures of thought. For in his reflections on aesthetic and moral sentiment – “the powers that move the human heart” – of the mid-1760’s (*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime* (1764); *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer, illustrated by the Dreams of Metaphysics* (1766), he had sought define a *sensus communis* through both the common of sense and a sense of the common. He articulated their relationship through visual and optical models plotting their convergence, not entirely dissimilar to earlier attempts to localise common of sense, albeit to different effect. However, this turns out to be anything but a simple localisation. The convergence marks a double convergence: the site at which different perceptions converge in a common of sense, simultaneously forms the condition by which internal senses are projected outwards, from which point it becomes possible to conceive of a sense of the common.

Kant conceptualises this convergence in terms of an optical model, in whose terms this point would be designated as *focus imaginarius*. In the optical model of the *focus imaginarius*, Kant posits a subject looking into a mirror, and seeing herself as if from behind that mirror, where the lines converge in a focus that is but an imagined one. An illusion is thus generated – “the illusion that the lines have their source in a real object lying outside the field of empirically possible knowledge – just as objects reflected in a mirror are seen as behind it”. Nevertheless, Kant explains, “this illusion is indispensably necessary if, ... besides the objects which lie before our eyes, we are also to see those which lie at a distance behind our back” (Kant [1781] 1976: 533–534).

The convergence of lines through which a sensation is perceived is located at a point external to the subject. In the case of spirit-seers and phantasts, the vectors are being placed in some relation to each other inside of the brain, before being transposed outside, into the external world, without going through the mirror entailed in the model of the *focus imaginarius*. Thus, the spirit-seer projects internally generated sensations outwards directly, into the world of material objects, from where they are perceived as external, ‘real’, by the external senses. (Kant [1766] 1976: 44–46). In the absence of the *focus imaginarius* on the model of the mirror external to the subject, Swedenborg postulates a direct homologous correspondence between internal senses and external senses. By virtue of this correspondence, internal senses are seen to determine external sensation (Kant [1766] 1976: 73). Bypassing the point of convergence posited in the *focus imaginarius*, Swedenborg attempted to reveal to man his inner senses, and through them, to afford him access to the world of spirits, which are, in turn, connected to each other through internal sensation [Kant [1766] 1976: 72], generating a mystic form of communication.⁶

The communion and communication of the spirits is a matter of an entirely internal *sensus communis*. This does not, however, prevent it from being projected outward directly and unmediatedly, into a human figure. Once again, Kant uses an optical effect, to describe the appearance of a superhuman figure casting a shadow in which each individual spirit moulds itself. By extension, the societies of spirits image themselves in the appearance of this superhuman figure in one immense giant fantasy, producing an intimate communion between one spirit with all spirits, and all spirits with one spirit, immune and indifferent to the way in which real live human beings order their relationships in the world. It is worth quoting this significant passage in Kant’s account of group fantasy at some length:

So wie ... verschiedene Kräfte und Fähigkeiten diejenige Einheit ausmachen, welche die Seele oder der innere Mensch ist, so machen auch verschiedene Geister ... eine Sozietät aus, welche die Apparenz eines großen Menschen an sich zeigt, und in welchem Schattenbilde ein jeder Geist sich an demjenigen Orte und in den scheinbaren Gliedmaßen sieht, die seiner eigentümlichen Verrichtung in einem solchen geistigen Körper gemäß sind. Alle Geistersozietäten aber zusammen und die ganze Welt aller dieser unsichtbaren Wesen, erscheint zuletzt selbst wiederum in der Apparenz des größten Menschen. Eine ungeheure und riesenmäßige Phantasie, zu welcher sich vielleicht eine alte kindische Vorstellung ausgedehnt hat In diesem unermesslichen Menschen ist eine durchgängige innigste Gemeinschaft eines Geistes mit allen und aller mit einem, und, wie auch immer die Lage der lebenden Wesen gegeneinander in dieser Welt, oder deren Veränderung beschaffen sein mag, so haben sie doch eine ganz andere Stelle im größten Menschen, welche sie niemals verändern und welche nur dem Scheine nach einem Ort in einem unermesslichen Raume, in der Tat aber eine bestimmt Art ihrer Verhältnisse und Einflüsse ist. (Kant [1766] 1976: 73–74)

What Kant outlines here by reference to enthusiasm (“*Schwärmerei*”), phantasies, illusions, hallucinations and fascination for mysticism conjuring up the occult, miracle-working, and spirit-seeing, as well as the suggestibility and mass hysteria entailed in them, I would argue, is nothing short of the elements of group psychology. In his formulation, there is one point that indicates this very clearly: the suggestion that an old notion dating back to childhood days, has been extended to form a giant fantasy centering on the appearance of the ‘super-human’.⁷

Furthermore, the reciprocal influence that the spirits have on each other, and the fact that they constitute themselves into a society (however amorphous), is related, in Kant’s account, to their common relation to what could, in the broadest terms, be described as an object (see Freud [1921] 1985: 112), which in Kant’s account, is the appearance of that ‘super-human’. The apparent unity of the group resides in the fact that, in Freud’s famous formulation, “a number of individuals have put one and the same object in the place of their ego-ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego” (Freud [1921] 1985: 145).

