

Immanuel Kant

Pt. 2.2

HUMN2001 – VIDEO LECTURE – WK8
M. Curtis Allen

Recap of Some Important Features of Kant's Philosophy

Important Ideas

- Kant's theory of mind includes **doctrine of faculties**
- The relationship between these faculties gives us Kant theory of **synthetic *a priori* knowledge**, the kind on which mathematics and empirical science is based.
- These faculties are built into a hierarchy in Kant's philosophy, based on their role in thinking.



Recap of Some Important Features of Kant's Philosophy

Hierarchy of the Faculties

Reason (Faculty of Desire/Will)



Understanding (Faculty of Cognition)



Imagination (Faculty of Synthesis)

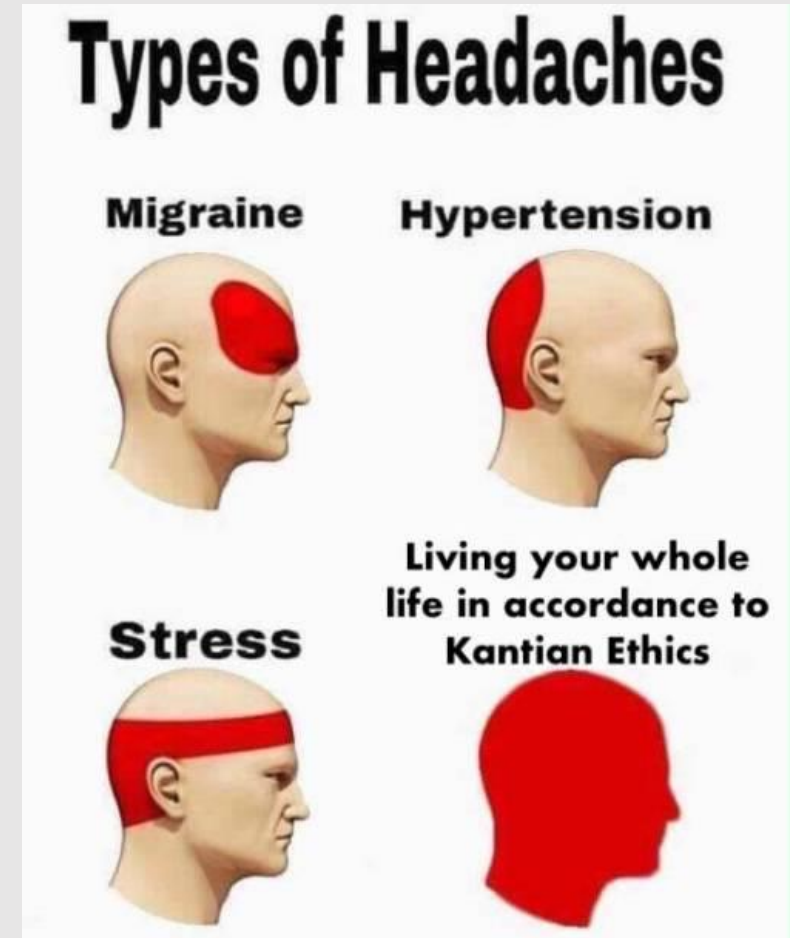
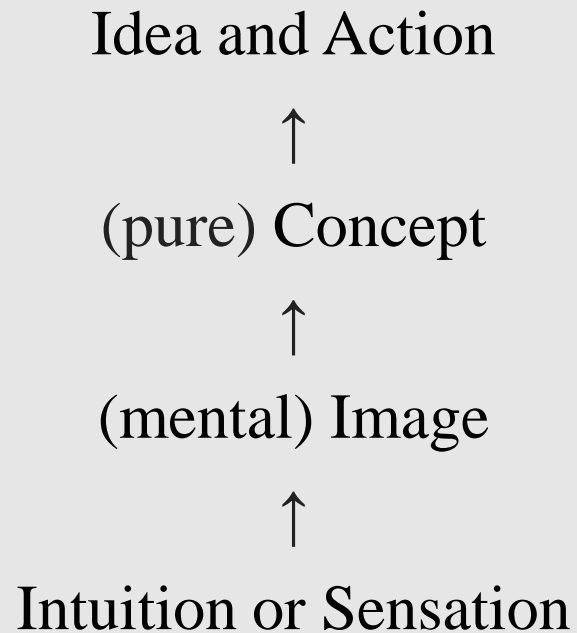


