

## The Postmodern Sublime

### *Presentation and Its Limits*

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In the last three decades of the twentieth century, the philosophical concept of the sublime underwent a renaissance among a number of “continental” philosophers, after having fallen largely out of favor around the end of the preceding century. Many thinkers who turned to the concept of the sublime at this time were associated in one way or another with the then-nascent and fiercely debated categories of “postmodern theory” and “postmodernism” in general;<sup>1</sup> accordingly, this trend in continental thought quickly became identified by the name “postmodern sublime.”<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, we examine the work of four influential thinkers of this postmodern incarnation of the sublime: Jean-François Lyotard, Julia Kristeva, Gilles Deleuze, and Fredric Jameson. Other writers also contributed to this discourse, but the work of these four encapsulates effectively its central themes and issues, while at the same time illustrating the wide range of its elaboration and use.<sup>3</sup>

Common to these thinkers’ work is a more or less explicit but fundamental engagement with Kant’s “Analytic of the Sublime.”<sup>4</sup> For each of them, the contemporary importance of the experience of sublimity, as well as the central problematic of its concept, concerns the issue of what Kant in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* calls *Darstellung*: the process through which the imagination presents sensible intuition to rational thought. In the aesthetic experience of the sublime, on their interpretation, the imagination tries to present an intuition of some object that is strictly and intrinsically unrepresentable, thereby running up against its own limit. This means, in these thinkers’ view, that the experience of the sublime involves a crisis for the faculty of

<sup>1</sup> Not all late twentieth-century continental philosophers of the sublime can be associated with postmodernism, however one might construe the term. Theodor Adorno, for example, is not generally considered a postmodernist but wrote on the sublime at the end of the 1960s. See Theodor W. Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie*, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970); *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (New York: Continuum, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> We must note here that the term “postmodern sublime” denotes not only a philosophical discourse on the sublime but also a trend in art, architecture, and literary criticism and practice. The present chapter focuses on the philosophical and not the more specifically art-, architecture-, or literary-critical uses of the sublime in postmodernism.

<sup>3</sup> For some articulations of the postmodern sublime that are not considered directly in the present chapter, see Jean-Luc Nancy, “L’Offrande sublime,” in *Du sublime*, ed. Jean-François Courtine et al. (Paris: Belin, 1988); “The Sublime Offering,” in *Of the Sublime: Presence in Question*, ed. Jean-François Courtine et al.; trans. Jeffrey S. Librett (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 25–54; Jacques Derrida, *La Vérité en peinture* (Paris: Flammarion, 1978); *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); and Paul de Man, “Phenomenality and Materiality in Kant” and “Hegel on the Sublime,” in *Aesthetic Ideology*, ed. Andrzej Warminski (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 70–90 and 105–18.

<sup>4</sup> *Kritik der Urteilskraft, Kant’s gesammelte Schriften*, Königlichen Preussischen (later Deutschen) Akademie der Wissenschaften, 29 vols. (Berlin: Reimer [later de Gruyter], 1900–), vol. 5 (KGS); *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer; trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), §23–9, 5:244–78 (CJ). All references are to volume and page of the Akademie edition.

presentation in the form of an irresolvable conflict between it and a set of objects that remain fundamentally inaccessible to it, but that it strives to present nonetheless. This issue of irresolvability, which is central to the way these thinkers conceptualize the sublime, was first and most rigorously analyzed by Kant in the third *Critique*. For this reason, the thinkers of the postmodern sublime focus almost exclusively on Kant's interpretation and reject both pre-Kantian and German Idealist and Romantic discourses of the sublime; the latter tend to resolve the conflict between presentation and what cannot be presented, whereas the former ignore the issue altogether. On the postmodern view, this conflict, although irresolvable, takes on an affirmative role, generating a profound and violent affective response, and reveals a mode of thinking or sensing that is radically different from our usual ways of thinking and sensing. In the experience of the sublime, these thinkers believe, we find resources for new forms of intellectual and aesthetic endeavor.

