

**TRANSCENDENTAL SUBJECT VS. EMPIRICAL SELF: ON
KANT'S ACCOUNT OF SUBJECTIVITY**

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Kant's view of subjectivity implies a twofold consideration of the idea of subject. On the one hand, there is the empirical self, and on the other hand, there stands the transcendental subject as the principle of the unity of experience, and therefore, as the principle of the existence of the empirical self. Kant's transcendental subject is an effort to suggest a theory of subjectivity, which is impersonal and non-atomistic, that is to say a model that intends to exclude individualism. Yet, this model fails to constitute the factually existing person as subject. Kant's theory of transcendental subject is rooted in his subjectivist idealist philosophy; the transcendental subject appears to be another type of the idea of absolute.

Keywords: Kant – Hume – Subjectivity – Self – Transcendental – Empirical

An analysis of the Kantian view of subjectivity is not feasible if one does not consider his standpoint in relation to the historical background within which Kant attempts to resolve the problem of subjectivity. On the one hand, Kant criticizes the traditional metaphysical picture regarding subjectivity, a picture that is rooted in both a Cartesian and Leibnizian metaphysics of the subject and claims that the subject (the mind, the self, the soul etc.) is one substance among others, which has certain properties, of which thinking might be considered the most determinant. Cartesian metaphysics, for instance, distinguishes two discrete realities: that of subject and that of object. The former is known from within, whereas the latter is apprehended externally. The objective world refers to the universe of spatial entities. The subject acquires the knowledge of such entities, although it does so not *within* itself yet *through* itself. It would be best to omit for the time being, the discussions surrounding the problematic nature of acquiring the knowledge of objectivity within the Cartesian framework. The important point, however, is that the Cartesian picture shares the general metaphysical view that knowledge of so-called objectivity is possible if the subjective representation of it that is called knowledge conforms to the world of objects. On the other hand, Kant criticizes the empiricist picture of subjectivity, since, according to Kant, empiricism shares the presupposition that requires the conformity of knowledge to the world of objects.

Traditionally, it is supposed that Kant admits the distinct existence of objective and subjective universes, since, according to Kant, subjective reality requires objective reality for being real, i.e., subjectivity is impossible without objectivity. For Kant, experience is not possible unless we admit the existence of the objects of experience. However, Kant clearly states

that it is the understanding that provides these objects. The so-called Copernican Revolution that Kant brought about in philosophy proposes that “objects must conform to our knowledge” and that understanding has the function of “prescribing laws to nature, and even of making nature possible” (Kant 1787/1929, B 159f). Instead of reality shaping knowledge, it is human judgment that should be read into so-called reality. Moreover, such judgment determines what reality and nature are, and what character their existence possesses. It is human judgment that conditions the real. Hence, we should infer that the dichotomy, which Kant upholds, does not exactly fit into the Cartesian picture. Moreover, it might be claimed that according to this picture the external world is to be inferred from this internal, subjective world, i.e., the Kantian metaphysics of subject provides a traditional idealist picture regarding objective and subjective realities. However, the importance of Kant’s reversal of the subject-object relation does not lie upon its idealistic implications. It is not just a reversal of correspondence theories. Kant’s Copernican Revolution supplies us with a new, yet problematic picture of subjectivity.

I. Kant’s Copernican Revolution has a number of important implications. In the section of the *Critique of Pure Reason* called “Metaphysical Deduction” Kant argues that logic has shown that our thoughts and judgments have certain forms. For instance, they appear in subject-predicate, conditional, quantified forms. Therefore, we can conclude that thoughts about objects – and it is to be noted that the self is one of these objects – should be understood in certain ways. In other words, prior to what we think about the world, we have to think about these thoughts in certain ways or forms. Thoughts are being thought within a certain schema. In this respect Schwyzer states: “We cannot conceive of things without conceiving them under the categories of understanding, as substances, as causally inter-related etc” (Schwyzer 1997, 345).

Rationalism and empiricism, according to the Kantian standpoint, share a common fallacy. They propose that one ultimately would be able to know the real either through reason or by the way of senses. However, As Cassirer expresses, these traditional philosophical doctrines fail to see that “there are *limitations* in the nature of the case, for since man is involved in the knowing his doing so has part in the resultant knowledge and so there can be no pure transcript of the truth in either sense or reason” (Cassirer 1953, 3). The process of acquiring knowledge then consists of ordering the material of experience and experience itself according to causal (a priori) laws and discovering the application of these laws in particular empirical cases. In addition, this process is to be followed by the judgment of reason.

The pure forms of understanding that make experience possible are a priori. When Kant speaks of the subject being in possession of “synthetic a priori knowledge,” he refers to these sensible and intelligible forms. In contradistinction to these forms, which are not learned from experience, the content of our knowledge is totally empirical and experimental. However, these pure forms always condition and determine the understanding of the empirical content. The forms are constitutive of the whole experience of the world, i.e., it is understanding that makes nature. Nature is not an arbitrary bundle of data that does not follow any rules or regulations. Intelligible nature, the world of appearances, is derived from the mind in accordance with this order and form. Carr states respectively that “[f]or Kant there can be no real empirical knowledge without a priori synthetic knowledge” (Carr 1999, 35).

