



Is the Idea of the Sublime Relevant to Philosophical Reflection?

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What, then, is the sublime? What is sublime, can it inhabit this world? And if it inhabits another, it can only be a full replication on *earthly* ground. A

Contemporary art, on the other hand, reflects what? How to interpret it if in its relationship with the world it claims to represent, or, in other words, to be a mirror of that same world? On the other hand, art appears in this globalized social universe, as a panacea, with the instinct to cure the ills of the world that, in my view, are essentially ills of the heart, as many philosophers say, that is, of the relationship of people among themselves and of the broad universe of realization of Man as a (individual, in a certain sense) thinking being. The social science (of humans) seems to be faltering, on the one hand; on the other hand, the technicians of society, be they, social anthropologists, sociologists, social psychologists, social workers, abound. Lewis Mumford has analyzed the relationship between art and technique and in this sense, art has a technique and I refer in particular to painting. Without technique, however, a painting can be sublime. *The Origin of the World* can be sublime while it is projection to the experience of the other and while, as happened with Nietzsche, the philosopher does not please his contemporaries at all, those who will come after him will regard him as a genius who projects himself into the infinity of time of generations to come and to come. In ancient times, the sublime was associated with art and vice versa, but with the death of God, this connection was eventually lost. Today, in the universe of art, performance matters, and art itself has become sublime. We can think that, essentially, the classical sublime was patent in art and philosophical reflection is, in a certain way, by tradition that goes back a long way, associated with sculpture, painting, and the philosophical reflection produced in those times reflects this. Now, in this sense, we can infer that philosophical reflection is based on a certain historical, cultural, contextual context, let's say. It is the mirror of history, in a certain sense, and its intellectual "victim", as Ortega y Gasset would say. Nowadays, in contemporary times, the idea of the sublime is very present in philosophical reflection, because, first of all, the world and the subject are sublime all the time, at least in terms of search, in the sense that man searches for life as a fish in the mouth, let's say, the sublime of

Contemporary art and, let's say, philosophical reflection, is a search for the meaning of life in life itself, that is, in the box, outside the box but being the bearer or apostle of the box itself, or, what fascinates contemporary philosophical reflection the most is the question of becoming and finitude, in my view, because the world and its components are increasingly connected, or just connected in another way, with fewer echoes, with more or less violence we don't know, at all. We could say, as journalists do, that art and therefore philosophical reflection only reflects (social, mental) reality. Now, reality is built from scratch by man, reality IS man. The philosopher prepares his reflective activity because he prepares for death, in fact, there is nothing more mysterious and full of secrets than finitude, which is simple medicinal failure of vital systems. In this sense, it has been said in society and in the media that this is the last of the taboos, so every man is, little by little, more or less, a philosopher, but he himself explains, at the end of his lectures, that physical death is only the beginning, nowadays almost all medicine (from parapsychology to forensic medicine, since with the social sciences, which always affirm that there is no individual death, that is, societies have memory) tends to affirm that the individual soul does not perish, it only transforms, transmutes, like the chrysalis. Is this a truism, or am I myself, as a social scientist, precisely coming up with explanations for everything? The philosopher does it too, dispensing with a time and space of dwelling, of habituation. Basically, both are closer than one might think and, in my opinion, they differ only in this aspect, if we except the relative divorce between interpretative theories and collective representations on the part of the anthropologist?, but different ways of acting and thinking and different moments and opportunities? Common sense is concerned with