Although their conceptions of the sublime come directly from their readings of Kant, these philosophers also critique, invert, or undermine Kant's analysis. They do so in four ways. First, each of them conceptualizes the nature of the unrepresentable object in the sublime differently than Kant, who had identified this object as the rational idea of absolute magnitude or power (CJ 5:251-64): Lyotard conceives of the unrepresentable in terms of the absolute in general; Deleuze, in terms of pure sensation; Kristeva, in terms of a very early stage of an individual's psychosexual development; and Jameson, in terms of the vastness of contemporary capitalism. Second, they all contest Kant's downplaying of the importance of the sublime for philosophy – his assertion that the "Analytic of the Sublime" constitutes a "mere appendix" to the project of the third *Critique* (CJ 5:246) – insisting instead that the experience of the sublime is indispensable for thought to reflect on its own conditions or the conditions of contemporary cultural life. Third, each of them moves away from the association, still operative in Kant's account, between the experience of the sublime and emotions like awe and respect, instead relating sublimity to more subversive, corporeal, or even base affective and ethical registers. Fourth and finally, each rejects Kant's insistence that the sublime is primarily germane to our experience of nature and only secondarily and weakly relevant to our judgments of art; they deploy the concept of the sublime expressly as a means to think about art and literature.

In spite of the several important commonalities just enumerated, however, each of these postmodern thinkers of the sublime approaches his or her analysis in a highly singular way and comes to quite different conclusions than the others. Accordingly, we treat each thinker singly, beginning with Lyotard, the archetypal postmodern theorist of the sublime. Of the four thinkers under consideration, he alone forges an explicit and thoroughgoing notion of the postmodern sublime as both an aesthetic tendency and an analytic object. By contrast, Jameson develops an explicit but much less fully theorized concept of the postmodern sublime, whereas neither Deleuze nor Kristeva links the experience of sublimity to a notion of the postmodern at all. Lyotard's account of the sublime is also the most faithfully Kantian of the four. From him, we will turn to Deleuze and then to Kristeva, both of whom push the concept of the sublime quite far from its Kantian articulation, while still maintaining Kant's critical notion of a crisis occurring at the limit of the transcendental faculty of presentation. Deleuze displaces Kant's concept of the sublime toward a theory of pure sensation, whereas Kristeva converts it into a psychoanalytic-semiotic concept of abjection. We conclude with the critic of postmodernism, Jameson, who identifies the postmodern sublime as a symptom of the postmodern acquiescence to late capitalism.

#### JEAN-FRANÇOIS LYOTARD

Lyotard's engagement with the concept of the sublime is the most focused, thematic, and sustained of any of his peers. Through this concept, Lyotard addresses a set of interlinked questions

"Crisis" in (re)presentation

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ways

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Lysotard: 'metaphysics of the event'

concerning the function and significance of modern art and the artistic avant-gardes that produced it, the metaphysics of "the event," and the nature of postmodernism itself. More broadly, the concept of the sublime enables Lyotard to carry out what he calls "an *anamnesis* of criticism itself (in Kant's sense)."<sup>5</sup> By this, he means that the concept of the sublime makes possible a renewal of Kant's critical project: it directs us toward and allows us to reflect on the limits and conditions of our experience. In so doing, it shows us how those limits can be forced, effecting a kind of negative but unfettered aesthetic process, which enables us to reconceive how we orient our thought and our action in the world, and in particular, how we do so through art.

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Lyotard's longest and most concerted discussion of sublimity is found in his *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime* (1991),<sup>6</sup> an extended close reading of Kant's theorization of the sublime in the third *Critique*. Following Kant very closely, Lyotard identifies the experience of sublimity as the simultaneous feeling of pleasure and pain that accompanies the imagination's inevitably failed attempt to present to thought an intuition that would adequately correspond to an idea of the absolute generated by the faculty of reason. Through this failure, thought is made to feel the unintuitable presence of this idea of the absolute, as well as the superiority of the faculty of reason over both the imagination and the phenomena of nature the latter presents. For Lyotard, the essential mechanism of this experience can thus be summarized in one short formula: the presentation of the unrepresentable. Importantly, the failure of the imagination in the experience of sublimity is not merely contingent; the imagination is barred a priori from presenting an intuition corresponding to an idea of the absolute, because it is constitutively capable only of presenting phenomena that are by definition conditioned, limited, and finite. It is this humbling failure of the imagination before reason, in spite of the former's greatest efforts, that gives rise to the painful component of the feeling engendered in the sublime; it is the awareness of the limitlessness and absolute power of ideas that subsequently "awakens the feeling of a supersensible faculty in us," that generates the feeling of pleasure we take in the sublime (CJ 5:250).

the weakness in Kant's formulation of pure reason.