Kant’s view on subjectivity, roughly, may be considered as an attempt to resolve the riddle of the self, which has been put forward by Hume. Hume’s attack on the idea of self as a substance is part of his more general refusal of the idea of substance and essence; this includes his repudiation of metaphysics. Contrary to Hume, Kant affirms the existence of such

objects that lie beyond the boundaries of the sensible world. Kant holds that, if we stick to Humean position, there will be no way of demonstrating the possibility of knowledge of the sensible world, because such knowledge, although it is empirical, is a priori synthetic in nature. And if such knowledge is possible, why should not synthetic a priori knowledge of the non-sensible be possible? Therefore, his first task is to show the possibility of knowledge of the sensible world, i.e., how synthetic a priori knowledge of this world is possible, and later he will proceed to show the possibility of the synthetic a priori knowledge of the non-sensible. To do so, Kant starts with the subject of knowledge. Similar to the case of the objects of the non-sensible realm he proposes the existence of a transcendental self that keeps together the aforementioned bundle of perceptions. In other words, Kant states that the Humean notion of the self is not realizable unless there already is a self which marks off or defines a bundle as this or that particular bundle.¹ Cassirer states: “The self, so far from being the product of individual perceptions, actually constitutes the fundamental presupposition for something that can in general be called ‘perception’” (Cassirer 1918/1981, 198). The basic action or the self-activity of such a subject is to combine the manifold of representations, which is best explained as the “I think” which accompanies all representations. It is clear even at this stage that such a reformulation of the question of subjectivity requires a dual existence where the self is to be considered. This is to say that, there exist two distinct modes or forms of subject: the transcendental and the empirical. The self-activity of the latter, empirical apperception is the inner sense or the consciousness of the self which is due to our inner determinations and is always changing. Kant states: “Transcendental apperception,” which is the pure, original, unchangeable consciousness refers to the state where “there can be in us no modes of knowledge, no connection or unity of one mode of knowledge with another, without that unity of consciousness which precedes all data of intuitions, and by relation to which representation of object is alone possible” (Kant 1787/1929, A 107). According to this position, the problem of Cartesianism, as well as the mistake of empiricism where the question of the self is at stake, is the lack of such a distinction between these two modes of the existence of the self. Empiricism acknowledges the empirical self and its self-activity; it holds that empirical apperception is the sole form of the existence of the subject. On the other hand, Cartesianism and rationalism hold to a confused definition of the transcendental self that reduces its existence to a mere substance and its activity to the properties of such an essence.

Kant distinguishes between the transcendental subject and the empirical subject by referring to the former as the consciousness of the existence of the latter. The transcendental subject is the ultimate condition for the possibility of experience, and if we consider the empirical subject as another yet highly unique and distinctive object of experience, it should follow that the pure apperception or the transcendental unity of apperception is the condition for the possibility of the existence of the empirical subject too. Still we should note that this unity of apperception is not simply another subject, it is the *consciousness* of being a subject. “Pure apperception or the original apperception is the self-consciousness which while producing the representation ‘I think’ cannot itself be accompanied by any further representation” (Kant 1787/1929, B 132f). One’s representations stand together in unity within one universal self-consciousness, where such universal unity refers to the transcendental unity of self-consciousness. The act of synthesizing is given within the intuition, and the consciousness of this synthesis is the condition that makes the representation possible (Kant 1787/1929, B 133 f). Manfred Frank, for instance, distinguishes self-consciousness from the subject-object relation. He is aware that, if such a distinction is not present, the Kantian consideration of the

problem of subjectivity will turn into another form of Cartesianism. He proposes that the pure apperception or the consciousness of being a subject refers to a pre-propositional form of the existence of the subject which signifies not a conceptual awareness but a form of “familiarity or acquaintance” (Carr 1999, 39, Schwyzer 1997, 353-4). However, Kant even characterizes the empirical self or the empirical subject in terms of consciousness; in the case of the empirical subject, its consciousness will be empirical too (Kant 1787/1929, B 133f). Awareness seems to be present as a constitutive element of subjectivity regardless of its transcendental or empirical mode. The distinction Kant has in mind is more likely to be directed towards suggesting a solution to the “bundle” problem that Hume has brought about, as mentioned above. Kant states that, “For the empirical consciousness, which accompanies different representations, is in itself diverse and without relation to the identity of the subject” (Kant 1787/1929, B 133). Awareness and accompanying representations appear to be common aspects of both the empirical and transcendental subject. What is more likely to differentiate them is the perpetual self-identity of the former in contradistinction to the diversity of the latter. Kant relates the perpetual self-identity of the transcendental subject to a particular form of awareness. The transcendental subject is not the consequence of having representations of the sensible world, not the result of the “I think,” but the result of bringing these representations together (synthetic activity) in conjunction with consciousness of this synthesis. “That relation comes about, not simply through my accompanying each representation with another, but only in so far as I conjoin one representation with another ... and am conscious of the synthesis of them” (Kant 1787/1929, B 133f).

This consciousness, the original apperception, is the principle that conjoins the representations and bestows identity upon the ever-in-flux bundle of perceptions. Kant’s answer to Hume’s question with regard to the formation of causality suggests a parallel consideration of the relation between transcendental and empirical selves. The Humean question is: How can we prove things are necessarily related when we do not have an impression of such a necessary relation? According to Cassirer, Kant assumes the existence of the synthesis, which is a necessary relationship according to rules, in the possession of the experience that functions as the logical basis for all possible inferences, including the ones about cause and effect (Cassirer 1953, 12). To the degree that the bundle of perceptions, that is, the empirical self, is an object of the sensible world, the transcendental unity of apperception appears as the constitutive condition that makes the formation of such bundles possible. “Transcendental self-consciousness involves a certain representation of myself” (Kant 1787/1929, A 132, B 157). Kant insists that the transcendental unity of apperception is in possession of the representations of the “I.” These representations should belong to *one* self-consciousness if there is to be not a “many-colored and diverse self” (Kant 1787/1929, B 134). “Knowledge requires an a priori subjective unity, that is, one ‘I’ to which the many representations belong” (Carr 1999, 41). Kant ultimately tends to equate subjectivity and selfhood to the identity of the self. Kant’s answer to the question, Who am I?, is not the empirical, non-identical bundle of perceptions but is the “I.” This self-identical “I” is the one that simply poses itself as “I,” as a subject.

