

**Reading British Romantic Poetry In The Context Of Kant's
“Analytic Of The Sublime”**

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Introduction

In this paper, I will explore how poetry about sublime landscape can reveal the subject–object relation in British Romantic thought. Within the experience of the sublime, the subject–object relationship can be depicted as a shifting away from a dualistic world view, where mind and nature are two opposed states of being, towards a world view where subject and object are interconnected. The analysis will be done in context of Immanuel Kant’s “Analytic of the Sublime” in the *Critique of Judgement*. This approach enables one to develop an understanding of the importance of landscape as a subject for poems that can only be illuminated through consulting Kant. The Kantian conception of the sublime focuses on the processes that are going on in the mind and how these particular processes give rise to the experience of the sublime. As a result, the relation between subject and object, that is mind and nature is revealed. I will demonstrate the validity of this argument by analysing two British Romantic poems about sublime landscape: “Hymn Before Sunrise, In The Vale of Chamouni” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and “The Mount Snowdown Episode” in Wordsworth’s *Prelude* book fourteen (1850).¹ To illuminate the portrayal of the subject–object relationship in these poems, I am going to explore the way imagery of landscape is used to evoke the experience of the sublime. Thereby it can be shown that Coleridge and Wordsworth extend the Kantian ideas, to emphasise the wholeness in which subject and object, that is mind and nature, are embedded.

In the first part, I will establish the reason for consulting Kant’s “Analytic of the Sublime” in more detail. In the second part, I will provide a concise, general understanding of what the British Romantic Sublime is, and establish its connection to Kant’s conception of truth. It will be shown that Coleridge and Wordsworth adopted Kant’s conception of truth which stresses the synthesising and creative power of the faculty of the imagination. This is crucial because the role of the

¹ Since an analysis of all of Coleridge’s and Wordsworth’s work goes beyond the scope of this paper, I am going to focus on these poems, as they are exemplar text of sublime landscape.

imagination in the case of the Kantian sublime is of particular interest to understand in what ways the mind is able to transcend the world. Therefore, the third part will discuss Immanuel Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime" in the *Critique of Judgement* in detail. This will provide the necessary groundwork to explore in the fourth part, the Kantian influence in "Hymn Before Sun-Rise" by Coleridge and "The Mount Snowdown Episode" in Wordsworth's *Prelude*. Analysing these poems in the context of the Kantian sublime will show that the imagery of landscape is used to illustrate the internal process of the mind that gives rise to the experience of the sublime. In this sense, these poems about landscape can be understood as expressions to comprehend the mental processes that lead to the experience of the sublime. This in turn reveals the subject-object relationship.

Part One – The Kantian Sublime And Its Link To British Romanticism

In "British Art and the Sublime" Christine Riding and Nigel Llewellyn explain:

Although the theory of the sublime was discussed across many western cultures, it was especially important in eighteenth-century Britain, mainly because of the increasing importance of landscape as a subject category for artists and critics and because of the impact in the eighteenth century of the best-known theory of the sublime in English, which is found in the Irishman Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, published in 1757. (n.p. *original italics*)

In Burke's text: *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, he argues that the source of the sublime resides within the object. Burke considers overwhelming natural forces, such as storming seas and earthquakes as sources of the sublime (cf. 47). Moreover, Paul Guyer explains in the "Introduction" to Burke's *Enquiry* that Burke argued that "experiences [are] grounded in our physiology rather than in our intellect" (n.p.). In other words, Burke's conception of the sublime focuses on the bodily reaction of the subject.

While Kant picks up on the link between the experience of the sublime and the overwhelming natural forces, he no longer places the source of the sublime within external nature but within the mind itself.² As Terrance Des Pres notes in “Terror and the Sublime”, for Kant “terror becomes the mind’s opportunity to transcend its ordinary limits and thereby recognize its own sublime dominion over even the worst threats” (141). Hence, Kant depicts the mental processes that give rise to the experience of the sublime. Approaching British Romanticism in the context of the Kantian sublime is beneficial because it develops an understanding of “the increasing importance of landscape as a subject category for artist” (“British Art and the Sublime” Riding and Llewellyn n.p.) that cannot be illuminated through Burke.