This experience of sublimity, Lyotard argues, shows us something surprising and unsettling about Kant's critical thought generally. The sublime rests, he says, on a principle of "thinking's getting carried away ..., as if fascinated by its own excessiveness" (LAS 55). The sublime, in other words, is the aesthetic manifestation of thought's inexorable attraction to transcendental illusions: in sublime experience, thought tantalizes itself, as it were, with the possibility of discovering the absolute in phenomenal intuition by transgressing its own boundaries, boundaries that it, itself, establishes through critical reflection. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant had acknowledged that the impetus toward such illusions – the desire to cognize the absolute – is an essential motivation of thought, despite the errors that it frequently causes.<sup>7</sup> Lyotard turns this observation back to reflect on Kant's critical project itself, arguing, in a passage worth quoting at length, that critical philosophy depends crucially on this "deaf desire for limitlessness":

What critical thought does, in short, is to look for the *a priori* conditions of the possibility of judging the true, the just, or the beautiful in the realms of knowledge, of morality, and in the territory of the aesthetic. The project seems modest and reasonable. However, it is motivated by the same principle of fury that the critique restrains.... Reflection pushes the analysis of its own conditions as far as it can, in accordance with the demand of the critique itself. Reflection thus touches on the absolute of its conditions.... All thought is a being put into relation – a "synthesis," in the language of Kant. Thus when thinking reaches the absolute, the relation reaches the without-relation, for the absolute is without

<sup>5</sup> Jean-François Lyotard, "Complexity and the Sublime," trans. Geoffrey Bennington, in *Postmodernism*, ed. Lisa Appignanesi (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1986), 11.

<sup>6</sup> Jean-François Lyotard, *Leçons sur l'analytique du sublime* (Paris: Galilée, 1991); *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime*, trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994) (LAS).

<sup>7</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, KGS 3 and 4; *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), A321/B378–A338/B396. All references are to the pagination of the first (1781) and second (1787) Akademie editions, abbreviated CPR A/B.

relation. How can the without-relation be "present" to relation? It can only be "present" as disavowed (as metaphysical entity), forbidden (as illusion).... The consequence for thought is a kind of spasm. And the Analytic of the Sublime is a hint of this spasm.... It exposes the "state" of critical thought when it reaches its extreme limit – a spasmodic state. (LAS 56)

On Lyotard's view, then, by taking us to the limit of what can be presented, attempting in vain to surpass that limit, and thereby raising us to an awareness of the power of the supersensible that lies beyond that limit within us – in short, by presenting the unrepresentable – the Kantian sublime recapitulates and brings us to feel, aestheticizes, the essential movement of critical thought in general: the "spasm" entailed by thought's fascination with what it forbids itself.

Importantly, for Lyotard, the mode in which the sublime achieves this presentation of the unrepresentable is one of "negative presentation." In spite of – in fact, because of – the incapacity of the imagination to render a presentation adequate to the unrepresentable idea of the absolute, we are brought to feel the presence and the power of the content of that idea in the experience of the sublime. This bringing-to-feel, this presentation of the absolute, is achieved not positively by the imagination but negatively in that faculty's failure. This does not merely mean, however, that the absolute is presented simply by virtue of its not being presented. Rather, Lyotard points out, in its being forced to its limit by reason, the imagination discovers a kind of paradoxical limitlessness; it "feels itself to be unbounded" as Kant writes (CJ 5:274). Unable to discover anything sensible that would enable it to fulfill its sublime task, brought before the abyss, as it were, of its failure to present the absolute, the imagination feels itself become unlimited, infinite. It presents properly and positively nothing; reason's idea of the absolute is left without a sensible datum it could subsume. At the same time, in the feeling of unboundedness that it experiences in this discovery of its inadequacy, the imagination evokes the absolute by "mak[ing] a sign of" its failure-induced limitlessness – a limitlessness that negatively signifies the absolute in the form of "the trace of a retreat ... an almost insane mirage" (LAS 152).