II. Quassim Cassam, in his “Kant and Reductionism,” tries to show that although different there are similarities between Kant’s and Hume’s accounts of the self. Cassam labels the Humean bundle theory as a form of reductionism too. The basic feature of reductionism that is shared by different reductionist approaches, according to Cassam, is the impersonalization of subjectivity (1989, 72-4). If so, then Kant’s transcendental account of the self can also be

thought as a form of reductionism. In this way, Cassam tries to confront circularity and begging the question allegations against Kant's criticism of the Humean bundle theory: according to Kant the unity of experience requires the unity of the subject, where the subject is that which provides the unity of the experience. According to this view empiricism takes for granted the idea of conception of experience as experience of an objective spatial world, whereas it is this very capacity of conceptualization of the experience that needs to be explained (Cassam 1989, 73). Cassam argues that the term 'subject' signifies two different entities in two parts of the statement above. While the latter can be thought as the personified subject, the former designates the realm of transcendence and is in fact an impersonal account of the yet-to-be-personified subject. As Cassam states:

Kant's account of what unites diverse simultaneously or successively occurring experiences in a single consciousness incorporates two elements: firstly, the subject must be capable of ascribing these experiences to himself as *his* experiences; and secondly, the subject must be aware, or potentially aware, of the numerical identity of that to which the different experiences are ascribed. (1989, 77-8)

However, such a strategy only shifts the basis of circularity to the transcendental realm. The being of the transcendental, impersonal subject remains unexplained and is simply presupposed. The possibility of ascription of different experiences to the same subject or the same "I" is what unites these different experiences as experiences that belong to one particular subject. According to Cassam, Kant's account of subjectivity requires the existence of an "I" that can abstract from experiences as states of a subject and ascribe them to the "I think". However, even in this formulation the existence of the abstracting, transcendental subject is presupposed. Cassam's Kantian argument can be restated in the following syllogistic form: if there is a unity of experience then there should be a subject that provides such a unity. There is unity of experience; therefore, there exists such a pre-experiential subject.

Cassam considers Hume's bundle theory, at least its revised form which is presented by Derek Parfit, to be a form of reductionism too. Reductionism sees a person as consisting in a body and a brain together with a series of deeds and mental states (Cassam 1989, 75-6). If so, then a reductionist account of subjectivity appears to be a form of error-theory that considers the subject to be only a grammatical and linguistic entity. Thus, the subject, in its nonlinguistic sense, is a pseudo-entity. It may be thought that from a formal point of view Hume's account is definitely an impersonal account of the subject. However, Humean impersonalization of the subject is not a rejection of the idea that empirical persons (people) exist. What in fact Hume aims to do is to criticize and reject a substantialist account of the self. For Hume the nature of the substratum that the idea of substance signifies is of little importance and its influence on the core of Hume's account of the self is minimal. This is to say that Hume's account may be labeled as reductionist only if a person is supposed to signify a substantial entity. In this sense Hume's bundle theory is non-transcendental as much as it is impersonal. In Cassam's view, however, person replaces the idea of substance. Therefore, rejection of such an idea of person does not contradict the acceptance of the idea of a transcendental subject. In this way, he tries to escape Hume's criticism of substantialism and to reintroduce the idea of substance, but this time in the form of an impersonal, transcendental, subject. If such replacement is accepted, then Kant's basic thesis that the transcendental subject provides the unity of experience is saved. Moreover, the idea of the self as an impersonal, experiential entity is restored as well. However, as was mentioned earlier, it is the very existence of the transcendental self that re-

quires explanation.

Although he is aware of the shortcomings of Kant's account of the self and Kant's ascription of the unity of the subject to some *internal* core that exists *within*² Cassam remains faithful to the transcendental account of the internal unity of the subject as the only plausible way of resolving the question concerning the nature of the self. Cassam's atomism with regard to the subjectivization of persons that is manifested in his ignoring of Hume's account of the self in Books II and III of the *Treatise* prevents him from viewing the process of unification of the self as subjectivization/internalization of the objective, societal elements. In Cassam's view transcendentalism is the only way out of personalization of subjectivity.

Cassam's approach can be considered an attempt to provide a form of substantial account of the self, which is not individual-subjectivist. However, the main point of the Humean theory of the self is not only criticism of the idea of a substantial subject in its individual-subjectivist form but is also criticism of the idea of substantial self in its entirety. This is why Hume's account of the self is not limited to what he explains in Book I of the *Treatise*. Reference to the social bases of the idea of the self provides the impersonal, yet non-transcendental, constitution of the idea of the self.