Kant’s analysis of the sublime focuses on the processes that are going on in the mind and how this particular process gives rise to the experience of the sublime. As a result, the relation between subject and object, that is mind and nature is revealed. Vast landscapes and mighty mountains can be understood as medium that draws the poet closer to a state of self-knowledge. Thus, in Coleridge and Wordsworth’s poems I am going to examine the notions of a self-regarding sublime. It will be shown that the human subject is situated in a relation of interdependence with nature. It is not determined by it or, like Kant, seeking power over it. Instead the self is dwelling in nature. Put differently, the Romantic self is depicted as more in harmony with nature. However, the ways that nature evokes self-reflection and an exploration of the self is connected to and bears similarities to the Kantian sublime. A shift away from the mind’s superiority over nature towards the ideas of interconnectedness can be established within these texts.

² While Kant’s thought influenced the Romantic movement in his native Germany, the reach of his ideas can also be illustrated by analysing the development of the Romantic movement in England. In *The Sublime*, Philip Shaw notes: “In England, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, writers such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, John Thelwall, Thomas Beddoes, and Thomas De Quincey demonstrated an awareness and interest in the Kantian thought that undoubtedly informed their conception of the sublime” (118).

Part Two – Brief Definition of the Romantic Sublime – Meaning of the Kantian notion of truth for the Romantics

Adam Potkay notes in “The British Romantic Sublime”, the main idea of the Romantic sublime

refers to the mind’s transcendence of a natural and/or social world [...] Revealed in the moment of the sublime is that the mind is not wholly of the world, but this revelation may be triggered by a particular setting in the world. (203)

From this it follows that foundational to the sublime experience is the notion that there is something that lies beyond the sensible world. It is in the experience of the sublime where qualities or aspects of the super-sensible are revealed to the subject. Therefore, the function of the sublime experience is that it enables the subject to be aware of both spheres. This suggests that the sublime experience reveals that the mind is not only part of nature, but relies on nature to arrive at the understanding that the mind can transcend the sensible world. In other words, mind and nature presuppose each other.

Vast landscape, majestic mountain ranges or fierce thunderstorm have been associated with the experience of the sublime and are popular images used in British Romantic poetry. One reason why Romantic poetry about landscape is popular is because it provides a way to rethink the subject-object relationship. Linked to this is the experience of the Sublime. In “The Romantic Sublime”, Weiskel notes that the “Romantic sublime was an attempt to revise the meaning of transcendence [...] a transposition of transcendence into a naturalistic key (4). Moreover, Weiskel supports my argument that the Romantic sublime is a way of rethinking the subject-object relationship, as he describes the Romantic sublime as “the most spectacular response of the literary mind to the dualism which cut across post-Renaissance thinking” (4). This notion of the romantic sublime is informed by the conception that the mind actively shapes experience rather than only passively perceiving it.

This conception of the mind was greatly informed by the Kantian notion of truth, established in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781). The Kantian notion of truth argues that the world has to be understood in its relation to the mind rather than the mind in its relation to the world. Put differently, the Kantian notion of truth replaces “the conception of truth as correspondence with a conception of truth as production, according to which the subject does not merely reflect on a given reality but constitutes the very structure of reality through activity” (Frederick C. Beiser *The Romantic Imperative* 74). The particular faculty of the mind that is responsible for shaping and constructing experience is the Imagination. It is this idea, that the mind plays an active role in creating one’s experience of reality that has been adopted by Coleridge and Wordsworth (cf. Gray William, *Fantasy, Myth and the Measure of Truth* 11). If the mind not only imitates but actively shapes and creates experience, this leads to a revaluation of the subject–object relation, and therefore of the mind’s ability to transcend the world.