In this procedure of negative presentation, we find the ultimate expression of the irresolvable relationship between presentation and the unrepresentable in the sublime – an irresolvability Lyotard calls "differend" (LAS 147–53).<sup>8</sup> The faculty of presentation can never properly and positively present the absolute, and yet the faculty of reason demands that it do so. Rather than resulting in a kind of stultified impasse, however, the irresolvability of this situation itself becomes generative: it produces a negative presentation of what exceeds presentation, "a sign of the presence of the absolute" (LAS 152). In particular, for Lyotard, this generative irresolvability of presentation in the sublime effects a turning point in the history of art: "The shock of the thought of the absolute for the thinking of forms expresses and sanctions a major shift in the stakes of art and literature.... Its stakes can be formulated simply: is it possible, and how would it be possible, to testify to the absolute by means of artistic and literary presentations, which are always dependent on forms?" (LAS 153). Lyotard had already addressed this question of the role of the sublime in artistic and literary endeavor almost ten years before *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime* was first published. In an essay entitled "Answering the Question: What Is Postmodernism?" (1982),<sup>9</sup> Lyotard employs his concept of the sublime to articulate and defend the idea of avant-garde modernism in the arts. The essential project of the avant-garde, Lyotard argues, is to ask "the question of reality implicated in that of art" (AQ 75). The modern avant-garde, then, interrogates the rules of art making; it experiments with

<sup>8</sup> For Lyotard's theoretical articulation of this concept, see Jean-François Lyotard, *Le Différend* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1983); *The Differend*, trans. Georges Van Den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

<sup>9</sup> Jean-François Lyotard, "Réponse à la question: qu'est-ce que le postmoderne?" *Critique* 419 (1982); "Answering the Question: What Is Postmodernism?" trans. Régis Durand, in *The Postmodern Condition*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 71–82 (AQ).



presuppositions about what art is and can be. In so doing, it questions dominant assumptions about creative endeavor and communication more broadly, assumptions that entail demands for clear identity, liquidation of ambiguity, stability, and easy recognizability in signifying processes – in short, the crystallization and consolidation of existing “reality.” In opposing such demands, avant-garde modernism effects a “shattering of belief and ... discovery of the ‘lack of reality’ of reality, together with the invention of other realities” (AQ 77).

In refusing the “reality” of both traditional art and contemporary mass communication and capitalism, Lyotard argues, avant-garde art undertakes precisely the task that the imagination is compelled to perform in the experience of the sublime. It attempts “to present the fact that the unrepresentable exists” – a fact that the discourse of reality must expunge at all cost, because this discourse relies on the assumption of a stable, easily determinable concordance between thought and referent, between idea and presentation, and because, in other words, it assumes the world to be merely beautiful (AQ 78). A work of *properly* modern art, then, will initiate a sublime experience. It will, Lyotard writes, “present something though negatively; it will therefore avoid figuration or representation. It will be ‘white’ like one of Malevitch’s squares; it will enable us to see only by making it impossible to see; it will please only by causing pain” (AQ 78). The project of the modern avant-garde, then, according to Lyotard, is essentially sublime in character.

In another text from about the same period, Lyotard frames this link between the avant-garde and sublimity in terms of the temporality of “the event” – a notion, derived from Martin Heidegger’s concept of *Ereignis*, which describes the relationship between an emergent phenomenon and the thought that tries to think this phenomenon simply in its happening, rather than identifying it as a “what” that has happened. We experience modern, avant-garde art, Lyotard says, in the radical present of the event – a “*now* that is no more than *now*,” as he puts it.<sup>10</sup> In this present of the event, the work of art absents itself from determinant or even determinable experience and “happens as a question mark ‘before’ happening as a question” (SAG 90). Thus, modern art “attempts combinations allowing the event” (SAG 101), in which allowing the event is tantamount to “bearing pictorial or otherwise expressive witness to the inexpressible” – tantamount, that is, to the sublime (SAG 93). Again, then, Lyotard shows the sine qua non of modern art to be the experience of sublimity.

By identifying the sublime as essential to artistic modernism in this way, Lyotard establishes a principle of distinction within modern aesthetics, a principle that enables him to answer his titular question: what is postmodernism? He argues that one must distinguish between a form of sublime modernism that places greater emphasis on the failure of the imagination and the absence of the absolute from presentation, and a form that privileges the becoming-unbounded of the imagination and its negative presentation of the absolute. There are, accordingly, two modes of avant-garde art: one that emphasizes the failure of presentation and evokes the unrepresentable merely as a kind of missing content, while indulging in pleasurable, nostalgic forms through which to convey that absence (Lyotard invokes Marcel Proust here), and another that avails itself of the bewildering movement of negative presentation and relentlessly seeks out new and unfamiliar forms through which to evoke the unrepresentable in its presence to form, and not merely its absence from content (Lyotard points to Joyce). The former Lyotard calls “aesthetic modernism,” and the latter, “postmodernism” (AQ 81).