III. The possibility of any knowledge depends on the existence of a priori knowledge which is present in the categories. Empirical knowledge, including knowledge about the empirical subject, is always an instantiation, an application of the categories to particular manifolds. Knowledge always appears as judgments that are produced as the result of such an application, which in turn depends upon the existence of the transcendental subject, a self-consciousness that makes the formation of such judgments possible. The necessity of the categories for the formation of knowledge then refers to the subjective necessity or the necessary existence of the transcendental subject. By contrast, with regard to the world of sensible objects, we can only speak of objective validity. Following this line of thought into the realm of the subject itself, we encounter an intriguing, yet non-resolvable tension. As far as the existence of the subject refers to its schematic being, it is necessary. However, its empirical existence, as an object of experience, is only possible. Formally speaking, to the degree that my existence refers to the schema, existence of the subject in general is necessary. On the other hand, my very empirical existence is only possible but not clearly and distinctly proven, it is not beyond doubt that I exist. *Cogito* for Kant can only be the proof of the existence of subject's schema and categories; in other words, it serves only as the proof of the existence of the form of the subject, i.e. the transcendental self. To be a subject, then, is directly related to the formation of judgments, since to judge something is to be aware of it, and awareness in turn requires the application of necessary categories (Carr 1999, 42, Schwyzer 1997, 351). However, if such be the case, we face circularity: to be a subject is to form judgments, and to form judgments means to connect representations through the necessary categories which belong to the transcendental subject. In other words, producing judgments about the manifold of my representations requires the application of categories, where the application of the categories depends on the existence of the transcendental self-consciousness that owns such categories.

In addition to the points mentioned above, the idea of the subject of judgment, i.e., the idea that the subject makes synthetic judgments about the sensible world and poses itself as an object through the necessary schema and categories, raises the following questions: To whom do these categories and schema belong? From where does the supposed pre-propositional or pre-subjective "I" acquire these categories? Or is it at all the pre-subjective "I" that acquires

them? In the Preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant answers this question as follows: “We can know a priori of things only what we ourselves put into them” (Kant 1787/1929, B xviii). And who does this ‘we’ refer to? In the section of the *Critique of Pure Reason* called “Transcendental Aesthetics,” Kant relates the possibility of the formation of a priori knowledge to pure intuition and pure representation. Kant defines pure representation as something that has nothing in it that belongs to sensation, where sensation is defined as being the effect of an object upon the faculty of representation. The a priori ordering principle, the pure representation or the pure form of sensibility is found in mind (Kant 1787/1929, B 34, A 20). Therefore, it is clear that the ‘we’ refers to nothing or nobody other than the transcendental subject or the understanding. In any case, is not the subject in one way or another presupposed from the outset?³ It seems that, on the one hand, we face a problem of circularity if we insist on staying within the conceptual framework of metaphysics of the subject. If to resolve such circularity, in agreement with Heidegger and Manfred Frank, we attribute a primordial or pre-propositional status to the so-called transcendental subject, then we might be faced with a radical renunciation of the idea of subjectivity, which clearly is contradictory to the Kantian project. As Cassirer states, “[c]onsciousness is, indeed, that which alone makes all representations to be thoughts, and in it, therefore, as the transcendental subject, all our perceptions must be found; but beyond this *logical* meaning of the ‘I’ we have no knowledge of the subject in itself, which as substratum underlies this ‘I’” (Cassirer 1918/1981, 200). Moreover, such a suggestion does not seem to possess the potential of resolving the tension between the empirical and transcendental selves.

Forms, as the underlying logical factors that make knowledge possible, are transcendental. Transcendence refers to conceivability in general through intellectual analysis and through construction of theory only. Synthesis is the primary act of understanding; it comes about only as the act of combining representations. Analysis – the apparent opposite of synthesis – always presupposes the latter (Kant 1787/1929, B 130). Therefore the transcendental elements are the constitutive elements of experience (Cassirer 1953, 12). This means that they provide the synthetic unity of the experience. The transcendental self, therefore, is what stands conceptually over and against the sensible world, as well as one and against the empirical self as a part which is included in that world. The empirical self is included, entailed in the sensible world. “The transcendental self stands in an intentional or subject-object relation to the world” (Carr 1999, 46). The empirical self, as part of the sensible world, is subject to causal laws and determinations of this world; it is not spontaneous but is caused. The transcendental self, on the contrary, is active, spontaneous, and intentionally related to its objects. Therefore, our knowledge of the self can only be the intuitively apprehended empirical self, since only the objects of the sensible world, the phenomena, are knowable. “The intuition of the self represents the self with its natural properties, as a part of the world” (Carr 1999, 50) and not as the condition of the possibility of experience. Hence, one can conclude that, in contradistinction to the empirical self, the transcendental self is the self-in-itself. However, such a formulation would be explicitly contradictory to the conceptualization of the world as thing-in-itself that is, unknowable. Kant does not formulate the case quite like that; he claims that the transcendental self is neither the self that appears to itself nor as the “I” in itself, but only as a thought. Kant states: “Since I do not have another self intuition which gives the determining in me ... I cannot determine my existence as that of a self-active being; all that I can do is represent to myself the spontaneity of my thought... [B]ut it is owing to this spontaneity that I entitle myself an intelligence” (Kant 1787/1929, B 157). The transcendental self, therefore, is neither an element of

the world of phenomena nor of the world of things in themselves. It is that which “has insight only into that which it produces after a plan of its own” (Kant 1787/1929, B xiii). However, such a formulation appears to be a mere tautology, since it presupposes the existence of the transcendental self in order to explain its existence.