Most tellingly, the spirits that populate Swedenborg’s vision, and that Kant chases polemically, have, in Kant’s account, no relationship to reality: they are immune to change insofar as they are unified in the figure of the super-human. The absence of a relationship to reality is closely echoed in Freud’s observation of the lack of reality-testing in groups, which he explains through the fact that each member of the group so constituted, has transferred his/her ego ideal – his/her reality-testing agency – to the common object. It therefore should not come as a surprise, Freud remarks, to find that whatever emanates from the figure of the leader, is taken for guaranteed truth and reality, insofar as the ego ideals converging in him have given up their own function of reality testing in favour of Him on whom they have bestowed this function. (Freud [1921] 1985: 145). “No wonder”, Freud wistfully concludes, “that the ego takes a perception for real if its reality is vouched for by the mental agency which ordinarily discharges the duty of testing the reality of things” (Freud [1921] 1985: 147). This in turn ties in with Kant’s more general observation of the spirit-seer’s or fantast’s insistence on the vividness of images taken for perceptions, that are imbued with attributes of ‘reality’(Kant [1766] 1976: 44–46).

Amidst these rather dim views on group psychology, both Kant and Freud are interested in finding out the ways in which the individual’s moral standards can be raised by the group (Freud [1921] 1985: 106). This can only happen, according to Freud, on condition of raising the standards of the group itself, i.e. by equipping the group with the attributes of the individual. That would mean that the group “should have a definite struc-

ture, expressed in the specialization and differentiation of the functions of its constituents” and in its own traditions and customs, and by reserving the performance of intellectual tasks for individual members (Freud citing McDougall, in Freud [1921] 1985: 115). For individual members, conditions of repression of unconscious impulses must remain in place (see Freud [1921] 1985: 101).

Kant approaches the question of how the moral standards of the individual can be raised by the group, from the presupposition of an accord with others. Kant’s quest initially remains within the parameters of optical models. The reason why Kant considers the optical illusion generated by the *focus imaginarius* necessary, against the ‘optical fraud’ that he discovers in the double illusion of spirit-seeing, hallucinations, and fantasies, emerges from his consideration of the human capacities of cognition, which involve a threading of internal senses through the loop of the Other:

... [ich setze mich] in die Stelle einer fremden und äußeren Vernunft, und beobachte meine Urteile samt ihren geheimsten Anlässen aus dem Gesichtspunkte anderer. Die Vergleichung beider Beobachtungen gibt zwar starke Parallaxen, aber sie ist auch das einzige Mittel, den optischen Betrug zu verbüten und die Begriffe an die wahre Stelle zu setzen, darin sie in Ansehung der Erkenntnisvermögen der menschlichen Natur stehen. (Kant [1766] 1976: 49)

Once again adducing an optical metaphor – viz. that of parallax –, Kant here highlights the necessity of the intervention of an appearance – the apparent displacement of an observed object due to a change in the position of the observer that provides a new line of sight – to combat an illusion.⁸

In contrast to the purely internal *sensus communis* of a unitary society of spirits ([Kant [1766] 1976: 31, 73), universally communicating, transparent and disembodied, in complete harmony with each other, Kant posits a conflictual *modus vivendi et percipiendi* of a *sensus communis*. Internal sense, individual needs and wants, are drawn, as a matter of the human condition, to an outward point of convergence, where they enter into a conflict with the considerations of the common weal and common ends.⁹ It is through the impulsion of external validation through, and in accord and interaction with that Other – general will, an other will, the will of others outside of us – of Kant’s definition of *sensus communis*, that the double illusion of spirit-seeing, hallucination, and fantasy can be exposed. Therein lies the possibility of reason, understanding, of judgement, and of ethical life (see Kant [1766] 1976: 28; also 30):¹⁰

Wenn wir äußere Dinge auf unsere Bedürfnis beziehen, so können wir dieses nicht tun, ohne uns zugleich durch eine gewisse Empfindung gebunden und eingeschränkt zu fühlen, die uns merken lässt, dass in uns gleichsam ein fremder Wille wirksam sei, und unser eigen Belieben

die Bedingung von äußerer Beistimmung nötig habe. Eine geheime Macht nötiget uns, unsere Absicht zugleich auf anderer Wohl oder nach fremder Willkür zu richten, ob diese gleich öfters ungem geschieht, und der eigennützigem Neigung stark widerstreitet, und der Punkt, wobin die Richtungslinien unserer Triebe zusammenlaufen, ist also nicht bloß in uns, sondern es sind noch Kräfte, die uns bewegen, in dem Willen anderer außer uns. Daher entspringen die sittlichen Antriebe, die uns oft wider den Dank des Eigennutzes fortreißen, das starke Gesetz der Schuldigkeit und das schwächere der Gütigkeit, deren jedes uns manche Aufopferung abdringt, und ob gleich beide dann und wann durch eigennützige Neigungen überwogen werden, doch nirgend in der menschlichen Natur ermangeln, ihre Wirklichkeit zu äußern. Dadurch sehen wir uns in den geheimsten Beweggründen abhängig von der Regel des allgemeinen Willens, und es entspringt daraus in der Welt aller denkenden Naturen eine moralische Einheit und systematische Verfassung nach bloß geistigen Gesetzen. (Kant [1766] 1976: 29)