Postmodernism, then, is that form of modern, avant-garde aesthetics that deploys the sublime in full and that seeks out the irresolvability of the unrepresentable for presentation in every corner of aesthetic activity. For Lyotard, postmodernism does not come after the end of modernism

<sup>10</sup> Jean-François Lyotard, “Le Sublime et l’Avant-garde,” in *L’Inhumain: Causeries sur le temps* (Paris: Galilée, 1988); “The Sublime and the Avant-Garde,” in *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 90 (SAG).

Sublime  
modernism  
vs.  
sublime  
postmodernism

but is that aspect within modernism that is always suspicious of what has come before, of what has been firmly established – even what has been firmly established by modernism itself. Thus, far from constituting the end or the successor of modernism, postmodernism is modernism “in the nascent state, and this state is constant” (AQ 79). In other words, postmodernism is the engine of permanent revolution within the modern; it is the modern impulse that harnesses the full power of the sublime in its attempt to break with reality. In this way, Lyotard rediscovers in postmodern art the violent and aporetic but affirmative movement of critical thought that he found in the *Analytic of the Sublime*: avant-garde postmodernism is the “spasm” that art undergoes as it runs up against its own limits and, in presenting nothing, negatively presents the idea of a reality absolutely different from our own.

#### GILLES DELEUZE

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Deleuze developed an account of the sublime that diverged strongly from the strictly Kantian formulation given by Lyotard, while still retaining its transcendental framework.<sup>11</sup> In Deleuze’s account, the experience of the sublime is no longer located in the conflict between the faculty of presentation and a present but unrepresentable rational idea of the absolute. Rather, in an almost opposite fashion, the sublime testifies to the primacy of sensation itself, to the constant functioning of a kind of trans-sensible aesthetic rhythm that underlies all experience and that invests sensation with an immense power that exceeds and disrupts presentation. Deleuze thus takes up the sublime as a critical (in Kant’s sense) anti-Kantian, finding in the resources of a transcendental philosophy of sublimity the means to account for an experience of sensation that short-circuits presentation and reveals a purely sensible encounter with forces and intensities.

Of the several works by Deleuze from the 1970s and 1980s dealing with the sublime, we will focus on two: a seminar he gave on Kant on March 28, 1978, at the University of Paris VIII<sup>12</sup> and *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (1981).<sup>13</sup> The latter contains his most central and most focused treatment of the concept of the sublime from this period, even though the term “sublime” appears nowhere in the work (Daniel Smith uses it in his translator’s introduction [FB xix–xxiii]). The Kant seminar, by contrast, contains an explicit although occasionally elliptical discussion of the concept of sublimity toward which Deleuze is working during this period. For

<sup>11</sup> Deleuze’s interest in the sublime dates to the early 1960s, although his work from that period falls outside the purview of the current discussion. See Gilles Deleuze, *La Philosophie critique de Kant* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963); *Kant’s Critical Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1984); Gilles Deleuze, “L’Idée de genèse dans l’esthétique de Kant,” in *Revue d’esthétique* XVI, 2 (1963); “The Idea of Genesis in Kant’s Esthetics,” trans. Michael Taormina, in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, ed. David Lapoujade (New York: Semiotext(e), 2002), 56–71; and Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et Répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968); *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). For brief but helpful discussions of Deleuze’s use of the sublime in these early works, see Paul Patton’s introduction to *Deleuze: A Critical Reader* and Daniel W. Smith’s “Deleuze’s Theory of Sensation: Overcoming the Kantian Duality,” in *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, ed. Paul Patton (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996), 1–17 and 29–56.

<sup>12</sup> This seminar has not been officially published, but it is available online at <http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=68&groupe=Kant&langue=2>, trans. Melissa McMahon (accessed June 18, 2011) (CGD).