IV. One possible answer to the problem that was raised above – the problem of reconciling transcendental and empirical subjects – is differentiating between the self, selfhood, and subjectivity as concepts and, furthermore, proposing that what the “I”, as the sign of the transcendental subject, signifies has a pre-conceptual attribution. This is to say that “concepts or ideas are also objects of which I am conscious” (Carr 1999, 55). Such a formulation will be in agreement with the Hegelian conceptualization of the self as something which distinguishes itself from things while simultaneously relating itself to them. Thus we should conclude that the transcendental self has a status which is neither general nor particular but exists prior to both modes. However, such a formulation attributes a distinct type of existence to the transcendental self and, as a consequence raises many questions including the not-yet-resolved one about the connection between the ideas and particulars. To define the transcendental self as the consciousness of being oneself against the multitude of other selves does not seem to resolve the issue either. The reason for this is that this formulation resonates with a meaning similar to be found in the notion that matter is the principle of individuation. (According to Kant, the empirical self as object of the world of appearances, “which correspond to sensation[,] is *matter*” (Kant 1787/1929, B 34, A 20).) This in turn will result in a consideration of the transcendental self as a substance – the rationalist position that Kant had formerly criticized. Yet, we should note that Kant is quite open to such a Cartesian interpretation, since he similarly uses the language of form and matter. In contrast to matter, “that which determines and orders this sensation is its form.... Pure representation is what nothing in it belongs to sensation. The pure form of intuition, which orders the manifold of intuitions, is found in mind and is a priori” (Kant 1787/1929, B 34, A 20).

If we elaborate on the pure intuition of time, i.e., if we signify by the form time “the universal condition of the possibility of appearances” (Kant 1787/1929, B 46, A 31) we might be able to avoid such problematic situations. As a universal form, time will not be an object but “the mode of representation of myself as object” (Kant 1787/1929, B 54, A 37), which means the mode of representation of myself as an empirical subject. Hence, time becomes the form of the action of differentiation of the self against the plurality of other selves. It is only against such plurality that the unique, individual subjectivity of a particular self can be acquired. The transcendental self then can be understood as the consciousness of the fact that such a realization takes place within the universal form of time, i.e., it will be the awareness of the temporality of the self. My empirical self is the necessary condition that allows me to distinguish my unique self from the world of sensible objects. The empirical self is the objectivity of my self against which my transcendental self as the consciousness of such objectivity, as my objective being in time, can be proposed. The admission of the objectivity of my empirical self as the temporalized subject is the condition that gives way to the realization of the apperception of the “I think.” Time is the form within which the undetermined existence of my self is determined. Therefore, says Gilles Deleuze, “the ‘I think’ affects time, and only determines the existence of a ‘self’ that changes in time... Time as the form of determinability therefore doesn’t depend upon the intensive movement of soul; on the contrary, the intensive production of a degree of consciousness at every moment depends on time” (1993/1997, 29). Hence, follows

lows the secularization of time. Time is not a cosmological movement any more, but is the time of the city, the time of action. I act, I think, where thinking signifies an activity determined by time; therefore I am but in time. The time as the form of the non-eternal results in the temporalization of the self, the awareness of time as the form of the self's finitude. Time, being thus secularized is "emancipated" (Deleuze 1993/1997, 29).

The submission of self to time results in constant change within the self. The receptivity of the self in time is the experiencing of such changeability. Contrary to this, the "I" actively determines the existence of the self in time. "The 'I' and the self are separated by the line of time, which relates them to each other only under the condition of a fundamental difference" (Deleuze 1993/1997, 29). I am different from my self. The "I" is the determination of my constantly changing self, which is due to its receptivity to time. The "I" is active as the apperception of the self. The "I" is the "Other" of the self; it is the internalized other. The "I" is the form of the existence of the self; the self is the content of such existence. The "I" signifies the transcendental element; the self signifies the empirical, practical being. To the self the "I" proposes itself as a universal, unchanged entity; yet it determines the finitude of the self by presenting itself to it as the universal form of time. This is the realization of the finitude of the self through its subordination to the form of time.

"Time is the form of inner sense, that is, of the intuition of ourselves and of our inner state" (Kant 1787/1929, B 49, A 33). Time is the interior affect of the self by itself. Space is the possibility of being affected by the exterior objects; the possibility of being affected by other selves. Time is the interior form of finitude, whereas space is its exterior form. The interiority of time is not simply the interiority of time to the mind. It is the form that continuously splits the "I" and the self from within. The infinity of time, thus, points towards the unfinalizability of my doubling process. Time is the inner form through which the "I" becomes aware and admits the empirical existence of the self just as space is the external form of apperception of such empirical being.

V. Contrary to Hume's empirical methodology that starts from the philosophical and historical analysis of what is happening, Kant's methodology begins with "human nature... to be understood not as variable but as a constant magnitude. Man is not to be comprehended and presented in the shifting from this momentary contingent state, but rather his eternal essence is to be sought out and revealed as the foundation for moral laws" (Cassirer 1918/1981, 235). The eternal essence of man, on the one hand, signifies the transcendental subject of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, while on the other hand, it refers to Rousseau's concept of nature. Although the latter seems to be an existential expression, it is indeed an ideal, normative concept. Kant takes Rousseau's praise of the state of nature not as a quest for a return to nature as such. The Rousseauian transcendence which signifies the universal nature of the human refers "not to a constitutive but a regulative principle. [Kant] regards Rousseau's theory not as a theory of what exists but of what should be ... as a prospective prophecy" (Cassirer 1945, 10).