However, there is another possibility indicated in this formulation of Kant's, that seems entirely out of place within a context of an attempt to find a moral unity of mankind insofar as it is moved by a general will, altruistic inclinations, guilt and benevolence. The effectivity of a 'general will' that would impel our drives towards a point outside of ourselves, could alternatively be an 'alien will', even an 'alien arbitrary will' imposed on our intentions and inclinations. "Forces that move us which have their origin in a will outside of us" (Kant [1766] 1976: 29) – that is how Kant ambivalently describes both mass phenomena, and supreme moral feelings. He explains: "A secret power makes us simultaneously direct our attention towards the well-being of others, and towards the arbitrary will of others" (Kant [1766] 1976: 29). It is one and the same power that makes us dependent on the will of others, and causes us to act in unison with other reasonable beings; one and the same power is the source of both suggestibility, contagion, dependence, fascination, bondage, and of achievements for the good of all of the highest ethical standards (see also Kant [1790] 1974: [para 28] 194, 198–199, 202). Kant's occupation with "the powers that move the human heart" (in *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, written in 1765 and published in 1766) encompasses his earlier insights into both mental illness (1764) and feelings of the beautiful and the sublime (1764). What combines both is the effect of enthusiasm, defined as "the condition of passionate participation in moral "imaginings" that fail to "harmonize with concepts" (see Kant's *Anthropology*, quoted in Kneller 1997: 464).

Freud (relying on Le Bon's account), characterises groups in surprisingly similar terms:

In a group every sentiment and act is contagious, and contagious to such a degree that an individual readily sacrifices his personal interest to the collective interest. This is an aptitude very contrary to his nature, and of which a man is scarcely capable, except when he makes part of a group. (Le Bon [1920: 33] (Freud [1921] 1985: 101–102)

In order to make a correct judgement upon the morals of groups, one must take into consideration the fact that when individuals come together in a group all their individual inhibitions fall away and all the cruel, brutal and destructive instincts, which lie dormant in individuals as relics of a primitive epoch, are stirred up to find free gratification. But under the influence of suggestion groups are also capable of high achievements in the shape of abnegation, unselfishness, and devotion to an ideal. While with isolated individuals personal interest is almost the only motive force, with groups it is very rarely prominent. It is possible to speak of an individual having his moral standards raised by a group (Le Bon [1920]: 65). Whereas the intellectual capacity of a group is always far below that of an individual, its ethical conduct may rise as high above his as it may sink deep below it. (Freud [1921] 1985: 106)

In Kant’s scheme, the correspondence between internal and external sensation, spirit-seeing and fantasies mistaken for real is invoked here once again, as Freud so aptly illustrated it with his graphic model providing “the formula for the libidinal constitution of groups” insofar as they are relatively undifferentiated and have not managed to acquire the characteristics of an individual. He graphically represents the group consisting of “a number of individuals who have put one and the same object in the place of their ego ideal” (Freud [1921] 1985: 147) in the following diagram:

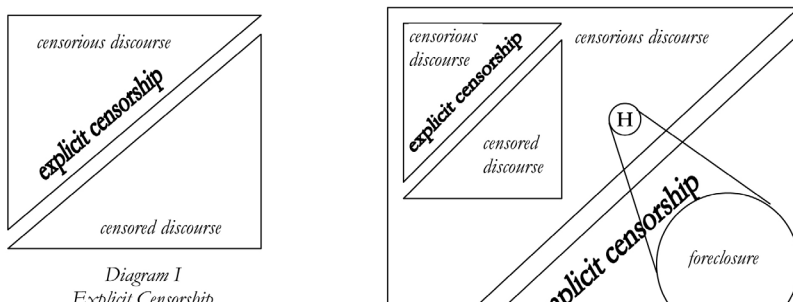


Illustration: “A number of individuals who have put one and the same object in the place of their ego ideal” (Freud [1921] 1985: 147)

It is the incapacity, by reference to optical models, to clearly distinguish primary and necessary from secondary and hallucinatory, a-social delusions, I would argue, that induce Kant to switch registers in his elaborations of *sensus communis*. Optical science, far from dispelling spectral illusions, contributed to the uncertainty about the difference between optical illusion and optical-scientific fact. Moreover, an explanation adducing a physiological sensorium, cast within a mechanistic theory of sight, proved limited and contradictory when mobilised for a theory of knowledge (as Kant’s letter to Soemmering suggests) (Smajic 2003: 1118, 1124).

