THE PROBLEM OF THE SUBLIME IN THE KANT’S AESTHETIC THEORY

Abstract: In this article some aspects of the category of the “sublime” in the aesthetics of Immanuel Kant are considered. Modern aesthetic thought pays great attention to the analysis and criticism of the basic categories of aesthetics. This is required for a new modern understanding of the skills and abilities to creative artistic perception of reality and art.

Key words: Immanuel Kant, aesthetics, the sublime, the beautiful, the mathematical sublime, the dynamic sublime, moral feelings, personality, mind, nature.

Language: English


How beautiful so sublime is determined not on the basis of sensual pleasure and not based on logical judgment, but the judgment of reflection.

Therefore, the pleasure from the beautiful and the sublime is not a pleasant feeling and not with certain concepts. However, the object and the mechanism of their perception and feelings caused by these objects, beautiful and sublime are various.

Beautiful in nature is connected with the form of the object, and sublime — with formless and excessive. Beautiful perception correlates imagination with mind, sublime — with reason. The perception of beauty excites play the higher abilities of cognition of reason and imagination, which leads to a “sense of increase life”; the perception of the sublime, on the contrary, suppresses the activity of man as a natural being, initiating his spiritual senses, stimulates the activity of his imagination.

The beautiful associated with quality assessment, sublime with quantity. “The basis for the beautiful in nature we must seek outside of us, for the sublime in us and in the way of thinking that makes a sublime view of nature...” [8, 252]. Hence, in the perception of the beauty of nature although there is knowledge of phenomena, but is enriched by the concept of it, as the aesthetic perception of nature, which is based on the subjective principle of expediency (i.e. its ability to call the game of cognitive abilities), makes a person think about the possibility of objective the expediency of nature.

“Therefore, wrote Kant, is an independent beauty of nature actually expands while not our knowledge of objects of nature, yet our concept of nature, namely [about nature] just as the mechanism, [extends] to the notion of it as art that awakens us to a deep research about the possibility of this form” [8, 251-252]. The sublime in nature does not lead to understanding of nature, and affects a person and directs him to the feasibility in man, regardless of the nature.

Getting to the study of the sublime as an aesthetic category, Kant uses the same method as in the study of the beautiful, i.e. considers the sublime on its quality, quantity, relation and modality. Because “as the judgment of aesthetic reflection of the ability of judgment the pleasure of the sublime and the beautiful, should be according to the number of valid, quality — devoid of interest, to give an idea about subjective feasibility and modality to present this as a necessary expediency” [8,252].

The method of consideration of the sublime differs from Kant only the sequence of consideration of these traits: if the study begins with a beautiful determine its quality, the analysis of the sublime begins with the study number as the main point of aesthetic judgments of the sublime. Thus Kant begins with justification for dividing mathematical sublime and the dynamic sublime accordingly the mechanism of activity of the human inner world. If in the perception of the sublime in nature, the imagination compares its performance with cognitive ability, the...
judgment of this view on the basis of appropriate movements of the soul, which it has caused, will be the mathematical sublime. If the idea of the sublime will be correlated imagination with the ability to desire, then it will be called dynamic. In the first case, the sublime is seen as a value in the second as a power. The concept of magnitude due to the knowledge, the concept of force — with the practical ratio of the power of nature and man.

Kant defined the sublime from the point of view of value: “we call sublime that certainly is great” [8, 253], i.e. great addition to any comparison of this phenomenon with other phenomena. For example, we perceive the great ocean without regard to other oceans, which may be more than great. In the judgment of the sublime is not happening any knowledge of this phenomenon (i.e., the presentation of it is not correlated with the concepts of reason), nor the determination of its objective necessity.