As mentioned above, central to this active conception of the mind is the faculty of imagination. It is in *The Critique of Judgement* where Kant focuses on this faculty in relation to reflective judgements, the beautiful, and the sublime. Kant argues that the world is apprehended in space and time, and these apprehensions synthesise with concepts, that is, categories of reason. Consequently, human beings cannot access unconditional nature, which is nature outside of space and time. That is to say, Kant argues that it is not possible to apprehend things as they are in themselves because one can only think what is, within space and time. As a result, the subject has no positive access to the super–sensible world. However, the sublime experience provides a way to access the super sensible in a negative way.

Establishing an understanding of the Kantian sublime is crucial in order to understand in what ways Coleridge and Wordsworth extended the Kantian ideas, to bring out a more holistic understanding of the subject–object relationship. Therefore, I am going to discuss the Kantian sublime. I will focus on the nature of the aesthetic judgement of the sublime and the role of the

imagination to reveal in what ways the mind is able to transcend the sensible world.

Part Three – Kant’s “Analytic of the Sublime” In The Critique Of Judgement

Kant talks about two different sorts of sublimity, the mathematical and the dynamical sublime. In the case of the mathematical sublime, the imagination is overwhelmed by size, while in the dynamical sublime, the imagination is overwhelmed by power. The experience of the mathematical sublime articulates the idea of an absolute whole, while the experience of the dynamical sublime articulates the idea of humanities vocation as a free being. For the purpose of this essay, I am going to discuss how these two sorts of sublimity are triggered within nature.

Mathematical Sublime

The mathematical sublime is concerned with a sense of the absolute, “*Sublime* is the name given to what is *absolutely great*” (§25 248 *original italics*). Hence, when looking at a vast landscape or a mountain range, the imagination is unable to exhibit the magnitude of the object. What Kant is suggesting is that when the subject is presented with the idea of the absolutely large, such as the infinite, the imagination fails to complete its task of presentation. That is to say, the imagination fails to come up with an image of the infinite in the minds eye.

Kant describes this first stage of the sublime experience as follows:

The mind feels itself *set in motion* in the representation of the sublime in nature [...] This excess for the imagination (towards which it is driven in the apprehension of the intuition) is like an abyss in which it fears to lose itself. (§27 258 *original italics*)

Because the vastness of the landscape cannot be comprehended, the time-condition is interrupted: “the comprehension of the successively apprehended parts at one glance, is a retrogression that removes the time-condition in the progression of the imagination, and renders co-existence intuitable” (§27 258). Although the idea of infinity cannot be conceptualised, the super-sensible is revealed as asserting a feeling of infinity. Thus, this failure of the imagination constitutes a

“negative presentation” of the super-sensible qualities. As Henry E. Allison points out in *Kant’s Theory of Taste*: “in the case of the sublime, it is precisely the counterpurposiveness of the imagination, its inability to realize the demands of reason, that accounts for the manner in which it points to the supersensible” (341). From this, it follows that the sublime points to the super-sensible in a negative way. This suggests that the subject can have a sense of the super-sensible but cannot access it beyond feeling that it is there.

Dynamical Sublime

In the case of the dynamical sublime, it is the sense of the might of nature that leads to the experience of the sublime. Kant states “the aesthetic judgement can only deem nature a might, and so dynamically sublime, in so far as it is looked upon as an object of fear” (§28 260). The reason why an object of fear can be seen as pleasurable is because “our own position is secure” (§28 261). The experience of the dynamical sublime is an interplay between the fear of being overwhelmed by the force of nature, and the pleasure that arises by realizing the mind’s superiority over nature. In the first stage of the dynamical sublime, the subject recognises its physical powerlessness:

Bold, overhanging, and, as it were, threatening rocks, thunderclouds piled up the vault of heaven, borne along with flashes and peals, volcanoes in all their violence of destruction, hurricanes leaving desolation in their track, the boundless ocean rising with rebellious force, the high waterfall of some mighty river, and the like, make our power of resistance of trifling moment in comparison with their might. (§28 261)

However, the realisation of the subject’s physical powerlessness to the external might of nature leads the subject to discover within itself “a power of resistance of quite another kind” (§28 261). As a result, the mind feels its own super-sensible qualities, that is reason. Thereby the subject realises that it is not determined by external nature. In “Terror and the Sublime” Terrence Des Pres explains: “For Kant the sublime thus becomes one of the rare occasions when the immortal soul reveals itself and ‘proves’ that we possess within us something more and definitely superior to mere

natural being” (142). It is this realization of one’s own superiority that is pleasurable. The failure of the empirical perception reveals the subject’s relation to the super-sensible. The imagination is elevated “to a presentation of those cases in which the mind can come to feel the sublimity of its own vocation even over nature” (§28 262). However, the imagination is incapable of producing a positive image of the mind’s super-sensible vocation. In both cases of the Kantian sublime, the subject is only made aware of its super-sensible qualities in a negative way. Put differently, the mind can only transcend the world negatively.

Part Four – Kantian Sublime In The Context of Coleridge And Wordsworth

While Coleridge and Wordsworth keep the notion that the experience of the sublime draws the subject closer to a state of self-knowledge, it is this negative representation of the super-sensible they re-articulate. This is because Coleridge and Wordsworth argue that this negative representation of the super-sensible does not break free from the dualism of mind and nature (cf. William Gray 11). Kant’s conclusion removes the subject from the world, or as Philip Shaw explains in *The Sublime*:

For poets and thinkers writing in the wake of Kant, then, the sublime induces equal amounts of pleasure and pain: pleasure that the encounter with the sublime should lead to the discovery of a capacity within the self greater than nature; pain at the realisation that such ‘power’ places us at a remove from nature. (117)

In this sense subject and object remain two independent states of being. In order to emphasise the wholeness wherein the subject-object relationship is embedded, the super-sensible quality of the mind needs to be given a sensible representation. This is done in Coleridge’s and Wordsworth’s poems, by stressing the synthesising and creative power of imagination. Moreover, the imagination is able to compare and combine, thus creating new images which have no precise counterpart in nature. Coleridge and Wordsworth are trying to come up with a sensual representation of the mind’s super-sensible faculty. This is done by showing how nature bears resemblance to the mind’s super-

sensible qualities. Nature is used as a reflection of a world that does not exist outside but within the poet. Furthermore, the mind is not determined by it or, unlike Kant, seeking power over it, but the subject is dwelling in nature. Put differently, the Romantic subject is depicted as more in harmony with nature. Not only does subject and object presuppose each other, but they interact with one another.

I am going to explore how these claims are presented through a close reading of their poems. The focus of the analysis lies on the representation of landscape, as non-human, nature bearing resemblance to the faculties of the mind; or as an instantiation of divine presence. By focusing on how the imagery of landscape is represented within the poems, the Kantian influence can be depicted. Moreover, it can be shown how Coleridge and Wordsworth expanded the Kantian notion of the sublime.

Reading Coleridge’s “Hymn Before Sun–Rise, In The Vale of Chamouni” in the Context of the Kantian Sublime

Coleridge directly engaged with Kant’s works, and was highly influenced by it.³ Raimonda Modiano notes in *Coleridge and the Concept of Nature* that “Coleridge found the German sublime preferable to Burke’s empirically–based doctrine” (101) and that “Kant exerted the most enduring influence on Coleridge’s views on the sublime” (108). One of Coleridge’s poems wherein the natural sublime is addressed most directly is “Hymn Before Sun–rise in the Vale of Chamouni”. In fact, Christopher Stokers argues in *Coleridge, Language and The Sublime*: “[A]ny discussion of sublimity in Coleridge’s work must turn at some point to this poem” (111). Analysing the poem illustrates parallels between Coleridge and Kant concerning their conception of the sublime, yet it also reveals where Coleridge’s notion of the sublime moves away from the Kantian sublime. This

³ It is unclear at what point Coleridge became familiar with Kant’s works. There are several possibilities, for a thorough reconstruction see Stoker, Christopher. *Coleridge, Language and The Sublime*, 113–114.

illustrates that Kant and Coleridge operated with a different conception of the understanding of subject and object.