Sensibility (Faculty of Receptivity)



Recap of Some Important Features of Kant's Philosophy

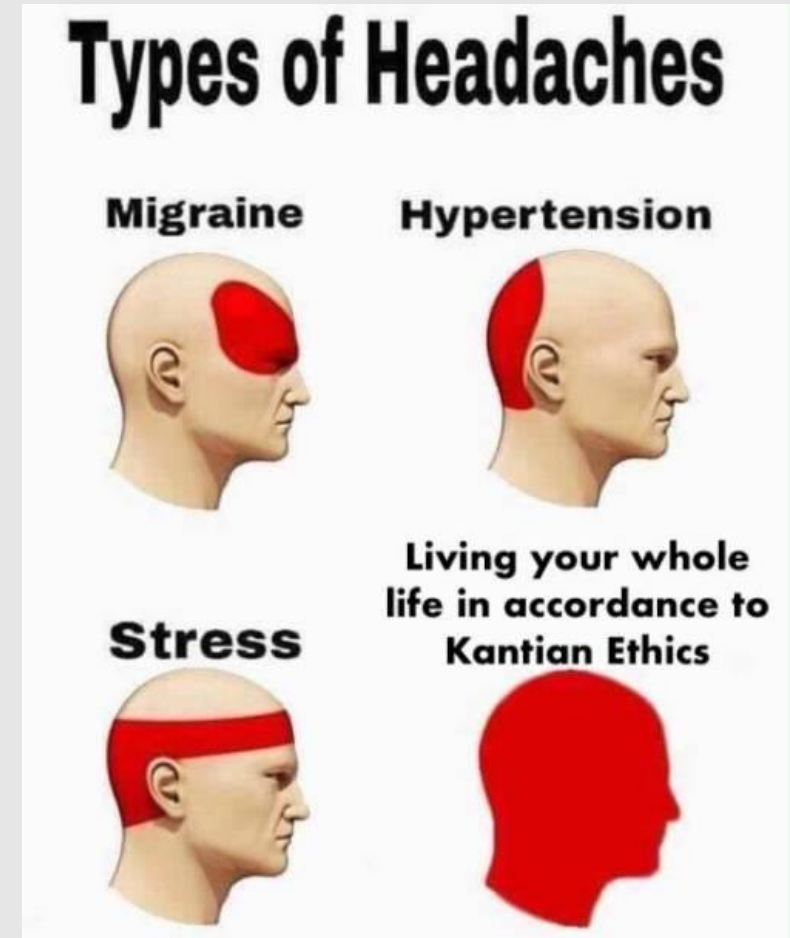
Hierarchy of the Faculties, cont.



Recap of Some Important Features of Kant's Philosophy

Hierarchy of the Faculties, cont.

Rational
↑
Cognitive
↑
Aesthetic



Recap of Some Important Features of Kant's Philosophy

Faculties cont.

- Where is judgment?
 - Is judgment a faculty?
 - Is there more than one faculty of judgment?
 - If not, what is it?
 - Is judgment a mode or use of a faculty?
 - What does 'power' mean in this context?
- Is this a complete list of faculties
 - What about memory?
 - What about sexual drives?
 - If these are not included, then why not?
 - Are these (or other parts of the mind) important for aesthetics?



“Analytic of the Beautiful” Recap.

- Disinterestedness
 - Subjective
 - Impartial
 - Contemplative
 - Non-conceptual
 - Not aggregable
 - Not good (in the universal, moral sense)
- Universality
 - Not interested
 - Reflective
 - Auto-affection of the mind (its ‘**free play**’ ‘**harmony**’ or ‘**concordance**’)
 - Between Imagination and Understanding
 - These judgments are **singular** or **exemplary**
 - Necessary but not part of ‘logical judgment’



Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Purposiveness without Purpose

“An object or a state of mind or even an action, however, even if its possibility does not necessarily presuppose the representation of an end, is called purposive merely because its possibility can only be explained and conceived by us insofar as we assume as its ground a causality in accordance with ends, i.e., a will that has arranged it so in accordance with the representation of a certain rule. Purposiveness can thus exist without an end, insofar as we do not place the causes of this form in a will, but can still make the explanation of its possibility conceivable to ourselves only by deriving it from a will.” (105)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Purposiveness without Purpose