more to do with the economy, more to do with the economy of his domestic core and friends, than with the end of an existence more or less in reality, an end that doesn't really exist. In my view, death doesn't exist, that's why it's sublime, not even Life exists, what runs through our veins is of another order, which I will explain later. Death, collective (Auschwitz, Darfur) is the full disordered terror, the absence of values, the obscene of the racist act, the experience of the places where the human soul can reach (Jung), death is sublime, it is par excellence and definition the Sublime, that is why it interests so much contemporary philosophical reflection, given that its discourse is, in my sense neither feminine nor masculine, neither positive nor negative (in terms of a certain well-thought-out intellectual Manichaeism or just aggregated to the discourse of common sense), but neutral, that is, fully objective, conceptually precise, at the same time that other disciplines arrogate to themselves the most diverse conceptual instruments to analyze reality. Therefore, the best way man found to deal with death was, anthropology tells us, better, primitive societies, was to dissimulate it, that is, to apply a mask to it to take away its existential, metaphysical, moral, physical, chemical, supernatural weight even?that is, finally, to apply a mask to it (Lévi-Strauss et al), to give society the life that departs, in a double sense of return, perhaps giving back the life that (if) ceases to exist, to the younger generation, which observes the dying old man and listens to his last advice, admonitions, confession of survival techniques, exhalations of his experienced and knowing spirit. Perhaps this is the only thing that remains as a consolation while you leave: seeing others without a mask from behind your mask, between screens or in an old house, in front of a TV that never stopped broadcasting. Death is, thus, the great enigma, the challenge, like life, recreational or reproductive, that runs in the body of the man and is harvested in that of the woman, the last frontier, that is, the starting point to discover what there will be, for the subject and then, in terms of learning and memory, for the group, that he will be a Mozart buried only with the presence of his dog,

Whether he is an eminent politician like Churchill, or else a mere peasant who, in favor of the question of truth, was only part, part of reality, of the landscape and, paraphrasing Drummod de Andrade, perhaps this is the most correct way, even in the ethical sense, man is part of a scenario, he is an act and reproducer of a script that is often repetitive, finding happiness in this reiteration, like a veritable *ritornello* by Orff¹. Since death does not exist, it is a symbol, a fiction, just like racism, for man to venture into social life, that is, what is truth? What is true for me may not be true for someone else...What is Good and Evil? We would always have to see the Whole, like Marcel Mauss and his total social phenomena. In fact, in society, Good and Evil are constantly linked, they almost stick together sometimes, every person has his or her sense of Good and Evil, yes, really, what is parenthood if not a burden? Why do philosophers usually have fewer children than other men or women of other professions? Perhaps, simply, because they are thinkers, *thinkers*, wise men, because they think as a profession, because they want to know, or know beforehand, reality, social and human nature. In this sense, a philosophical anthropology is justified, that is, a study of human nature relative to its thinking and principles in the course and context of living in society, not only in terms of reflection, but also of action in the sphere of domestic space and public space. I advocate this conjunction of ideas, of knowledge and disciplines, whether sociological, anthropological (social and cultural), or philosophical and theological, finally. This is why I advocate a positive, constructive philosophy, which can bring together the most diverse systems of knowledge and theories.

¹Actually, I also think about my father, my mother too, of course, and the act, social and individual, of succeeding him, perhaps because of the absence of children, but I also think about other spaces besides the ones I inhabit that can project me and mine to a place that is similar to the family home, where there are no masks at all?

And, saying this, I can say that philosophy is, by definition and tradition, an activity that aims to "build" something, be it a building or a dwelling on a marble cliff, a dwelling of the purr of thinking, of the house of the comfort zone, because from it was born the life that we are bearers of and will return to it...And I say house because this is the aim of the economy, that is, the idea that no one likes to be outside the comfort zone, even knowing that too much comfort can generate significant discord. While anthropology is concerned with tradition and reproduction, psychology is concerned with sexuality, while the other psyche's are concerned with the mechanisms, traumas and damages of abuse in relationships, which soon become "relations", see the phenomenon of domestic violence and the explosive proliferation of media and functional representations of the body, of the relationship between bodies, while, laterally, more is studied about the intricate and intermanifestly interpenetrating world of the erotic life of plants, which could throw out any moral and ethical argument against the disordered and widespread practice of animal sex...