The basis of the judgments of the sublime and of the beautiful is the subjective desirability of representation in relation to the ability of judgment. According to Kant, the basis of aesthetic judgment value is a subjective measure — the amount without any practical interest in the subject matter. The object is pleasure in the subjective consciousness of appropriateness in the application of cognitive abilities, namely the extension of the imagination in the perception of the sublime. As for the object of judgment, it is available in the contemplation of nature, according to Kant, there is nothing in itself sublime, because “everything that can be given in nature, no matter how big we thought it in our judgment, can be reduced to infinite minimal when viewed in a different relation, and, on the contrary, there is nothing so small that in comparison with even smaller scale it would be impossible to increase in our imagination to the world. Telescopes have given us a wealth of material to make the first comment, and microscopes the second comment” [8, 256].

The human imagination can move upward and downward contemplate nature infinite, and the human mind tends to think all this infinity in both directions as a whole and infinity claims, according to Kant, to possess the “real ideas”, this “absolute totality”. Therefore, according to Kant, the sublime is not the objects of nature themselves, but the “spirit” that occurs under the influence of ideas about them and awakens extrasensory ability to perceive something that exceeds the capacity of the sensory perception of natural phenomena.

But what must be the magnitude of the natural phenomena to evoke a sense of the sublime, and what is the way of determining it? The sublime, according to Kant, cannot be proved by means of concepts of number (this would be the mathematical definition), and is known only in the contemplation of (according the eye, says Kant) and is therefore subjectively and not objectively ascertainable. Therefore, if the mathematical definition of variables there is no limit greatest, as increasing numbers can in principle be infinite, then for aesthetic contemplation greatest is available. It is due to the ability of perception of nature is not infinite, since there is a limit to the ability to hold in mind the image of a natural phenomenon with the help of imagination.

On the Kant’s theory of knowledge, the ability of the imagination to operate a number associated with its power of adhesion of the results of perception of the nature of the external senses, i.e. in time and space, and connecting them in one foreseeable integer. Therefore, the ability of imagination in connection with sensuality and is the criterion of “aesthetically the most basic means of determining quantities” [8, 258]. It is a cross between a specific way and infinity. “In fact, wrote Kant, when grappling comes to what first captured partial representations of sensuous contemplation in imagination already starting to fade, and imagination meanwhile goes to the grasp of a larger number [of ideas], it is on the same side loses exactly as much as wins on the other, and in the mix there is something of the greatest, beyond which it already does” [8, 258], for aesthetic judgment about value “indicates the value is irrelevant, as far as the soul can perceive it in contemplation”.

Therefore, the aesthetic definition of values is “absolute measure, which more subjectively (for the subject, considering it nothing is impossible... it leads to the idea of the sublime and generates the excitement, which may not cause the mathematical definition of the variables by numbers”, and which “always shows a relative value by comparing it about other quantities of the same kind, same aesthetic shows the magnitude irrelevant...” [8, 257-258], with “value, which is covered here, can grow to any extent, unless it can be an imagination connected in integrity” [8, 259].

Given all this, Kant concludes that the sublime feelings can cause not products of labour activity, where human purpose determines their size and shape, and not as natural objects, such as animals, like horses, are known from practice, but only the phenomena of rough, wild nature, and then only in the case that the perception of them not associated with the stress of their real danger, i.e. only to the extent that they represent “value”.

But thanks to what, asks Kant, is formed aesthetic norm that serves as “the basis of the general interest of pleasure in determining values, and, moreover, in determining reported to the inconsistencies of our ability of imagination in depicting the concept of value?” [85, 260]. Such a norm is, according to him, the infinite as a whole, in comparison with which all else is small. But this whole people can only think, not to imagine, because
it far exceeds the “scale” of his ability of perception and imagination.

Expanding to the extent possible, in the perception of the sublime phenomena of nature, imagination convinced of their inability to grow indefinitely and to provide insight into such phenomena. So “nature is sublime in those of its phenomena, the contemplation of which makes the idea of its infinity. This can only take place due to the mismatch of even the greatest effort of our imagination when determining the value of a thing” [8, 262] that “makes judged how about the sublime is not so much about the subject when you define it, how about the location of the soul” [8, 263], in which imagination is correlated with intelligence and subjectively corresponds to its ideas.