<sup>13</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation* (Paris: Éditions de la Différence, 1981), 2 vols.; *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) (FB). For other examples of Deleuze’s use of the concept of the sublime from this period, see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1980); *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 310–50; and Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 1: L’Image-mouvement* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1983); *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 40–55.

this reason, we must begin from the seminar. By gleaning what we can from it and then turning back to *Francis Bacon*, we will gain a robust and complex picture of Deleuze's later thinking on the sublime.

In the seminar, Deleuze argues that to understand the experience of the sublime one must begin from Kant's discussion of the transcendental syntheses of perception in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. There, Kant had identified three synthetic operations that are crucial for all experience: apprehension, reproduction, and recognition (CPR A98-111; see also B160-2). Together, these transcendental syntheses enable the subject to integrate and represent the sensible manifold so as to form a properly spatiotemporal object capable of being subsumed under concepts of the understanding and thereby of being cognized as experience. The first of these syntheses, apprehension, is carried out by the imagination as it unifies the successive parts that an intuition comprises, "determining the parts of a space and a time," as Deleuze expresses it (CGD). Beneath this synthesis, however, lies an even more fundamental operation: for apprehension to unify the parts of an intuition, a determination must first be made as to what constitutes a part in the first place – "something like a lived evaluation of a unit of measure" (CGD). Deleuze follows Kant in calling this spontaneous evaluation on which the synthesis of apprehension rests "aesthetic comprehension" (CJ 5:251-2). Because the content and the scale of our intuitions vary constantly, the unit of measure "chosen" by aesthetic comprehension must vary in kind:

When I see a tree, for example, ... I say that this tree must be as big as ten men.... I choose a kind of sensible unit to carry out my successive apprehension of parts. And then, behind the tree, there is a mountain, and I say ... it must be ten trees tall. And then I look at the sun and I wonder how many mountains it is. (CGD)

Deleuze characterizes the continuous and variable determination of this fundamental aesthetic measure as the "exploration" of a rhythm. Deleuze is clear that by "rhythm" he does not mean a regular, homogenous beat or meter but rather an essentially variable repetition or pulsation. Thus a constantly fluctuating sensible rhythm constitutes the foundation of all aesthetic comprehension and, transitively, all perceptual synthesis – a rhythm that we may call "trans-sensible," insofar as it traverses sensation in its entirety, allowing it to be synthesized by the imagination. Rhythm thus emerges as a fundamental condition of the possibility of all experience.

Deleuze assigns a source to this trans-sensible rhythm of aesthetic comprehension: it "comes out of chaos" (CGD). The nature of this chaos and the manner in which rhythm "comes out of" it are issues that Deleuze leaves unexplained in this seminar; they will become clearer in *Francis Bacon*. The important point to note here is that in the relationship between rhythm and chaos, Deleuze discovers the possibility of a "catastrophe": the catastrophe of rhythm's returning back to chaos, a catastrophe that is tantamount, for Deleuze, to the ignition of the sublime. In the experience of sublimity, Deleuze says, "I can no longer apprehend parts, I can no longer reproduce parts, I can no longer recognize something.... This is because my aesthetic comprehension is itself compromised, which is to say: instead of rhythm, I find myself in chaos" (CGD). On Deleuze's interpretation, then, the experience of the sublime consists in a disorientation or deranging of the syntheses through which the imagination presents sensation to thought. This disorientation is caused by a disruption of the aesthetic comprehension on which those syntheses rest, as it falls into a kind of chaotic arrhythmia, unable to find a unit of perceptual measure. Deleuze does not clarify in the seminar how this sublime disorientation comes about, but, again, this becomes clearer in *Francis Bacon*, to which we can now turn.

In *Francis Bacon*, Deleuze attempts to develop a "logic of sensation" by examining the work of the Irish painter Francis Bacon. Bacon is almost peerless in the history of art, Deleuze believes, because he paints sensation and the forces that give rise to it, rather than, like most painters, painting either objects that are supposed to represent things or abstractions that

Catastrophe

logic of sensation

at the sensory  
to a sensation" (→)

tend toward a kind of "cerebrality" (FB 46). Bacon achieves this painterly communication of sensation by painting images of figures, but without allowing them to become *figurative* – that is, without allowing them to tell stories or represent models.<sup>14</sup> Instead, the type of figure that appears in Bacon's painting – Deleuze calls it "the Figure" – functions as a kind of recording surface through which variations in sensation are transmitted. "The Figure is the sensible form related to a sensation" (FB 31), Deleuze says, "an 'accumulated' or 'coagulated' sensation" (FB 33). In order to produce the Figure, in order to make paint into the medium of sensation, Bacon becomes a rhythmicist, in precisely the sense of rhythm discussed previously: "This operation [of painting the Figure] is possible only if the sensation of a particular domain (here, the visual sensation) is in direct contact with a vital power that exceeds every domain and traverses them all. This power is Rhythm, which is more profound than vision, hearing, etc." (FB 37).