In our opinion, the sublime is not related to the experience of the transcendent, to the biography anchored in a restricted social and cultural context where one philosophizes, the true experience of the sublime is redundantly and roundly human, that is, it handles anthropology and philosophy, having the sociologist in its way, better, it is a travel experience, perhaps literary, of discovery of the Other, of India and its spirituality, for example Tai Chi, that allows us to fit the body-spirit relational duality into that other incomprehensible space-world, the spirituality of both the Tao and the Amazonian Indian, better yet, the discovery of humanity outside of us and that has always been in us and is filled by the discovery of the most diverse customs, feelings and beliefs on the planet, that makes us philosophize greatly not only about mankind but also about its meaning (of essence and existence), that is, there is a common datum from which we start to reflect abundantly about the most varied philosophical topics. But I understand and consume

temporally

the sublime of a Brandenburg concert, under the most varied forms and interpreters, of a variation of Bach by Glen Gould While the sublime arrived, after an ardent search, by way of Franciscanism, the drive to live in society led to social science and the obsession that vital biographical experience can be not only thematized but also mathematized...my mistake, I then look for the sublime in a little dog that comes to me, in a Nordic child that laughs at me in the Lisbon subway...

In another sense, we can diametrically articulate a radical anthropology of philosophy, in the sense that philosophical speculation, philosophical reflection will have, for some of its practitioners, to do essentially with what I have elsewhere called "thinking from the slings," related to what is called pathology in psychiatry and in cultural root anthropology of this even in terms of a dirty/clean opposition as to the social (or intimate) uses and presentations of the body. For most of those who believe in desire and its fulfillment ("sublimely") through the body, the sublime has to do with sexual practice, for what it may represent of surrender to the Other, in certain terms or, on the threshold, of authentic subjection of corporality in the universe of the social and its individual or group composites. In this aspect, the ecstasy of the sexual act can be considered, yes, as a unit of communication, as a certain experience of the sublime. Let us say in another way that the idea of the sublime has suffered interference, the concept has suffered irreversible invasions that essentially have to do with a work at the level of the collective unconscious. The sublime of today and that which the American empire has contaminated throughout the world is that of chaos, even though many are looking for meaning in their world and in this world, oblivious to the Other, the Other's world. The sublime is in Platoon, *The Brave of Platoon*, which applied Kypling's scene, the sublime is the cinematic philosophy for example of a Henry-Lévi, about the war in former Yugoslavia, the sublime is in the intent of the mind of man that seeks

meaning always (they constantly call him in the street logo, so every philosopher will be logo? Is it not his task, like that of the anthropologist, to create meaning by linking things, chaos, the things of chaos? Isn't the sublime, the sublimity of the World essentially in the "fact", in the idea of being chaotic, that is, of being "detached" until the moment, or space, or idea, in which it is willing to connect, to make sense? Isn't the Eliadian philosophy more than right, which refers to the things of the world in terms of an eternity that is prescribed, repeated, eternalized, like Boethius' *The Eternity of the World*? Are we not in the midst of an upside-down Middle Ages, Zizek or Sloterdijk, or even Bauman might say, in which voice and dialogues intersect, intercut, interpenetrate, just like videographic bodies, the fields where they grow ecological produce who wanted to leave the *citylight* that oppressed their consciences like a stunned and shrill Nietzschean hammer? What could be more sublime than the anguish of circumstantially anguished minds in the Metro? When we dream of a metropolis that tells us what "living" is like or what to do in the most diverse situations, we get used to seeing something wonderful, religious, sublime I would even say, in the circularity of a post-modern thought where a routine is perpetuated like a *saltarello*, a *pasachaila*, where even depression always has a grain (of sand, of piri-piri) of hope and sparks again towards the hyper-reality where our spirit is sent. Thus, the bodies (and the glasses, sometimes) of the Metro, are translucent bodies, in fact, one can see neither the body nor the mind, one sees a bundle of sense of the chaotic that hides the aggressiveness of Eros, and its work in a determined spatial context, that sometimes gets clean and sometimes gets dirty according to the most varied dispositions of the spirit of spirits. See in this regard a Marcuse or even Freud's essay "Ill-Will in Civilization".

We can propose as a theory the idea that, from birth, man tends to die, that is, there is a whole reflection on death that philosophy and anthropology have been doing, with data or speculations, but which should be done in a more pressing and acute way, because it seems to me that many subjects do not

realize

In other words, this physical body that we inhabit, which they own, or not, will cease to exist, at least in the form that is known at present. In other words, the wise man is the one who reflects on death, on the end, and thus draws the finality of his praxis and of his thought.