In the realm of practical philosophy, will plays a role similar to what cognition plays in the realm of pure reason. Will exists only if there is a permanent and stable rule which constitutes its unity and identity. Will by itself cannot function as a universal rule, since every human has a will with a different object. The will, as an element of the world of sensible objects, as an element of the realm of empirical selves, is the representation of the good as it is presented in the philosophy of antiquity. By contrast, the law of ethics does not aim at the good but is to provide it with the universal form that determines it. The self's ethical object is the good; the

ethical object of the “I” is the law. The difference between the will and the law is based on a formulation of persons as the limits of each other’s well-being. “The wills of all do not have one and the same object, but each person has his own (his own welfare), which, to be sure, can accidentally agree with the purposes of others” (Kant 1788/1956, 27). The other is the limitation of the realization of the welfare of another. It means that, as empirical entities, humans are the external limit of each other’s freedom. Hence, we need a *harmonizing*, universal principle which can transcend these particularities and which is applicable to all universally. Law is the form that differentiates pure will from the arbitrary subjective desire of the individual.

Autonomy is the principle that guarantees the participation of humans in the realm of subjects which are treated as ends. Autonomy involves rejecting submission to other persons and submitting to the universal law of morality. The autonomous person is the mature subject who has access to understanding not under the guidance of another person but by submitting himself to reason, to the law of practical reason alone. Such a person, through awareness of the ethical law, attains consciousness of his freedom. The will is free not when it is determined by an individual object of desire but when it allows itself to be determined by the ethical law as the transcendental form of the unity of wills. Hence freedom can be formulated as submission to causality. However, it is not the causality of the empirical, but the determination that is imposed by ethical law.⁴ Freedom is to follow the order of law that dictates that one “must necessarily proceed rationally” (Kant 1788/1956, 8).

In the realm of the practical reason, Kant views personhood as two-sided. One side is concerned with feeling, the other with thought and will. The former refers to the social principle and the latter to the transcendental principle. This split within the subject forms the basic tension in the Kantian concept of subjectivity. While it rejects one form of subject, which is based upon feeling, it affirms a subjectivity which is founded through thought and pure will. This latter formulation is closely related to the Rousseauian notion of nature. It is the universal nature that every human shares as a transcendental principle and which is the basis of the concept of universal rights and freedoms. When considering moral qualities such as sympathy, Kant writes: “[S]ympathy is kind and amiable, for it indicates a kindly interest in the fate of other men.... But this good-natured passion is weak and always blind.... As soon as this feeling has attained its proper universality, it is sublime, but at the same time colder” (quoted in Cassirer 1945, 16). The other to whom sympathy is to be directed must not be simply a particular (empirical) individual but should be the universal form, the transcendental subject. The other should be constructed in the realm of transcendence. The empirical subject should be surmounted so that the transcendental or universal subject emerges. The other of the “I”, the empirical self which signifies the other person, can never claim fully the attributions of a subject, since the “I” only encounters with this particular other on empirical grounds. The other of the empirical ground belongs to the world of intelligible beings. It is a peculiar kind of object with certain properties. However, as far as its subjectivity in transcendental sense is concerned, it belongs to the realm of the thing-in-itself and cannot be known; it can never be conceived as another “I” but only as the other of the subject, i.e., as a mere object. The transcendental subject that corresponds to the universal man as the bearer of certain universal rights goes beyond the empirically given self. Kant’s emphasis on independence vs. submissiveness is yet another evidence of such a differentiation. Kant writes: “[I]n submissiveness there is not only something exceedingly dangerous, but also a certain ugliness and a *contradiction*, which at the same time indicates its illegitimacy.... [T]hat man himself should stand in need of no soul and have no will of his own, and that another soul should move his limbs, this is absurd and perverse.

Such man is like the mere tool of another” (quoted in Cassirer 1945, 17-18). Kant underlines the importance of a reciprocal relation and interaction among humans instead of the dependence of one upon another. Reciprocity is derived out of the element of self-consciousness, which distinguishes humans from animals. It will later appear in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as apperception. There this element of self-consciousness is promoted to its most universal form, into a transcendental regulative principle. Kant does not reject the idea of the subject as such; he criticizes, although abstractly, a certain, historical form of the subject that, in contradistinction to the critical subject, is an object to the will of others. Kant praises Rousseau’s distinction between the conventional and the natural man, because as Cassirer says, he “saw in it rather a contribution to ethical and social criticism, a discrimination of true and false values. And welcomed this discrimination” (Cassirer 1945, 20). The permanent element in human nature is not social conditioning but the intentional element, the goal towards which man is directed. However, it remains a mystery how the other, whose transcendental subjectivity can never fully be admitted by the “I”, and who, regardless of its peculiarities, belongs to the world of objects, can claim independence and rejects submissiveness. It seems that the other’s fate cannot be other than the fate of Marquis de Sade’s unfortunate Justine’s and the other’s claim to subjectivity cannot resonate other than *being subject* to the will of its master.⁵

According to Kant, the analysis of man’s practical faculty should give way to the discovery of necessary elements of ethics versus accidental ones. The necessary elements are those that have been constituted by the pure transcendental form as a sort of ethical legislation which accords with human nature and the proper place of man in creation. According to Kant, the empiricist philosophers, “those who derive their doctrine from experience and aim to base a knowledge of human nature on the history of man’s previous development[,] have failed to face this task” (Cassirer 1945, 21). They missed seeing beyond the accidental and ever-changing element, the persisting, essential aspect. The point is that this essential element does not refer to a substance but points toward the ethical. It is due to this ethical essence that man can set universal rules and regulations (moral imperatives) before him although, empirically, he would not be able to recognize and to fully realize them. Deleuze states: “Law never acquits us completely (neither of our duty, nor of our guilt and vice)” (1993/1997, 32). Acquittal is something we can hope for, but which never comes; it requires the immortality of the soul.