'Sighting' "the powers that move the human heart" encapsulated in the term 'enthusiasm' would thus mean sliding between phenomena of sympathy, the supersensible, the sublime, mysticism, fascination for prophets and spirit-seers, and of crowds and revolutions.¹¹ Along with this incapacity to differentiate and distinguish these phenomena on the basis of the optical models adduced, comes Kant's own ambivalence, most clearly expressed in his theoretical attitude to spirit-seeing. While negating its theoretical interest, the need to explain its fascination turns out to be compelling. Kant confesses to feeling perturbed and insecure in responding philosophically to reports of the workings of occult forces, and accounting for hallucinations. It is as if these posed a challenge, even an assault, and definitely a danger to philosophy (possibly that of contagion by the very phantasmagoria that it seeks to dispel, precisely in as much as it does not muster the analytical means necessary to dispel them).¹²

The *focus imaginarius* mediating between idiopathy and *sensus communis*, by which the common of sense is drawn outwards into the sense of the common, was formulated by Kant in his first attempts to account for the feelings in the face of the beautiful and the sublime, and wielded in the service of countering the claims made on behalf of spirits and hallucinatory visions. It finds a more systematic application in Kant's critical philosophy. But in being cemented into the tectonics of the three critiques, it changes its role. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *focus imaginarius* becomes a model for the transcendental idea articulating the relationship between the understanding and reason in which the understanding comes to contemplate itself as seen by reason, as from the virtual point of view of an outside observer – which becomes the regulative idea:

[Transcendental ideas] have an excellent, an indeed indispensably necessary, regulative employment, namely, that of directing the understanding towards a certain goal upon which the routes marked out by its rules converge, as upon their point of intersection. This point is indeed a mere idea, a *focus imaginarius*, from which, since it lies quite outside the bounds of possible experience, the concepts of the understanding do not in reality proceed; none the less it serves to give to these concepts the greatest possible unity combined with the greatest possible extension. Hence arises the illusion that the lines have their source in a real object lying outside the field of empirically possible knowledge – just as objects reflected in a mirror are seen as behind it. Nevertheless this illusion is indispensably necessary if, ... besides the objects which lie before our eyes, we are also to see those which lie at a distance behind our back. (Kant [1781] 1976: 533–534).

While the *Critique of Pure Reason* thus assimilates the *focus imaginarius* to the transcendental idea, it is entirely sublated into the *a priori* of reflective judgement, and of the judgement of taste in particular, in the *Critique of*

Judgement. In the Third Critique, Kant retains the broad notion of an accord of our own judgement with that of all others, which relates the former to the understanding. However, he has discarded any reference to optical models. Instead, he elaborates the complex relations of analogy, an *as if*, in the rhetorical figure of hypotyposis¹³ in the place of the previous model of the necessary illusion. This figure of thought replaces the optical model, but not without residue. The distinction between necessary illusion (of the *focus imaginarius*) and the double illusion of dreams of spirit-seeing that do not go through the *focus imaginarius* is dissolved, and the idiopathy of spirit-seeing alone holds title to the designation of ‘illusion’. As Kant explains,

The idea of a sense *shared* [by all], i.e., a power to judge that in reflecting takes account (*a priori*), in our thought, of everyone else’s way of presenting [something], in order *as it were* to compare our own judgment with human reason in general and thus escape the illusion that arises from the ease of mistaking subjective and private conditions for objective ones. (Kant [1790] 1987: 160) (Emphasis added by underlining – UK)

Visual elements are also retained in the Third Critique in the attributions to the faculty of imagination, whose role of forming the common of sense remains as prominent in the Third Critique as it was in the earlier writings on the Beautiful, the Sublime, and on Enthusiasm (entailing both ‘*Begeisterung*’ and ‘*Schwärmerei*’): The productive imagination connects intuitions and synthesises the manifold according to the rules and categories of the understanding and thereby mediates between the sensorium and the understanding. However, beyond delineating the synthesising role of the imagination as an internal sense, the problematics here centre on the connection between “our own judgement” and an external “human reason in general”.

Redefining *sensus communis* within the judgement of taste, Kant discards the dimensions of the relationship between internal and external sense that optical and visual models had allowed him to draw and to develop in his earlier writings. On the other hand, with the radically particular in the judgment of taste as the source of *sensus communis*, Kant gains an element of *Sittlichkeit* that is asserted against the disembodied communication of spirits exerting fascination, hallucination, and bondage.

The assumption of the possibility that our aesthetic judgement is comparable to that of all others, has its basis not in actuality, but in an ‘*as-if*’. Aesthetic judgement, while not immediately cognitive, fulfils the Kantian understanding of critique as second-order thinking: thinking the conditions of possibility of (non-cognitive) thinking that defines reflective judgement. Aesthetic judgement is not the judgement of each individual subject; its *a priori* character is motivated by the assumption of its mediation through

all others who exercise judgement. The ascription of value takes place in the name of others, but the assent of others is assumed by projection. And the possible assent of others is not to be understood as corroborating a substantivist understanding of a 'common sense' as constituting 'our own', but appears under the sign of an Other. Kant states, "what is ... left undetermined by ... universal laws, must be considered in accordance with such unity as they would have if an understanding (although not our understanding) had furnished them to our cognitive faculties ..."

