

boris / December 30, 2011 10:16AM

[The Sublime - some thoughts](#)

Kant's Transcendental Deduction was grounded on that space and time are non-contextual. Hegel argued that time is not an empty container, and replaced it, the empty container, with "history", a concrete history. Thus begins Hegel's project of Spirit.

The hardest part of 3rd critique of Kant, my view, is the sublime. Kant's excerpts are scattered and didn't elaborate much on the subject of sublime. The sublime is on the opposite side of the beautiful, almost. The free-play and purposiveness are not adequate to explain the mechanism of the inner movement invoking the feeling of the sublime brought upon man. If so, then how could Kant designate purposiveness as the a priori for the aesthetic judgment?

The beautiful is about faculties of intuition, imagination and understanding, while the sublime is about faculties of intuition and reason. The understanding, properly speaking, is the pure reason of the 1st critique, and the reason related to the sublime precisely is the practical reason of the 2nd critique. We need to somehow join the two seemingly unrelated parts, the beautiful and the sublime, of the reflective aesthetic judgment. Kant put these two aesthetic judgment together, I and others think it is not by accident. The question raised here is in what way the beautiful and the sublime relate to morality, or by Kant's term, moral judgment. Can we employ Kant's Copernican Turn to be the vehicle to explain the sublime feeling? I think that's exactly what Kant is in mind that it can.

To say the rose is beautiful is the feeling of pleasure occurs to a person. To get such pleasure, the faculty of imagination is in a state in harmony with the faculty of understanding. In the process, the object - the rose vanishes.

Determining Judgment

However, when we say the rose is beautiful may will be sparking the cognitive judgment, in which we may employ concept and all the a priori categories induced by it. The concept may be the rose's shape, color, smell, so on and so forth. By that way to judge the rose, we will still get the pleasure, but this pleasure is induced by the success accomplished by our ability to reason (theoretical reason). The object - the rose exists. So the problem is "What prompts a man to favor reflective aesthetic judgment than reflective/determining cognitive judgment?"

Kant's subjectivity (vs. empirical objectivity) is arguable. One prominent view on Kant's subjectivity is he distinguishes "human's prospective" from "God's prospective," or "knowing infinitely" from "infinite knowing." Human is knowing infinitely, while God is infinite knowing. Why? Hegel rejected such distinction.

Dynamical sublime - something cannot be comprehended, only be apprehended. We sometimes regard Kant's just referring natural objects that induce the sublime feeling upon men. However, here I am more concerned about normal human encounter. such as,

1. sudden lost parents,
2. video camera catch unspeakable, unbelievable moment,
3. first instance to learn of getting a cancer,
4. witnessing a gruesome murder, etc.

Why camera taking still pictures are proven more preferable by hobbyists than camcorders?

My critique on Kant's whole a priori project is:

Before judgment (be it theoretical, moral, or aesthetic) starts, an even more fundamental faculty of man at work: power of categorization. Categorize first, then judge next. This categorization is not Kant's a priori categories.