“Thus nothing other than the subjective purposiveness in the representation of an object without any end (objective or subjective), consequently the mere form of purposiveness in the representation through which an object is given to us, insofar as we are conscious of it, can constitute the satisfaction that we judge, without a concept, to be universally communicable, and hence the determining ground of the judgment of taste.” (106)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Purposiveness as Pleasure

- The pleasure associated with the Beautiful is not that of charm or emotion, insofar as the former is pure. (108-9)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Beauty, Charm, and Form

“In painting and sculpture, indeed in all the pictorial arts, in architecture and horticulture insofar as they are fine arts, the drawing is what is essential, in which what constitutes the ground of all arrangements for taste is not what gratifies in sensation but merely what pleases through its form. The colors that illuminate the outline belong to charm; they can of course enliven the object in itself for sensation, but they cannot make it worthy of being intuited and beautiful, rather, they are often even considerably restricted by what is required by beautiful form, and even where charm is permitted it is ennobled only through the former. All form of the objects of the senses (of the outer as well as, mediately, the inner) is either **shape** or **play**: in the latter case, either play of shapes (in space, mime, and dance), or mere play of sensations (in time). The **charm** of colors or of the agreeable tones of instruments can be added, but **drawing** in the former and composition in the latter constitute the proper object of the pure judgment of taste” (110)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Beauty, Charm, and Form

“... a pure judgment of taste has neither charm nor emotion, in a word no sensation, as matter of the aesthetic judgment, for its determining ground.” (111)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Beauty and Perfection

“... if I encounter in the forest a plot of grass around which the trees stand in a circle, and I do not represent a purpose for it, say that it is to serve for country dancing, then not the slightest concept of perfection is given through the mere form. But to represent a formal objective purposiveness without an end, i.e., the mere form of a perfection (without any material and concept of that with which it is to agree, even if it were only the idea of a lawfulness in general), is a veritable contradiction.” (112)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Free Beauty and Adherent Beauty

- **Free beauty** is pure, and unrelated to the concepts of the understanding, and thus to any end
- **Adherent beauty** is that feeling mixed with the intellect according to a rule use or standard of perfection. (114-115)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

The Ideal of Beauty

“From this, however, it follows that the highest model, the archetype of taste, is a mere idea, which everyone must produce in himself, and in accordance with which he must judge everything that is an object of taste, or that is an example of judging through taste, even the taste of everyone. **Idea** signifies, strictly speaking, a concept of reason, and **ideal** the representation of an individual being as adequate to an idea. Hence that archetype of taste, which indeed rests on reason's indeterminate idea of a maximum, but cannot be represented through concepts, but only in an individual presentation, would better be called the ideal of the beautiful...”
(116-7)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

The Ideal of Beauty

“First, it should be noted that the beauty for which an idea is to be sought must not be a **vague** [free] beauty, but must be a beauty **fixed** [adherent] by a concept of objective purposiveness, consequently it must not belong to the object of an entirely pure judgment of taste.” (117)

“However, an ideal of a beauty adhering to determinate ends, e.g., of a beautiful residence, a beautiful tree, beautiful gardens, etc., is also incapable of being represented...” (117)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

The Ideal of Beauty in Humanity

“Only that which has the end of its existence in itself, the human being, who determines his ends himself through reason, or, where he must derive them from external perception can nevertheless compare them to essential and universal ends and in that case also aesthetically judge their agreement with them: this human being alone is capable of an ideal of beauty, just as the humanity in his person, as intelligence, is alone among all the objects in the world capable of the ideal of perfection” (117)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

The Normal Idea and the Idea of Reason

- **The normal idea** expresses the purposiveness of the form of a figure (or species)
 - E.g. the artistic image of a lion as the Idea of the species of the lion
 - The ideal figure as an average or limit
 - Greek (or Neoclassical) ideal human form
 - Relation to mathematics, and regular polygons
- The **idea of reason** determines the moral good, which in the expression of the human form through ideal beauty is given sensual (rather than cognitive) form (maybe?). (119-20).