“Hymn Before Sunrise” opens at early dawn and the speaker stands in the Vale of Chamonix looking at the Mont Blanc against a backdrop of a dark sky. The opening description of the landscape bears similarities to Kant’s mathematical sublime. The description suggests that the scenery the speaker looks at is overwhelming:

O Sovran Blanc!
 The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
 Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
 How silently! Around thee and above
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
 An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it (l.3–10)

The vastness of the mountain against the heaven cannot be comprehended at one glance and affects the poet’s perception of space and time. The mountain seems to rise out of a “silent sea of pines” (l.6), while the rivers at the bottom of the mountain seem to move “ceaselessly” (l.5), the “morning-star” (l.1) seems to pause. Furthermore, the sight of the landscape is obscured, indicated by the darkness of the air. As a result, the senses lose their grasp on the empirical perception:

O dread and silent Mount! I gaze upon thee,
 Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
 Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
 I worshipped the Invisible alone. (l.13–16)

In the poem the speaker is overwhelmed and the sensible vision of the mountain is transformed into a visionary internal landscape.

In *Coleridge, Language and the Sublime*, Stoker notes: “This failure of empirical perception, leading to the announcement of a relationship with the invisible, is thus a pattern

common to both Kant's theory and Coleridge's poem" (113). However, for Kant, in this moment, the imagination fails to conceptualise an image of the absolute whole, whereas for Coleridge the landscape transforms as an embodiment of the super-sensible.

The subject is brought closer to the "invisible" (l.16), a super-sensible idea appears to be articulated: "Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret joy: / Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused, / Into the mighty vision passing —there / As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven" (l.20–23). The soul is "enrapt" (l.21) when a super-sensible idea is articulated. Thus, a glimpse of the super-sensible world is revealed.

Moreover, a notion of Kant's dynamical sublime can be found in the description of the mountain. The description of Mount Blanc as "sovran" (l.3), "most awful" (l.5) can be understood as an embodiment of might. The mountain pierces through the sky, extending through the "sea of pines" (l.6), seemingly defiant to any other forces "methinks thou piercest it / As with a wedge!" (l.9–10). Like in Kant's dynamical sublime, the speaker is overwhelmed by the might of nature.

However, unlike the Kantian sublime, the mind is not elevated to feel its "own vocation even over nature" (§28 262). Instead nature blends in with "my Life and Life's own secret joy" (l.20). Related to that is the fact that in Coleridge's conception of the sublime there is no so-called "sublime crisis" (*Coleridge and the Concept of Nature* Raimonda Mondiano 101). Indeed, the displeasurable experience revealed in the first stage of the Kantian sublime does not take place. The faculty of the imagination appears to reconcile the sensible within the super-sensible (cf. Stoker 114). Put differently, the imagination in Coleridge's poem unifies the subject and the object. Modiano further explains that Coleridge "expects from the sublime not the attainment of personal power but the absorption into a higher unity" (122). While Coleridge accepts that the subject, through the faculty of imagination, actively shapes and creates the experience in this world, he does not go as far as to allow the mind to impose its own thoughts on nature. As Stoker points out, "for Coleridge, nature is a site of revelation where man receives knowledge of his own condition as a

created being and the effect [...] is to unify the sublime economy under God” (*Coleridge, Language and the Sublime* 115). Indeed in “Hymn Before Sunrise”, nature is an instantiation of divine presence. Through the rhetorical questioning (1.36–57), the divine force inherent in nature is developed. This suggests that through the experience of the sublime, the subject–object relation points to something else, it reveals an even higher force, God. Therefore, subject and object, that is mind and nature are unified in their shared relation to God.