VI. Kant elaborates on the Rousseauian split between the citizen, as the member of civil society, and human, as that particular and peculiar being that belongs to nature, in abstract terms. Factually this split corresponds to empirical reality which is the result of the existing state of political and social affairs; humans, regardless of their limitations, conditions, and positions within the realm of civil society have, as far as they are “citizens,” certain rights. (They are instances of a certain transcendental mode of subjectivity.) Kant internalizes and subjectivizes the aforementioned split as if such a split corresponds to a primordial situation that is the consequence of man’s existence. The goal is to actualize a situation within which the citizen (the transcendental subject or the “I”) will be realizable. Kant admits that, historically, the realization of such a fact is neither possible nor necessary. Hegel will later demonstrate that the state is the necessary way to the realization of this project. The state is the representation of the completion of the split between the human and the citizen. Kant’s disregard for the kind of sympathy that is directed toward a fellow being and his emphasis that genuine sympathy, which he promotes to being an objective practical law, should be directed toward man as such; his claiming that, furthermore, this sympathy is colder, more distant, and more serious – all this

signifies the importance of this split within his philosophical system. It is not the empirically given human individual that bears importance but the transcendental subject that can claim access to universality. Hence the basic moral task of pure practical reason is to supply the synthetic conditions for the realization of the transcendental subject.

The absolute purpose (limit) of such a subject is the rational state, which can never be fully actualized. On the contrary, the empirical subject or self, that bundle of perceptions as it may be called, is final but not delimited by such an absolute end. Rather it is delimited by its own subjectivity in every empirical moment and by others in empirical space. Its finitude is not demarcated by an absolute boundary but rests upon the very fluctuating nature of its experiential existence. Otherness is not a limit but a horizon which no subject can escape. Moreover, such a horizonal finitude contains an aspect of intentionality: the self comports itself towards the other, since in the future it will be an-other. Such a subject is a threshold phenomenon; it exists at the conjuncture of past and future; it is the other itself. Hence there is no absolute other to relativize its being.

Kantian transcendental subjectivity, although it contains an element of finitude and apprehends finitude through internal intuition, submits itself to an absolute limitation. The never-to-be-accomplished transcendental subject, in itself, represents an absolute, finalized limit. For Kant, the empirical aspect of the subject is what makes the realization of the subject impossible. The limit of the Kantian subject signifies a lack of the subject and a lack in the subject. For the empiricist, on the other hand, it is this very lack that marks subjectivity. Empirically speaking, to be a subject is to be incomplete, i.e., to be other than itself. For Kantian approach, to be a subject, is the apprehension of the impossibility of being a subject. The Kantian subject, with its dual mode of existence, does not emancipate the subject from the dissonant tension between the transcendental and empirical; it does not eliminate the tension between the "I" and the self but rather brings about the paradoxical existence of the subject (Deleuze 1993/1997, 35). The sublime practical principle emancipates the transcendental subject from the empirical self at the point "where the law to which the willing subject submits himself negates and cancels the empirical existence of this subject himself; where life regarded as physical existence is sacrificed to the idea" (Cassirer 1918/1981, 255).

Conclusion. Kant's view of subjectivity implies a twofold consideration of the idea of subject. On the one hand, there is the empirical self, and on the other hand, there stands the transcendental subject as the principle of the unity of experience, and therefore, as the principle of the existence of the empirical self.

Kant's idea of transcendental subjectivity is a response to Hume's empirical formulation that reduces the idea of the self to a "bundle of perceptions". Kant claims that there should be a unifying principle prior to empirical experiences of a particular person so that the idea of the self can emerge.

One major problem with Kant's view of transcendental subjectivity is that, in my opinion, he does not supply sufficient argumentation to support his claim about the existence of such a subject. Kant does not arrive at the idea of transcendental subjectivity but simply asserts it. It is in this sense that his discussion around this idea carries the mark of circularity. Kant criticizes Hume for simply assuming that the multitude of experiences of an empirical subject is sufficient to form the idea of the self. Kant criticizes Hume for randomly presuming the idea of the self as the inductive outcome of a number of experiences that are attributed to a particular person. Regardless of correctness or falsehood of such a criticism, I tried to show that Kant's

own idea regarding the existence of a transcendental self as the principle of the unity of experience is unfounded and that the existence of the transcendental self is simply presupposed.

Moreover, I argued that the idea of transcendental subject, although it is held to suggest a model of subjectivity, results in liquidation of the idea of subjectivity. Kant's transcendental subject is an effort to suggest a theory of subjectivity, which is impersonal and non-atomistic, that is to say it is a model that intends to exclude individualism. Yet, in my opinion, this model fails to constitute the factually existing person as subject. Kant's theory of transcendental subject is rooted in his subjectivist idealist philosophy; so be the case, the transcendental subject appears to be another type of the idea of absolute.

Furthermore, the distinction between transcendental subject and the empirical self is a reflection of Rousseau's distinguishing between the citizen and the man that Kant inherited. According to Kant's political philosophy, which is based upon and is concordant with his moral theory, man as such, in "the state of nature" has essential attributes such as individualism, selfishness etc. The natural man, that is the counterpart of the empirical self in the realm of pure reason, essentially does not acknowledge the existence and the rule of Right. It is only the citizen who, through imposing certain restrictions on himself, that is capable of being a rational being.