As we have seen already, there is a chaos churning just beneath rhythm, a chaos that rhythm both "comes out of" and, in the experience of the sublime, returns to. Here in *Francis Bacon*, Deleuze argues that the artist can only discover the rhythm of sensation by seeking this chaos, by finding "the point where rhythm itself plunges into chaos" (FB 39). It follows that the painter of the Figure – the painter who, as a rhythmicist, paints sensation itself and not merely its representation – must go through the experience of the sublime. Despite not invoking the concept of sublimity explicitly, Deleuze is here more forthcoming about the nature of the relationship between rhythm and chaos in the sublime than he was in the Kant seminar. To go to the point at which rhythm becomes chaos, Deleuze explains, is to go "beyond the organism," beyond the "paltry thing" that phenomenology calls the "lived body," and toward the "almost unlivable Power" contained in what he famously names the "body without organs" (FB 39). This concept of a body without organs designates the intensive reality of the sensing body, a body engulfed by a chaotic profusion of sensations at different levels and intensities. Lacking "that organization of organs we call an organism," this body contingently generates temporary and multifunctional "organs," or sites of reception, consumption, and expulsion, in response to the chaos that permeates it (FB 39). Near-constant sensory fluctuation and interminable polymorphousness fundamentally characterize this body. As Deleuze writes,

Body  
w/o  
organs

A wave with a variable amplitude flows through the body without organs; it traces zones and levels on this body according to the variations of its amplitude. When the wave encounters external forces at a particular level, a sensation appears. An organ will be determined by this encounter, but it is a provisional organ that endures only as long as the passage of the wave and the action of the force, and which will be displaced in order to be posited elsewhere. (FB 41)

The body without organs is activated in Bacon's work through what Deleuze calls "the diagram." This is a compositional element found in each of Bacon's canvases, which he uses to disrupt his conscious intentions for the painting and, with them, the possibility of conventional figuration. It consists in a localized zone of indeterminacy in the pictorial structure, an area of the composition that has been scrambled and deformed via a series of aleatory or uncontrolled marks – "a catastrophe," Deleuze says, echoing his Kant seminar (FB 83). The diagram intervenes in the representational order of the picture, vitiating the figurative qualities of figural form and engendering the Figure as a transmitter or modulator of pure sensation.

the  
diagram

In these related discussions of the body without organs and the diagram, we discover the meaning, left unarticulated in the Kant seminar, of the relation between chaos and the rhythm that comes out of it. This rhythm is nothing other than the movement of interminable disorganization and reorganization performed by the body without organs as it reacts to the chaotic and

<sup>14</sup> Deleuze takes this notion of a nonfigurative figure from Lyotard. See Jean-François Lyotard, *Discours, figure* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971); *Discourse, Figure*, trans. Antony Hudeck and Mary Lydon (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).



manifold sensory stimuli it encounters in the forces exerted on it. "Chaos becomes rhythm," Deleuze says;<sup>15</sup> the latter is like a modification or mutation of the former, produced when the "perpetually and violently mixed" intensities of the body without organs are temporarily organized through the generation of transitory and protean organs (FB 39). Rhythm, then, is *chaos ordering itself* through the constant mutation of the body without organs. The deranging of this rhythm and ignition of the sublime are caused when certain disordered and disordering phenomena – violent, "catastrophic" phenomena that function, like the diagram in Bacon's paintings, to "break up the sovereign ... organization" of perception (FB 82) – produce sensations that are so confused, so intensely deformed, that they momentarily forestall any possibility of sensory organization in the body without organs, sending rhythm back into chaos and rendering aesthetic comprehension and perceptual synthesis inoperable. At the same time, such a violent disruption of perception is also "a germ of order or rhythm" – the order, in Bacon's paintings, of the Figure (FB 83): "A new figuration," Deleuze writes, "that of the Figure, should emerge from the diagram and make the sensation clear and precise" (FB 89). With this engendering of the Figure through the chaotic ordeal of the sublime, we rediscover the rhythm running through sensation, because, as we saw previously, this rhythm is fundamental to the figuration of the Figure. This means that what emerges from the experience of the Deleuzian sublime, what comes out of the passage through the chaos of the body without organs, is *rhythm itself*.

