

What is Beauty?

—Pursuing Infinity with Infinity (Infinity of Subject with Infinity of Object)

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ABSTRACT

Beauty constitutes the result of aesthetic conception. There is objective beautiful content but a subjective notion for beauty. Based on subjectivity (the subject is the measure of beauty), making rationality the absolute object can also absolutely rationalize the object. Beauty cannot separate itself from an individual, for it is the feeling of the individual (presented perceptually). If "beauty" is regarded as a reasonable interpretation, then aesthetic conception can be obtained through learning. However, aesthetic conception is more of an unconscious self-action. Starting from beauty in a pure form, this article deeply explores that the aesthetic conception is the infinity of subject to the infinity of object, and reveals the philosophical interest of "pursuing infinity with infinity" of Oriental aesthetic conception.

Keywords: *beauty; aesthetic conception; Kant; Zhuangzi*

1. INTRODUCTION

When it comes to "truth, goodwill, and beauty", then what is the definition? Truth refers to truth-seeking, which is about cognition; goodwill refers to something related to morality; different from "truth" and "goodwill", beauty is pure and independent. When people talk about aesthetics, as the intermediary of knowledge, they explain the understanding and judgment of beauty in a written form with the intermediary as knowledge. Then, how does aesthetic conception occur?

2. BEAUTY IN A PURE FORM

When it comes to "truth, goodwill, and beauty", then what is the definition? Truth refers to truth-seeking, which is about cognition; goodwill refers to something related to morality; different from "truth" and "goodwill", beauty is pure and independent. People describe beauty in a written form with the intermediary as knowledge, which can be regarded as the cognitive judgment of beauty[1]. Among these understandings, people wonder whether it conforms to the aesthetic principles, has unique materials, and sublimates the emotion. However, the above is only cognitive judgments that can be taught. The so-called aesthetic judgment does not involve the specific content of objectification, and objectification is only a pure form that can bring pleasure. Despite having

no knowledge of "it", we still feel its beauty. This indicates disinterestedness between the object "it" in the subjective consciousness and the subject.

In the book Critique of Judgment, Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German classical philosopher, wrote that everyone must admit that a judgment on beauty will not be a pure appreciation of judgment as long as it is mixed with a little sense of interest. Therefore, in the case of an attempt to seek advantages and avoid disadvantages, beauty does not have a true and rational judgment. The objects it praises and criticizes have nothing to do with the judgment of "truth", "goodwill" or "beauty". When judging that behavior is "good", people can still observe the motivation of the object. But the pleasure brought by beauty is so pure that it has nothing to do with interests. Moreover, beauty must be specific. People can regard an object as something beautiful, but they cannot generalize a category of objects as beauty, for beauty also needs to be proved[2].

In the meantime, aesthetic judgment is universal. Kant once said that beauty is regarded as an inevitable pleasure without relying on concepts. It is effective for everyone. We can understand this universality as a kind of inevitability and common emotion that can be shared by people. When seeing the winding path leading to seclusions in high mountains and flowing water and

feeling the towering of the Great Wall, people can share the same aesthetic conception[3].

With the existence of pure beauty, we can think of another kind of beauty, namely, dependent beauty, which is a kind of beauty full of humans' cultural emotion in the society, such as national cultural totem, dress design, etc. It is a kind of aesthetic feeling attached to the aesthetic object in cultural dependence under the influence of many factors (climate, environment, language habits). For example, the beautiful human body is based on a healthy body, which implies positivity and beauty[4].

In my opinion, artistic beauty is the highest aesthetic feeling due to its deep aesthetic feeling created by the labor of the human spirit. It can be crazy, painful, or indifferent and harmonious. This unique artistic beauty cannot be imitated. People can acquire knowledge by reading mechanical works, but in art, only artists with great souls can create works of genius. It cannot be imitated and cannot formulate all "prescriptive" frameworks. What people can feel is the power of beauty shown in the works[5].