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Common Sense

- State of communicability of an "indeterminate norm" or "ought"
- Between sensation and cognition?
- Common sense is that through which we feel, or appeal to the common feeling of our humanity, outside the discursive rationality through which we understand natural law, and the determine moral law.
- Common sense is "free lawfulness" or "lawfulness without law" (125)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

Common Sense

“This indeterminate norm of a common sense is really presupposed by us: our presumption in making judgments of taste proves that. Whether there is in fact such a common sense, as a constitutive principle of the possibility of experience, or whether a yet higher principle of reason only makes it into a regulative principle for us first to produce a common sense in ourselves for higher ends, thus whether taste is an original and natural faculty, or only the idea of one that is yet to be acquired and is artificial, so that a judgment of taste, with its expectation of a universal assent, is in fact only a demand of reason to produce such a unanimity in the manner of sensing, and whether the “should,” i.e., the objective necessity of the confluence of the feeling of everyone with that of each, signifies only the possibility of coming to agreement about this, and the judgment of taste only provides an example of the application of this principle – this we would not and cannot yet investigate here...” (124)

Immanuel Kant

Pt. 3

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Brief Context for Kant in Relation to the Theory of Burke

Burke's Ideas of the Beautiful and the Sublime

- Edmund Burke (1729-1797) was a conservative English statesman and philosopher living during the Age of Enlightenment.
- Written at the age of 19, he published *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) in his late 20s.



Brief Context for Kant in Relation to the Theory of Burke

Burke's Ideas of the Beautiful and the Sublime

- It was his only purely philosophical work, and it gained the respect of many philosophers, intellectuals, and artists throughout the remainder of the 18th century, including especially Kant.
- Before the 18th c, the beautiful and the sublime were not often separated out as distinct aesthetic categories. Burke was central in this development.
- As the title suggests, it focuses on the concepts of the Beautiful and the Sublime, and takes these to exhaust the field of aesthetic pleasures.



Brief Context for Kant in Relation to the Theory of Burke

Burke's Ideas of the Beautiful and the Sublime

- Burke, like Kant after him and Addison before him, took the imagination to play a central role in both feelings, but the imagination adopted complex relationships with the pleasure of the senses in B's theory
- The 'perfections' of these two feelings and their description constituted the fulcrum of the theory
- these both relied on the passions, according to B, and were divided along the lines of social promotion and self-preservation (an idea about pleasure and pain adopted from Hume)



Brief Context for Kant in Relation to the Theory of Burke

Burke's Ideas of the Beautiful and the Sublime

- The perfections of social feelings arise from pleasure or its absence.
- The **beautiful** arises from the social passion of love.
- It is characterized by the small, the smooth, the various, the delicate, the clear, and the bright

(Shelley 2018)



Brief Context for Kant in Relation to the Theory of Burke

Burke's Ideas of the Beautiful and the Sublime

- The perfections of self-preservative feelings arise from pain or its absence.
- The **sublime** arises from the self-preservative passion of astonishment.
- It is characterized by great, the uniform, the powerful, the obscure, and the somber.

(Shelley 2018)



Brief Context for Kant in Relation to the Theory of Burke

Burke's Ideas of the Beautiful and the Sublime

- So we can see that Kant takes much of the framework from Burke's *Enquiry*
 - that aesthetics deals with forms of pleasure
 - That the beautiful and the sublime are distinct and have differing, but essential roles to play
 - And that Burke's understanding of these categories roughly align with Kant's own.



Brief Context for Kant in Relation to the Theory of Burke

Burke's Ideas of the Beautiful and the Sublime

- Nevertheless Kant will focus on their roles in relation to the understanding and to reason
- He will also separate out the idea of perfection from them
- And he will perform an *a priori* rather than empirical analysis of them in line with his project of transcendental psychology and philosophical anthropology.
- Thus Kant's work seeks to place aesthetics within a broader philosophical system of transcendental philosophy—the hallmark of Kant's 'critical' project.



Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

What the beautiful and the sublime have in common

- The sublime is also a reflective judgement
- The satisfaction of the S is "connected to the mere presentation or to the faculty for that [imagination]" (128)
 - e.g. with the state of feeling not with determinate concepts.
- S is singular (128), but universally valid.