(Kant [1790] 1951: 16) (Emphasis added by underlining – UK).^{14]}

Kant's elaborations of analogical relations defining reflective judgement and aesthetic judgement, and structuring the antinomies of taste, would not allow us to construe aesthetic judgement understood as being based on a prior social context; on the contrary, aesthetic judgement produces it by way of a fictionalising move. Secondly, it cannot be construed to give rise to a substantive, actual common sense, as it is virtual in a certain sense, producing, as it does, a unity of understanding only by analogy with it. Thirdly, common sense cannot be seen to affirm an integral sense of community, nor as an extension of the self to others, nor as an expression of a collective identity, as it passes through the other's appearance (see Kamuf 1997: 33). By virtue of these conditions, the complex mediations of aesthetic judgement (as reflective judgement) cannot validly be considered to be instantiated in a substantivist understanding of common sense, nor can they be equated with practical reason, nor with the rules of particular social formations, nor with a particular historical positioning of aesthetic judgement as sociability-founding act.

On the other hand, in making the radically particular the source of the *sensus communis*, Kant loses the wherewithal to describe *sensus communis* in terms of those attributes and criteria that are peculiar to the group. The *as if* analogy does not allow for any convergence, nor, what is a more weighty consideration, for any *analysis* of convergence. Hallucinations and *Schwärmerei* become psychological conditions tying in with the move, at the end of the eighteenth century, towards the psychologisation of supernatural perceptions. In the analogical treatment of *sensus communis* of Kant's Third Critique, fantasies, hallucinations, fascination – everything encapsulated in that amorphous term *Schwärmerei* – remain a-social in the sense of inconsequential for any analysis of sociality, good only for the asylum (see Kant [1766] 1976: 48). The *as if* construction, while de-substantialising a *sensus communis*, runs the risk of virtualising it, thus resonating with the universal language, and the universal, immediate communication of Swedenborg's society of spirits. Kant does concede, for a moment, that the dependence of our own judgement on the general human understanding could become a

rationale for granting the totality of thinking beings a kind of unitary reason (Kant [1766] 1976: 228–29). The *sensus communis* of Kant’s *ius cosmopolitanicum* is not entirely immune to this rationalisation. In fact, Swedenborg’s unitary sociality of immaterial spirits has been construed as proto-cyberspatial, ap-
posite also for a cosmopolitan imagination (see Böhme 2000).

Guarding against such possible conclusions, Kant did not rest content with the analogics of the ‘*as if*’ in his explorations of the modalities and reaches of *sensus communis*. He combined both a version of his earlier optical model of the *focus imaginarius*, and the analogics between judgement based on a radically particular internal sense and the presumption of general accord in his famous account of spectatorship in the *Conflict of the Faculties* (1798). In this account, Kant re-directs the focus of the assessment of the achievements of the French Revolution as political revolution from the actors to the spectators/witnesses, in order to emphasise the requirements of a socio-ethical revolution over and above those of a political revolution. He outlines “an event of our time” as a sign “which demonstrates [the] moral tendency of the human race”:

This event consists neither in momentous deeds nor crimes committed by men whereby what was great among men is made small or what was small is made great, nor in ancient splendid political structures which vanish as if by magic while others come forth in their place as if from the depths of the earth. No, nothing of the sort. It is simply the mode of thinking of the spectators which reveals itself publicly in this game of great revolutions, and manifests such a universal yet disinterested sympathy for the players on one side against those on the other, even at the risk that this partiality could become very disadvantageous for them if discovered. Owing to its universality, this mode of thinking demonstrates a character of the human race at large and all at once; owing to its disinterestedness, a moral character of humanity, at least in its predisposition, a character which not only permits people to hope for progress toward the better, but is already itself progress in so far as its capacity is sufficient for the present.

... this revolution ... finds in the hearts of all spectators a wishful participation that borders closely on enthusiasm, the very expression of which is fraught with danger; this sympathy, therefore, can have no other cause than a moral predisposition in the human race. (Kant [1798] 1979:153)

Spectatorship is a position that can encompass both agency (or ‘action’) and judgement. It provides a scenario in which the Other is structurally and necessarily implicated, not simply by virtue of a mechanistic optical model or by presumption and consequent analogical construction, but by definition.

It is only from the perspective of the point posited outside of the corporeal existence of the individual, but presupposing the latter, that fantasy

can be recognised as such, and distinguished from sensory perception, thus severing the “correspondence” of the forces of the soul with the organs of the body that had formed the object of Kant’s polemics against spirit-seeing and ‘*Schwärmerei*’ with their mode of ‘sympathy’ of and between spirits.¹⁵ It is only in the severing of this correspondence that a different kind of sympathy, that of moral feeling, based on a non-idiopathic *sensus communis*, can arise (Kant [1766] 1976: 44, 73). This allows Kant to reach beyond a proto-psychology or proto-sociology of groups, towards an ethics of groups related to an aesthetics of the political.

In this, I find some inspiration for addressing the question posed (in slightly different terms) by Homi Bhabha inflected by Kantian readings:

It is to establish a *sign of the present*, of modernity, that is not that 'now' of transparent immediacy, and to found a form of social individuation where communality is *not predicated on a transcendent becoming*, that I want to pose my question[.] ... : what is modernity in those colonial conditions where its imposition is itself the denial of historical freedom, civic autonomy and the 'ethical' choice of refashioning? (Bhabha 1994: 241)

The framing of the question is as important as the question itself, as it guides the search for possibilities of addressing the question that haunts a cosmopolitical *sensus communis*.