Reading Wordsworth’s “Mount Snowdon episode” from *The Prelude* in the Context of the Kantian Sublime

In *Coleridge and The Concept of Nature*, Raimonda Modiano points out the striking similarities between Kant’s “Analytic of the Sublime” in the Critique of Judgement and Wordsworth’s essay “The Sublime and the Beautiful”. Although there is no clear evidence, it strongly suggests that Wordsworth may have read Kant’s work. But even if a direct influence cannot be proven, Wordsworth most certainly had an indirect knowledge of Kant via Coleridge (cf.128–134).

The Prelude depicts the development and interplay between subject and object, that is mind and nature. (cf. Bruhn, Mark. “*The Prelude* A Philosophical Poem” 403). In this paragraph I am going to analyse Wordsworth’s conception of the sublime presented in “the Mount Snowdon episode” included in book fourteen of the poem. This will be done through a comparison with the Kantian sublime.

The “Mount Snowdown episode” begins at a cottage near the mountain bottom, where the speaker and his companions start their ascent, eager “to see the sun / Rise from the top of Snowdon” (1.5–6). This suggests the attempt to locate sublimity in external nature. However, their ascent is interrupted by the bright moonlight that illuminates the landscape which rests “at [the speakers] feet” (1.41). Similar to Kant’s mathematical sublime, the sense of infinitude is evoked by the “sea of hoary mist” (1.42) which appears to stretch into “headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes” (1.46)

and merge into “the main Atlantic, that appeared / To dwindle, and give up his majesty / Usurped upon far as the sight could reach” (1.47–49). As one can see, the ocean appears to expand infinitely. Furthermore, the dynamical sublime, nature’s might, is evoked through the change of atmosphere and the description of sounds: “Not distant from the shore whereon we stood, / A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing–place / Mounted the roar of waters, torrents, streams / Innumerable, roaring with one voice!” (1.57–60). Nature is presented as having the power to change unexpectedly; the sudden flood of moonlight enlightens the darkness of the mountain’s abyss and the roaring voice of nature suggests its omnipotent power. Similarly, to Kant, the sublime moment in the “Mount Snowdon episode” is characterised by a disruption of the senses and the speaker is made aware of their own super–sensible qualities: “When into air had partially dissolved [...] it appeared to me the type of a majestic intellect” (1.63–67). The mind discovers its own presence “it appeared to me the type / Of a majestic intellect” (1.66–67); its powers “a mind / That feeds upon infinity, that broods / Over the dark abyss” (1.70–72); its super–sensible qualities “A mind sustained / By recognitions of transcendent power” (1.74–75); and its independence of nature “In soul of more than mortal privilege” (1.77). In the experience of the sublime, the mind is made aware of its super–sensible qualities. The trope of “the dark abyss” (1.72) is reminiscent of Kant’s mathematical sublime, wherein the mind fears to lose itself, the mind realises its own power: “to feed upon infinity” rather than being engulfed by it.

Despite these striking similarities to the Kantian sublime, Wordsworth’s conception of the sublime develops beyond a negative representation of the super–sensible. In *The Romantic Sublime*, Thomas Weiskel characterises Wordsworth’s sublime as positive, or egotistical sublime (cf.152). Or as Adam Potkay sums it up in “The Romantic Sublime”: “This facet of the sublime involves perceiving all things as an extension of, or subservient to the self” (208). The aspect of the positive sublime suggests that everything is perceived as an extension of the self.