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

Differences between the beautiful and the sublime

“...([T]he feeling of the sublime) is a pleasure that arises only indirectly, being generated, namely, by the feeling of a momentary inhibition of the vital powers and the immediately following and all the more powerful outpouring of them...” (128-9)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

Differences between the beautiful and the sublime

“[T]hat which, without any rationalizing, merely in apprehension, excites in us the feeling of the sublime, may to be sure appear in its form to be contrapurposive for our power of judgment, unsuitable for our faculty of presentation, and as it were doing violence to our imagination, but is nevertheless judged all the more sublime for that.” (129)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

Differences between the beautiful and the sublime

“We can say no more than that the object serves for the presentation of a sublimity that can be found in the mind; for what is properly sublime cannot be contained in any sensible form, but concerns only ideas of reason, which, though no presentation adequate to them is possible, are provoked and called to mind precisely by this inadequacy...” (129)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

Specificity of the sublime

“From this we see that the concept of the sublime in nature is far from being as important and rich in consequences as that of its beauty, and that in general it indicates nothing purposive in nature itself, but only in the possible use of its intuitions to make palpable in ourselves a purposiveness that is entirely independent of nature. For the beautiful in nature we must seek a ground outside ourselves, but for the sublime merely one in ourselves and in the way of thinking that introduces sublimity into the representation of the former” (130)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

Specificity of the sublime

- The sublime is divided into the **mathematically** sublime and the **dynamically** sublime
 - The first relates the imagination to the faculty of cognition *as faculty*
 - The second relates the imagination to the faculty of desire *as faculty* (131)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“Now if I simply say that something is great, it seems that I do not have in mind any comparison at all, at least not with any objective measure, since it is not thereby determined at all how great the object is.” (132)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“Now it is noteworthy here that even if we have no interest at all in the object, i.e., its existence is indifferent to us, still its mere magnitude, even if it is considered as formless, can bring with it a satisfaction that is universally communicable, hence it may contain a consciousness of a subjective purposiveness in the use of our cognitive faculties: but not a satisfaction of the object... rather in the enlargement of the imagination itself.” (133)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

Which is more aesthetic?

Slide: artwork (one thing, then many Felix Gonzales Torres; E. Burtynsky)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“That the sublime is therefore not to be sought in the things of nature but only in our ideas follows from this; but in which of these it lies must be saved for the deduction. The above explanation can also be expressed thus: That is sublime in comparison with which everything else is small... Thus nothing that can be an object of the senses is, considered on this footing, to be called sublime.” (134)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“the very inadequacy of our faculty for estimating the magnitude of the things of the sensible world awakens the feeling of a supersensible faculty in us...”(134)

“That is sublime which even to be able to think of demonstrates a faculty of the mind that surpasses every measure of the senses” (134)

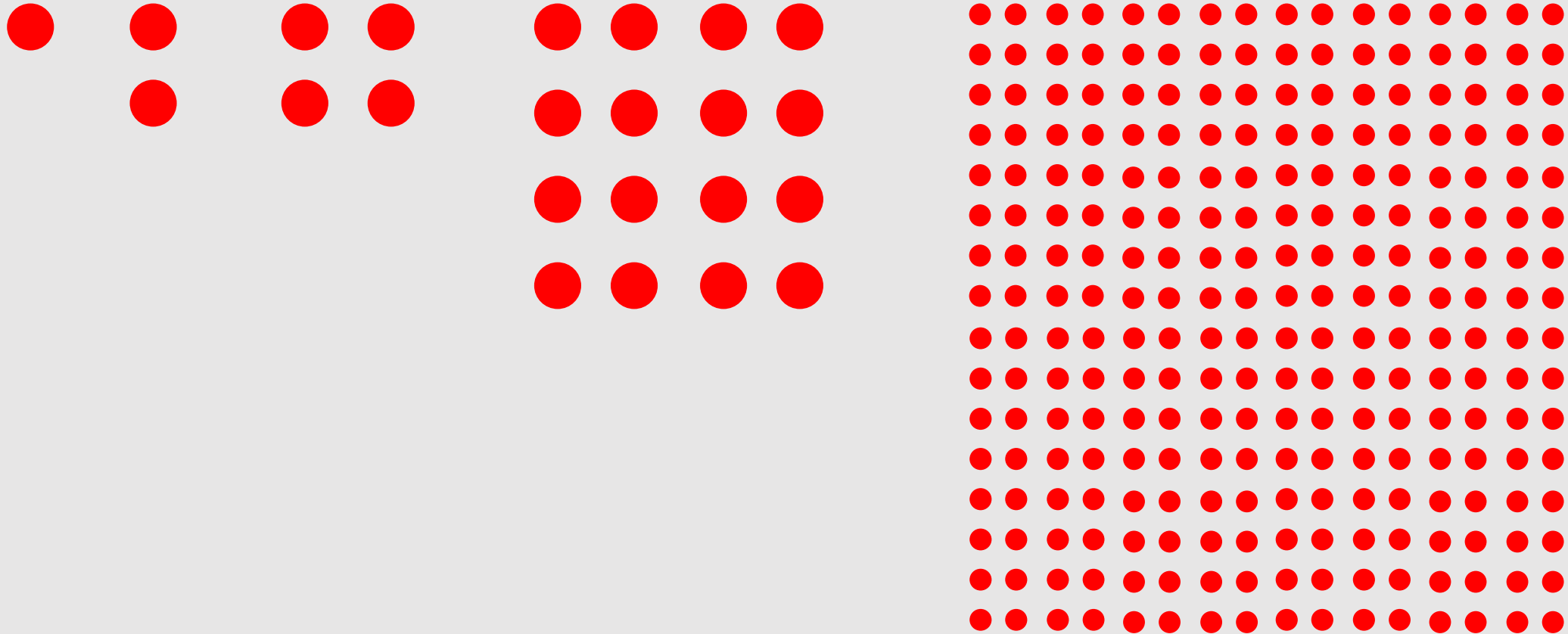
Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“There is no difficulty with apprehension... but comprehension becomes ever more difficult the further apprehension advances, and soon reaches its maximum, namely the aesthetically greatest basic measure for the estimation of magnitude” (135)