NOTES

¹ Schwarz translates *ius cosmopolitanum* as “cosmopolitan law” (Kant [1795] 1988: 61). I would translate the Latin term as “cosmopolitan right” in order to signal the shift by which the *Weltbürgerrecht* becomes embedded in a theory of Judgement.

² [Der Urteilende] ... kann keine Privatbedingungen als Gründe des Wohlgefallens auffinden, an die sich sein Subjekt allein hänge, und muss es daher als in demjenigen begründet ansehen, was er auch bei jedem andern voraussetzen kann; folglich muss er glauben Grund zu haben, jedermann ein ähnliches Wohlgefallen zuzumuten. Er wird daher vom Schönen so sprechen, als ob Schönheit eine Beschaffenheit des Gegenstandes und das Urteil logisch (durch Begriffe vom Objekte eine Erkenntnis desselben ausmache) wäre; ob es gleich nur ästhetisch ist und bloß eine Beziehung der Vorstellung des Gegenstandes auf das Subjekt enthält: darum, weil es doch mit dem logischen die Ähnlichkeit hat, dass man die Gültigkeit desselben für jedermann daran voraussetzen kann. Aber aus Begriffen kann diese Allgemeinheit auch nicht entspringen. ... Folglich muss dem Geschmacksurteile ... ein Anspruch auf Gültigkeit für jedermann, ohne auf Objekte gestellte Allgemeinheit anhängen, d.i. es muss damit ein Anspruch auf subjektive Allgemeinheit verbunden sein. (Kant [1790] 1994: 125 – para 6)

³ Unter dem *sensus communis* aber muss man die Idee eines gemeinschaftlichen Sinnes, d.i. eines Beurteilungsvermögens verstehen, welches in seiner Reflexion auf die Vorstellungsart jedes andern in Gedanken (a priori) Rücksicht nimmt, um gleichsam an die gesamte Menschenvernunft sein Urteil zu halten, und dadurch der Illusion zu entgehen, die aus subjektiven Privatbedingungen, welche leicht für objektiv gehalten werden könnten, auf das Urteil nachhaltigen Einfluss haben würde. Dieses

geschieht nun dadurch, dass man sein Urteil an anderer, nicht sowohl wirkliche, als vielmehr bloß mögliche Urteile hält, und sich in die Stelle jedes andern versetzt, in dem man bloß von den Beschränkungen, die unserer eigenen Beurteilung zufälliger Weise anhängen, abstrahiert ... (Kant [1790] 1994: 225 – para 40)

⁴ Hannah Arendt takes up the question ‘why taste, the private sense by definition?’ as a basis of judgement, and explains:

... taste and smell are the most private of the senses, that is, those senses where not an object but a sensation is sensed, where this sensation is not object-bound and cannot be recollected. ... taste rather than any of the other senses, [becomes] the vehicle for judgement; only taste and smell are discriminatory ... *and* only these senses relate to the particular qua particular. (Arendt [1971, 1977] 1978 II: 264)

⁵ Metaphysics, Kant avers, would bring to it the question of the site of the soul (*sedes animae*) in both its capacities of reception of sensory impressions (*facultas sensitive percipiendi*) and of motion (*facultas locomotiva*)

⁶ Kant elucidates the communication of the spirits thus:

Die Geistersprache ist eine unmittelbare Mitteilung der Ideen, sie ist aber jederzeit mit der Apparenz derjenigen Sprache verbunden, die er sonst spricht, und wird vorgestellt als außer ihm. Ein Geist liest in eines andern Geistes Gedächtnis die Vorstellungen, die dieser darin mit Klarheit enthält. So sehen die Geister in Schwedenbergen seine Vorstellungen, die er von dieser Welt hat, mit so klarem Anschauen, dass sie sich dabei selbst hintergehen und sich öfters einbilden, sie sehen unmittelbar die Sachen, welches doch unmöglich ist, denn kein reiner Geist hat die mindeste Empfindung von der körperlichen Welt; allein durch die Gemeinschaft mit andern Seelen lebender Menschen können sie auch keine Vorstellung davon haben, weil ihr Innerstes nicht aufgetan ist, d.i. ihr innerer Sinn gänzlich dunkle Vorstellungen enthält. Daher ist Schwedenberg das rechte Orakel der Geister, welche eben so neugierig sein, in ihm den gegenwärtigen Zustand der Welt zu beschauen, als er es ist, in ihrem Gedächtnis wie in einem Spiegel die Wunder der Geisterwelt zu betrachten. Obgleich diese Geister mit allen andern Seelen lebender Menschen gleichfalls in der genauesten Verbindung stehen, und in dieselbe wirken oder von ihnen leiden, so wissen sie doch dieses eben so wenig, als es die Menschen wissen, weil dieser ihr innerer Sinn, welcher zu ihrer geistigen Persönlichkeit gehört, ganz dunkel ist. (Kant [1766] 1976: 68–69)

⁷ In the Freudian model of group psychology, this “old notion” would correspond to the myth of the primal father, whose injunctions forced the sons into group psychology, and who was “later on exalted into the creator of the world”, and the ideal of each one of them (Freud [1921] 1985: 156, 168).