While in the Kantian sublime, landscape embodies the sensible world, in “The Mount

Snowdon episode” landscape mirrors the faculty of the imagination: “One function, above all, of such a mind / Had Nature shadowed here” (l.78–79). Nature can mould, join, abstract and highlight:

With interchangeable supremacy,
That men, least sensitive, see, hear, perceive,
And cannot choose but feel. The power [...] which Nature thus
To bodily sense exhibits, is the express
Resemblance of that glorious faculty
That higher minds bear with them as their own (l.84–90)

The landscape the speaker witnesses mirrors the faculty of the imagination, which is given the ability to mould, abstract, combine, highlight and thus create experience.

Wordsworth’s conception of the sublime, depicted through the might of nature, does not overwhelm but expand the creative faculty of the imagination. In *Road to Egdon Heath: The Aesthetics of the Great in Nature*, Richard Bevis notes that one of the most striking features of Wordsworth’s “description of natural sublimity is his insistence that an encounter with the Great is an analogue of the powers of the imagination” (115–116). As the description of these glimpses of the super-sensible goes on, nature is transformed, more precisely; the mind is being represented within landscape. That is to say, nature can offer a “resemblance” (l.89) of the “glorious faculty” (l.89). Thus, the landscape is used for the reflection of the self. By comparing nature to the mind, Wordsworth depicts the likeness of the super-sensible qualities of the mind in nature. This suggests that the mind’s vocation is not superior to nature, but rather that looking at nature makes one aware of the super-sensible qualities of the mind. In this sense nature becomes internalised and thereby the subject and object are unified.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have explored the importance of sublime landscape as a subject for poems in the context of Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime". It has been established that the Romantic sublime is concerned with the mind's ability to transcend the sensible world; and that Kant's conception of truth established in *The Critique of Pure Reason* influenced this concern. More precisely, stressing the synthesising and creative power of the faculty of the imagination shifted the conception of truth as correspondence to one of production. This new conception of truth leads to a reevaluation of the mind's ability to transcend the sensible world.

The role of the imagination in the case of Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime" in the *Critique of Judgement* is of particular interest to understand in what ways the mind is able to transcend the sensible world. It has been shown that the Kantian conception of the sublime focuses on the mental process that gives rise to this experience. The Kantian sublime captures the imagination's inability to make sense of an idea by the way reason demands. In the mathematical sublime, by looking at vast landscapes the faculty of the imagination is overwhelmed and fails to come up with a picture of the infinite. In the dynamical sublime, the subject is presented with nature's might and realises its own physical powerlessness. It is in this moment where the mind is elevated and can feel its own vocation over nature. However, the imagination cannot produce a positive image of the mind's super-sensible vocation. As a result, the subject is able to transcend the sensible world only in a negative way.

On those grounds two exemplar poems about sublime landscape have been analysed: "Hymn Before Sun-Rise, In The Vale of Chamouni" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and "The Mount Snowdown episode" in Wordsworth's *Prelude* book fourteen (1850). The Kantian influence within these poems has been outlined. Like Kant, the source of the sublime is found within the mind. In the experience of the sublime the subject is made aware of its own super-sensible qualities. For Kant,

Coleridge and Wordsworth, external nature is not the source of the sublime but can give rise to the sublime experience. In other words, it is through the experience in nature that the mind realises that is able to transcend the sensible world. However, both poems re-articulate the *way* the mind is able to transcend the sensible world.

These poems about landscape can be understood as sensual representations of the mental processes that are set into motion within the experience of the sublime. By providing a positive instantiation of the super-sensible, Coleridge and Wordsworth aim to go beyond the dualistic notion still present in the Kantian sublime.

Analysing British Romantic poetry about sublime landscape in the context of the Kantian sublime highlights how particular, concrete images about landscape are used to illustrate and think about the subject-object relationship. Through consulting Kant it has been shown that within the experience of the Romantic sublime, the subject-object relationship can be understood as a shifting away from a dualistic world view, where mind and nature are two opposed states of being, towards a world view where subject and object are interconnected.

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