3. BEAUTY OCCURS PRIOR TO REFLECTIONS

Beauty constitutes the result of aesthetic conception. There is objective beautiful content but a subjective notion for beauty. Based on subjectivity (the subject is the measure of beauty), making rationality the absolute object can also absolutely rationalize the object. Beauty cannot separate itself from an individual, for it is the feeling of the individual (presented perceptually). Therefore, "beauty" is not just a reasonable interpretation. If we only interpret rationality, then aesthetic conception can be obtained through learning. However, aesthetic conception is more about unconscious self-action.

Therefore, despite the common ground between beauty and rationality, what distinguishes beauty from rationality is that beauty is not the result of reflection. From this point of view, aesthetic conception is not the result but the beginning of thinking. As something direct and intuitive, beauty comes before rational reflection. Nature is also the embodiment of perception and a huge synthesis, including something *priori* and something empirical. The function of aesthetic conception is far from being developed and is not just something proposed by Hegel and others, such as gladdening the heart and pleasing the eye, easing the conflict between reason and sensibility, and having a casual rest. Here, for the significance of aesthetic conception, we should first explore the internal composition of aesthetic conception. In face of an object or event, we can use reflection for consideration, present the direct structure with representation, and establish causality logically, so as to obtain the attribute efficacy of each part, and then gain judgment based on causality presupposition. Hence, the

logical self-consistency exists based on the limited intercepted phenomenal materials, that is, the closed logical ring system corresponds to the non-closed open object. The ideal correspondence judgment based on its assumption of closure must be highly distorted due to the disadvantage of highly relying on direct experience.

All scientific experiments are the result of this assumption, but this is often the requirement of public discourse. For example, in communication, we are required to preset the margin first. Although this requirement seems reasonable, it assumes the non-openness of the object at the beginning. At the cost of distortion, this consensus doctrine gains logically but loses its true meaning. In the process of logical reflection, an individual makes limited provisions, that is, he only mobilizes the intellectual structure related to the meaning of the object. Meanwhile, he clarifies the edge of the object and makes limited cooperation with the subject and object. This is the requirement of logical reflection, or in a narrow sense, reflecting on the "object" itself is the product of limitation and marginalization.

4. PURSUING THE INFINITY OF THE SUBJECT WITH THE INFINITY OF THE OBJECT

However, aesthetic conception is a kind of subject infinity, that is, it does not make rational provisions regardless of its relevance with the object, that is, pursuing the infinity of the subject with the infinity of the object, just putting in an appearance. Then, the aesthetic subject fails to carry out meaningful and limited mobilization, and seems to have done nothing. This inaction subject, however, is unique, for an object exists. Therefore, the great difference between aesthetic conception and logical reflection is that the latter assimilates the object based on limited rationality and the existing concept to make it a rational limitation, while the former is in the attitude of self "presence" but "inaction", facing the "open" (infinite) but maintaining the "object" character. An object exists, but it is not closed or clearly defined.

All factors are open, infinite, and fuzzy. As an object, it has not clarified itself through the opposition of its "other things". The article here does not aim to compare the advantages and disadvantages of logical intellectual reflection and aesthetic conception, but to explore the unique significance of aesthetic conception. This kind of open care of the object seems to be the infinity of self-inaction (without mobilizing the meaning category) and no meaning screening between the open object with clear provisions. In fact, these two viewpoints refer to the same thing. When you present yourself in a rational rest state, you make the object open and holographic. Thus, we can mainly discuss what we can gain from this model.

Logical conceptual cognition presupposes the

possession of a clear “object” and the entry of object-related concepts into a closed and independent logical causal system, which is the basis of successful logical cognition and the process of finding concepts in the cognitive object. This process incorporates individual and concrete objects into general and abstract concepts, which is an ontological screening. The simplification and distortion of phenomenal materials or objects for the sake of logical processing is a negative crisis (a passive and hasty response) brought by the self in the face of the temporal evolution of the world of others. It loses the reality that is identical with the infinite and exchanges it for a temporary certainty of the finite. Thus, science is forever falsified, a purely utilitarian activity of self-survival where *des Man* are closely attached to *Dasein*. Science and logical knowing can only start from and be directed at serving the *das Man* (the norm of the *das Man*), and it is always responsive and strategic in its role as an expedient of the *Dasein*. It is the boundary of the whole world, forcibly cutting out areas and fitting them into concepts, constituting “objects” for the logic of knowledge to be processed into a coping and limited causal system that provides the ego with momentary stability in the negative crisis of the infinite world of others. In the logic of understanding, the “object” itself has clear boundaries within which the essence of the object and its causal elements are located.