Kant's distinction between the citizen and the man betrays his effort to suggest a non-traditional and non-Cartesian theory of the self. The concepts of natural man and the citizen signify Kant's reliance upon traditional distinction between reason and matter or the body-mind duality. In this sense, the empirical self represents the bodily and animalistic aspect of human existence whereas the transcendental self is the representation of the pure rational being of the subject.

The idea of transcendental self as the principle of the unity of experience inevitably reduces the empirical self into mere object. The principle of the unity of experience dictates laws upon "nature", which in itself lacks such orderliness as it appears to reason. Given that "man" as that being which exists in the state of nature we should conclude that he also lacks such laws and does not own an idea of Right. Therefore, man as such is not to be considered a subject but as mere object.

So be the case, Kant's view of subjectivity falls short to explain, first, that how the empirical self is related to the transcendental subject. Second, attributing the idea of subjectivity to the transcendental subject results in de-subjectivization of the self, and in the final analysis it resolves the very idea of subjectivity.

Notes

¹ Terence Penelhum refers to this problem as MacNabb's Hexameter (2000, 51-5). "I can only wonder if I am the same person I was yesterday, if I am, not if I am not. Kant may or may not have been right when he said that a similar worry about the objective character of my perceptions of physical phenomena is ultimately unintelligible; but he certainly seems to have a strong argument on his side when he says that any sort of comparative judgment about a sequence of perceptions that I have requires the identity of the self who has them, and cannot justify a doubt about that identity, even though one may not be able on this basis to characterize the self any further. This is the best-known and most widely-felt difficulty in Hume's account of self-identity" (2000, 51).

² "The question 'what explains the unity of consciousness?' is a question asked from the sideways perspective, and Kant's mistake is to assume that the answer must be faithful to the conception which, from within a mental life, underlies the capacity to conceptualize experiences as experiences of objec-

tive” (Cassam 1989, 80). Concerning the criticism against Kant’s transcendental account of subject Cassam also writes: “The objection is that the defense (of transcendental subjectivity) is committed to an unacceptable conceptual foundationalism in which the location of the subject is always taken for granted in determining the identity of objects of perception” (1989, 94).

³ Lacan differentiates “the ‘subject of the enunciation’ (the subject who utters a statement) and the ‘subject of the enunciated (statement)’ (the symbolic identity the subject assumes within and via his statement): Kant does not address the question of who is the ‘subject of the enunciation’ of the moral Law, the agent enunciating the unconditional ethical injunction from within his horizon, this question itself is meaningless, since the moral Law is an impersonal command ‘coming from nowhere,’ i.e. it is ultimately self-positing, autonomously assumed by the subject himself” (Žižek 1998, 17). However, it is clear that the subject of enunciation is the transcendental subject. The moral law does not come from nowhere but it comes from the transcendental subject. This will become clearer once the forms and intuitions are studied.

⁴ “[I]t is crucial to perceive the solidarity between this feature and the emergence of the figure of the ‘sadist’ torturer-executioner as the effective ‘subject of the enunciation’ of the universal ethical statement-command. The Sadean move from Kantian Respect-to-Blasphemy, i.e. from respecting the Other (fellow being), his freedom and autonomy, and always treating him also as an end-in-itself, to reducing all Others precisely to mere dispensable instruments to be ruthlessly exploited, is strictly correlative to the fact that the ‘subject of the enunciation’ of the Moral Injunction, invisible in Kant, assumes the concrete features of the Sadean executioner. What Sade accomplishes is thus a very precise operation of breaking up the link between two elements which, in Kant’s eyes, are synonymous and overlapping: the assertion of an unconditional ethical injunction; the moral universality of this injunction. Sade keeps the structure of an unconditional injunction, positing as its content the utmost pathological singularity” (Žižek 1998, 17-18). What gives way to such an operation is the contraposition that exists between the self as an empirical entity and the transcendental self as the subject of enunciation. The contradistinction between transcendental and empirical selves is similar to the contradiction between the emptiness of the Kantian universal imperatives and their (empirical) content that was criticized by Hegel, which results in the possibility of such Sadean perversions of the ethical law.

⁵ Žižek rejects such a reading. He writes: “What we encounter here is the properly perverse attitude of adopting the position of the pure instrument of the big Other’s Will: it’s not my responsibility, it’s not me who is effectively doing it, I am merely an instrument of the higher Historical Necessity... The obscene *jouissance* of this situation is generated by the fact that I conceive of myself as exculpated for what I am doing: isn’t it nice to be able to inflict pain on others with the full awareness that I’m not responsible for it, that I merely fulfill the Other’s Will...this is what Kantian ethics prohibits. This position of the sadist pervert provides the answer to the question: How can the subject be guilty when he merely realizes an ‘objective,’ externally imposed necessity? By subjectively assuming this ‘objective necessity,’ i.e. by finding enjoyment in what is imposed on him. So, at its most radical, Kantian ethics is NOT ‘sadist,’ but precisely what prohibits assuming the position of a Sadean executioner” (1998, 22). However, the problem is based upon the self’s split into transcendental and empirical entities. This being the case, the law is always the Other’s (or the God’s) law: the transcendental law of the transcendental subject. Therefore, once the subject apprehends such transcendence it will realize itself as an object. On the other hand, when the transcendental subject becomes conscious of such a transcendental position, it will treat the others (the other empirical selves) as mere objects. Hence, it seems that the Lacanian “twist” to nullify the identification between Kant and Sade is in vain.

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