⁸ The choice of the optical figure of a parallax is instructive here. The apparent change in the direction of an object depending on a change in observational position does not amount to an illusion. As Slavoj Žižek points out in his book *The Parallax View*,

The philosophical twist to be added (to parallax), of course, is that the observed distance is not simply subjective, since the same object which exists 'out there' is seen from two different stances, or points of view. It is rather that, as Hegel would have put it, subject and object are inherently mediated so that an 'epistemological' shift in the subject's point of view always reflects an ontological shift in the object itself. (Žižek 2006: 17)

⁹ In Kant's formulation,

Unter den Kräften, die das menschliche Herz bewegen, scheinen einige der mächtigsten außerhalb demselben zu liegen, die also nicht etwa als bloße Mittel sich auf die Eigennützigkeit und Privatbedürfnis, als auf ein Ziel, das innerhalb dem Menschen selbst liegt, beziehen, sondern welche machen, dass die Tendenzen unserer Regungen den Brennpunkt ihrer Vereinigung außer uns in andere vernünftige Wesen versetzen, woraus ein Streit zweier Kräfte entspringt, nämlich der Eigenheit, die alles auf sich beziehet, und der Gemeinnützigkeit, dadurch das Gemüt gegen andere außer sich getrieben oder gezogen wird. (Kant [1766] 1976: 28)

¹⁰ Kant here speaks of a

Drang, "dasjenige, was man vor sich selbst als gut oder wahr erkennt, mit dem Urteil anderer zu vergleichen, um beide einstimmig zu machen, imgleichen eine jede menschliche Seele auf dem Erkenntniswege gleichsam anzubalten, wenn sie einen andern Fußsteig zu geben scheint, als den wir eingeschlagen haben, welches alles vielleicht eine empfundene Abhängigkeit unserer eigenen Urteile vom allgemeinen menschlichen Verstande ist, und ein Mittel wird, dem Ganzen denkender Wesen eine Art von Vernunftseinheit zu verschaffen. (Kant [1766] 1976: 28)

¹¹ Similarly, Kant sees bondage, dependence, and the moral inclination to seek accord between one's own judgements with those of everyone else, as arising from the same source:

Derselbe "Trieb" ist es, der uns einerseits dazu verleitet, uns vom Urteil und Beifall anderer abhängig zu machen und andererseits unser eigenes Urteil des Wahren und Guten mit dem der Allgemeinheit in Einklang zu bringen (moralische Eibeit, sittliches Gefühl) (Kant [1766] 1976: 28–29).

¹² This is how Kant introduces his polemical discussion, which is anything but unequivocally triumphant:

Welcher Philosoph hat nicht einmal, zwischen den Betuerungen eines vernünftigen und festüberredeten Augenzengen und der inneren Gegenwehr eines unüberwindlichen Zweifels, die einfältigste Figur gemacht, die man sich vorstellen kann? Soll er die Richtigkeit aller solcher Geistererscheinungen gänzlich ableugnen? Was kann der vor Gründe dafür anführen, sie zu widerlegen? (Kant [1766] 1976: 5)

In his Introduction to the second part, entitled 'Ein Fragment der geheimen Philosophie, die Gemeinschaft mit der Geisterwelt zu eröffnen', he states, "Wir wollen daher, nach der beschwerlichen Vorbereitung, welche überstanden ist, uns auf den gefährlichen Weg wagen" (Kant [1766] 1976: 20).

Kant confesses to being seduced to lend ghost stories some degree of credibility: "[Der Verfasser] bekennet mit einer gewissen Demütigung, dass er so treuherzig war, der Wahrheit einiger Erzählungen [i.e. "gemeiner Gerüchte"] nachzuspüren. Er fand --- wie gemeinlich, wo man nichts zu suchen hat --- er fand nichts." (Kant [1766] 1976: 6).

¹³ The analogical thinking in which Kant's *sensus communis* is embedded, finds its figure in a symbolic hypotyposis, which comes into play when "einem Begriffe, den nur die Vernunft denken, und dem keine sinnliche Anschauung angemessen sein kann, eine solche untergelegt wird, mit welcher das Verfahren der Urteilskraft demjenigen, was sie im Schematisieren beobachtet, bloß analogisch, d.i. mit ihm bloß der Regel dieses Verfahrens, nicht der Anschauung selbst, mithin bloß der Form der Reflexion, nicht dem Inhalte nach, übereinkommt" (Kant [1790] 1994: 295 – para 59). Lacking an adequate expression, the concept presents itself through hypotyposis.

¹⁴ This passage elaborates the distinction between reflective judgement and determining judgement. Quoted at greater length, it reads as follows:

As universal laws of nature have their ground in our understanding, which prescribes them to nature (although only according to the universal concept of it as nature), so particular empirical laws, in respect of what is in them left undetermined by these universal laws, must be considered in accordance with such a unity as they would have if an understanding (although not our understanding) had furnished them to our cognitive faculties, so as to make possible a system of experience according to particular laws of nature. Not as if, in this way, such an understanding must be assumed as actual (for it is only our reflective judgment to which this idea serves as a principle – for reflecting, not for determining); but this faculty thus gives a law only to itself, and not to nature. (Kant [1790] 1951: 16–17) (Emphasis added by underlining – UK)

¹⁵ For Kant, "... genuine enthusiasm always moves only toward what is ideal and, indeed, to what is purely moral, such as the concept of right, and it cannot be grafted onto self-interest" (Kant [1798] 1979:155).