Kant denies the presence of the sublime in our environment natural world and categorically asserts that “true sublimity must be sought only in the soul of the one who makes a judgment, but not in the object of nature, a judgment which gives rise to this location from him”. Thus, the judgment about the sublime in nature as an aesthetic characterized by the fact that, as a result it is established that “the whole power of imagination is still disproportionate to the ideas of the mind”. The judgment of the sublime, according to Kant, ultimately points to the need “to make the concept of nature to a supersensible substrate (underlying it, as well as the basis of our ability to think)...”.

After determination of the function underlying the judgment of the sublime, Kant goes on to define the quality of pleasure in the judgment of the sublime.

According to Kant, the mind is inherently a law by which every phenomenon given to person in contemplation as if correlated with the same measure, that of the absolute whole, in relation to which any perceived phenomenon can not be absolutely small. In this correlation, as already mentioned, it is found that the human imagination even when the maximum voltage is not from the contemplation of this phenomenon to expand to such an extent to achieve this image of the absolute whole, i.e. the image of the idea of reason. But at the same time with the feeling of the limitation of his imagination a person feels their mission to strive for this whole. Hence the feeling of respect (and in his face and entire human race) to his destination to reach essentially unattainable. Thus there is a transfer of respect to the object that caused this feeling. When the ratio of the object that caused a sense of respect for its size, with immeasurably superior to its idea of the whole is clear the superiority of the cognitive abilities of a person seeking to comprehend this whole over the maximum ability of sensuality, the capabilities of which are limited to the ability to perceive only this object, in this case, however, superior to other phenomena. “Namely, all that

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Concluding his analysis of the dynamically sublime Kant, as in the analysis mathematically sublime, comes to the conclusion that the power of nature itself is not subdued but it is the only reason for the emergence of a sense of the sublime in the human soul, which is transferred to the phenomena of nature that instigated this feeling.

“The location of the soul to a sense of the sublime, wrote Kant, requires its receptivity to ideas; it is in conformity of nature with the ideas, therefore, only in the presence of this inconsistency, and with an effort of the imagination to consider the nature of how the scheme for them is what scares sensuality and at the same time draws [us] because [here] the mind has a coercive effect on the sensitivity, only to extend it in accordance with its own realm (the practical) and force her to look into infinity, which for sensuality is an abyss” [8,270].

According to Kant, the judgment of the sublime is connected with the moral feelings of man and lies “in the fact that with common sense to expect each person and require him, namely the inclinations of the senses (practical) and moral feeling”. The possibility to ask the right judgments about the sublime here is based on the presence of each person’s moral sense. In the perception of the sublime man more than by the contemplation of all other objects — a pleasant, useful or beautiful, is approaching the world of ideas, overcoming (and partially suppress) the limitations of sensual cognition of the world.

“Who’s afraid, he can’t judge about the sublime in nature, as cannot judge the perfect one who is in power and the inclination and desire” [8,269].

The sublime the power of nature seems to be when in the judgment of it human find it scary, but he does not feel real fear for his life and destiny. Moreover, dreadful objects of nature (thunder, volcanoes, hurricanes, etc.), called the sublime, in their contemplation “increase mental strength beyond the normal and allow you to discover a completely different kind of resistance ability, which gives us the courage to measure [forces] with the seeming omnipotence of nature”.

Just as identifying the limits of sensory perception mathematically sublime leads to the discovery of the relics of the mind and perception of the dynamically sublime gives a person the opportunity to feel your physical powerlessness before a Grand elemental forces of nature and at the same time evokes pride in the human race. A sense of superiority over nature rises above the fear of its mighty phenomena. “Therefore, concludes Kant, nature is here called sublime merely because it elevates the imagination to picture those cases in which the soul can feel the sublimity of its appointment, compared with nature” [8,270].

However, the purpose of man and his capacity belongs partly to the nature in the form of inclinations of these abilities, however, as rightly considers Kant, it is only the source material. The development and exercise of our nature “is given to us and entrusted to us” [8,270].

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