For example, in a film, the acts of all the characters and the causal relationships between them are within the scene, and the cause of each act of each character can be found in one or more scenes. Likewise, logical cognition or scientific reason is a closed, independent and self-contained system. Still, aesthetic appreciation is not a regular human activity. Its actions are not based on existential crises or techniques and tricks of harvesting the self to cope with the world of others. The fundamental difference between it and the logical rationality of the *des Man*’s norm is that the system of the aesthetic object is not enclosed in the region where the object shows itself but points to the infinite. The logical edge of the object is no longer clear, and the immediate phenomenon of this quality may point out beyond the horizon. The object is no longer the acquisition of the real “something” under the “negation” of the non-real infinite “others,” but the diffusion and radiation of the affirmative concrete “something” to the infinite non-real implicit abstract “others.”

This is not the establishment of a margin by artificial division, but rather the dilution of the intuitive and natural “margin of vision.” That abstract and infinite others (both spatial and temporal) of something as an object is all that is beyond the fixed object in space and time (what is possible to spread beyond the cognitive field of vision), not an intentional illusion or imagination. Thus, the aesthetic eye remains calm and just follows the manifestation of these appearances and is naturally drawn to the infinite others more than the object, and we are no

longer confronted with a fish in isolation, but harvest it together with the river. Aesthetics is linked to the infinite (utilitarianism is linked to the finite), a higher being, even a gift, a trait of genius.

Aesthetics is bound to deviate from self-utilitarianism. As Schopenhauer expressed, those geniuses capable of appreciating beauty are more able to detach themselves from the ego and observe the object and meditate on the deep infinite reality, so they are not as clever and skillful as ordinary people who are bound to their own utilitarianism. Unlike the *des Man* who strives to be illuminated by the world, the genius lights up the world, and this is what is called “to manifest bright virtue” in the oriental Great Learning. The *des Man*, out of utilitarianism, eagerly draws the edge of the object, and lightly corresponds it to his existing concepts and ideas, then superficially establishes the so-called reasonable cause and effect, and then pays little attention to the object. Therefore, many hold that logic and reason are closer to the true meaning than aesthetics, but the author thinks this is just the opposite. Logic cognition of reason is just a stopgap to deal with the crisis of existence at the cost of giving up the true meaning in the infinite, while aesthetics is the gesture that refers to the infinite reality. Such a view results from confusing the fixed existence with the real.

There are unknown treasures behind aesthetic conception, or beauty, First of all, the world is open and infinite. In the work, the French philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650) separated “thinking” and “being”. Kant also proposed both thing-in-itself and the *priori* that cannot be studied deeply (only the little stipulation of the port is associated with the object). Logical intellectual thinking strengthens the self and object as the stipulation when they are associated, which is limited and finite.

It shows more the appearance of ports. It is essential to observe it from the perspective of existentialism. The aesthetic conception of the infinite mode just allows us to meet a more real and holographic world. It is well known that Chuang Tzu said that it is dangerous to pursue unlimited knowledge with limited life. He also intended to express the opinion that “it is good to pursue unlimited things with unlimited life”.

5. CONCLUSION

Beauty occurs directly instead of the result of reflection or a reasonable interpretation. Aesthetic conception is just the beginning of thinking even prior to rational reflection. Therefore, aesthetic conception is the subjective “inaction” and facing the object in an open way rather than the limited mobilization. When the self is presented in the rational rest state, the object will have holography. The aesthetic conception of infinite mode can face the world more truly and comprehensively. It is well known that Chuang Tzu said that it is dangerous to

pursue unlimited knowledge with limited life. He also intended to express the opinion that "it is good to pursue unlimited things with unlimited life".

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