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Svetovljanski *sensus communis*: občost občutka – občutek občega

Ključne besede: estetika / estetska sodba / Kant, Immanuel / *sensus communis* / kozmopolitizem

Sensus communis, definiran kot predpostavka občutka, skupnega vsem, se pri Kantu jasno pokaže na dveh pomembnih mestih: kot vidik estetske sodbe v *Kritiki razsodne moči* (1790) in kot tema posebnega statusa svetovljanskega prava v razpravi *V večni mir* (1795). Zvezo med estetsko sodbo in svetovljanskim pravom vzpostavlja *sensus communis*, ki ga spodbujata domišljija in razsojanje o okusu; to Kant imenuje »razširjena miselnost« (erweiterte Denkungsart), »razširjena« ali »univerzalna komunikativnost« (erweiterte, allgemeine Mittelbarkeit). Njihova splošna povezanost z razsojanjem o okusu je stalno begala Kantove komentatorje in kritike. Razsojanje o okusu, o nemara najbolj radikalnem, značilnem, notranjem in zasebnem občutju, se zdi na prvi pogled paradoksen temelj občutka, ki naj bi bil skupen vsem. Sam Kant je ta paradoks poglobil tako, da ga je razvil kot antinomijo, tipično za razsojanje o okusu: okus kot notranji občutek je zelo specifičen in subjektiven, pa vendar ga je treba misliti, kot da je objektivno pomemben, in s predpostavko o tem, kaj je družbeno sprejemljivo. Kant hoče menda poudariti, da celo zelo subjektivne oblike estetskega zaznavanja predpostavljajo družbenost – ne kot objekt misli, ampak kot enega izmed njenih podobno sestavljenih stanj.

V tej razpravi sem razširila pojasnjevalni in kritični doseg tega paradoksa. Najprej sem pregledala nekaj starejših definicij in umestitev *sensus communis* v anatomskih, topografskih in optičnih modelih pri Aristotelu, Tomažu Akvinskem in Leonardu da Vinciju. Preden je besedna zveza *sensus communis* dobila pomen »občutek za obče«, je pomenila, kot se je pokazalo, »občost občutka«, koordinacijo zaznav, prejetih od zunanjih čutov. Tomaž Akvinski to opisuje kot »notranji čut«, skupaj z imaginacijo in *vis cogitativa*. V Leonardovih diagramskih risbah, ki ilustrirajo delovanje vida, čutne informacije potujejo k *sensus communis*, ki ima ob imaginaciji, intelektu in duši prostor v posebnem prekatu možganov.

Nato sem raziskala, kako Kant usposobi te starejše poglede na *sensus communis*, da postane njihov učinek kritičen. Če se Kant paradoksu, ki ga postavlja antinomija razsojanja o okusu samozadovoljno predaja do te mere, da tvega prepričljivost svojega argumenta – kritiki so ga obdolžili samoreferenčnosti –, je to zato, ker je drugje raziskal in izrazil razmerje med notranjimi in zunanjimi čuti, med individualnim, kontingentnim in partiku-

larnim na eni strani in socialnostjo na drugi; pri tem se je oziral na »sile, ki vzgibavajo človekovo srce« – v polemiki proti Immanuelu Swedenborgu, objavljeni leta 1765 pod naslovom *Sanje vidca dubov*, odklonilno, v istem času pa naklonjeno v svojih prvih raziskavah o analitiki sublimnega v spisu »Lepo in sublimno« (1764) ter pozneje v *Kritiki razsodne moči*. Umestitev *focus imaginarius* v njegovem optičnem modelu mu omogoča, da razloži mnogovrstnost občutkov in njihovo prepletanje v imaginaciji, zaznavanje zunanje realnosti in notranjih občutkov. Ustrezna umestitev *focus imaginarius* postane odločilna pri razlikovanju med etično socialnostjo in odvisnostjo (slednje se je razkrilo v *Schwärmerei*, fascinaciji, sugestibilnosti).

Kantova teorija estetskega razsojanja torej ohranja elemente, ki jih je vzporejal v starejših razlagah in umestitvah *sensus communis* – zlasti *vis cogitativa* in imaginacijo, pa tudi sposobnost imaginacije, da zadeve sintetizira – in jih nato postavi v medsebojna dinamična in protislovna razmerja, zato da kritično pogojujejo, modulirajo in omejujejo drug drugega na način, ki napoveduje Freudovo prizadevanje, da bi – sto petdeset let pozneje – povzdignil etični položaj in merila množic. Upam, da sem nazadnje dokazala, da Kantova teorija estetske sodbe – in razsojanja o okusu še posebej – ter njegova umestitev *focus imaginarius* ponujata obet za kritično svetovljanstvo.

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