“Analytic of the Beautiful” Recap.

Intuitively estimating magnitude



Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

- The experience of the intuitive magnitude is one of scale.

“ ... that in order to get the full emotional effect of the magnitude of the pyramids one must neither come too close to them nor be too far away. For in the latter case, the parts that are apprehended (the stones piled on top of one another) are represented only obscurely, and their representation has no effect on the aesthetic judgment of the subject. In the former case, however, the eye requires some time to complete its apprehension from the base level to the apex, but during this time the former always partly fades before the imagination has taken in the latter, and the comprehension is never complete.” (135-6)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

"... I only note that if the aesthetic judgment is to be pure... and if an example of that is to be given which is fully appropriate for the critique of the aesthetic power of judgment, then the sublime must not be shown in products of art... nor in natural things whose concept already brings with it a determinate end... but rather in raw nature... merely insofar as it contains magnitude" (136)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“Even a faculty for being able to think the infinite... is great beyond all comparison even with the faculty of mathematical estimation, not, of course, from a theoretical point of view, in behalf of the faculty of cognition, but still as an enlargement of the mind which feels itself empowered to overstep the limits of sensibility from another (practical) point of view. Nature is thus sublime in those of its appearances the intuition of which brings with them the idea of its infinity.” (138)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“Thus, just as the aesthetic power of judgment in judging the beautiful relates the imagination in its free play to the understanding, in order to agree with its concepts in general (without determination of them), so in judging a thing to be sublime the same faculty is related to reason, in order to correspond subjectively with its ideas (though which is undetermined...” (139)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“The feeling of the inadequacy of our capacity for the attainment of an idea that is a law for us is respect.” (140)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“Thus the inner perception of the inadequacy of any sensible standard for the estimation of magnitude by reason corresponds with reason’s laws, and is a displeasure that arouses the feeling of our supersensible vocation in us, in accordance with which it is purposive and thus a pleasure to find every standard of sensibility inadequate for the ideas of the understanding*.” (141)

* The translators have followed the second edition here in translating *Verstandes* as ‘understanding,’ whereas in the first edition it read as *Vernunft* (‘reason’). I’m not totally sure which one it should be. (MCA)

Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Sublime"

The mathematical sublime

“For just as imagination and understanding produce subjective purposiveness of the powers of the mind in the judging of the beautiful through their unison, so do imagination and reason produce subjective purposiveness through their conflict: namely, a feeling that we have pure self-sufficient reason, or a faculty for estimating magnitude, whose preeminence cannot be made intuitable through anything except the inadequacy of that faculty which is itself unbounded in the presentation of magnitudes (of sensible objects).” (142)