Initially, this may seem circular and rather uninteresting: the upshot of the experience of the sublime is nothing but the return of the very rhythm whose dysfunction initiated the process in the first place – as if the Deleuzian sublime amounted to no more than losing rhythm only to find it again. For Deleuze, however, the rediscovery of rhythm in the sublime is more complex than this. We lose rhythm and then find it again – but we find it in a new state, having undergone a transformation. In addition to making possible the cognition-supporting syntheses of apprehension, reproduction, and recognition, rhythm now makes possible the noncognitive figuration of the Figure, which was impossible before the adventure of the sublime; it now testifies to the presence and the power of the "non-organic life" of a body without organs that is "felt under the [organic] body," and whose transformations constitute rhythm itself (FB 43). This renewed rhythm thus shows itself to be of such a power as to organize, even if only in a provisional and temporary way, the chaos of the body without organs as it is deformed by and responds to the forces that affect it. Thus we discover in the experience of sublimity a more profound rhythm, one that we sense as such in its emergence from and harnessing of the chaos that seemed to sweep it away. With it, we also discover a more profound sensation: not sensation synthesized by the imagination, represented to the understanding, and placed in the service of the cognition of objects, but, beneath these processes, sensation as "encountered," as Smith puts it,<sup>16</sup> sensation as an immediate and uncognized response to forces registered on the body and impressed "directly onto the nervous system" (FB 32).

Thus, for Deleuze, as for Lyotard, the sublime is an aestheticization of the fundamental irresolvability in the relation between presentation and a domain that exceeds it. But whereas Lyotard takes this irresolvability to subsist in the relation of presentation to a supersensible idea, Deleuze locates it in the relation between presentation and a sensation whose violence and power to deform stymie the imagination's synthetic operations. Moreover, Lyotard and Deleuze conceive of the culmination of this irresolvability in the sublime quite differently. For Lyotard, the presence of the supersensible idea is felt in the movement of negative presentation, in the imagination's attaining a kind of negative infinitude as it is forced to its limit by reason. In the Deleuzian sublime, by contrast, there is no negative presentation; the failure of

<sup>15</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 313.

<sup>16</sup> Smith, "Deleuze's Theory of Sensation," 23. Smith's article contains an excellent account of the theory of sensation within which the Deleuzian sublime functions.

Sensation  
as  
encountered  
not  
cognized

imagination does not make itself a sign of the trans-sensible rhythm of sensation. Rather, the failure of imagination makes possible the fully positive realization of this rhythm; it allows sensation to be felt as an immediate, unsynthesized, and wildly rhythmic force exerted on the body, capable of harnessing the power of chaos in the service, as Deleuze says, of “an increasingly powerful Figure of life” (FB 53).

Figure → abject

JULIA KRISTEVA

Here and there in *Francis Bacon*, Deleuze characterizes Bacon’s painting as “abject,” at one point saying of it, “Abjection becomes splendor; the horror of life becomes a very pure and very intense life” (FB 45). This idea of abjection, which hovers at the edge of the Deleuzian sublime, becomes central in the work of Julia Kristeva, in which it colonizes and supplants the concept of sublimity. Kristeva is not an explicit theorist of the sublime, but she deserves inclusion here on the basis of *Powers of Horror* (1980),<sup>17</sup> in which her articulation of the concept of abjection reinterprets the Kantian sublime within a framework of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis and structuralist semiotics. Accordingly, as we will see, each of the key components of the Kantian sublime is recast through the concept of abjection: the pleasure and pain felt simultaneously in sublimity become *jouissance* and revulsion in abjection; the idea of the absolute for which no presentation is available becomes the memory of an archaic psychic state that is strictly unrepresentable in the mature subject’s psyche; the negative presentation of the idea of the absolute becomes the affective eruption of a long-obliterated past; the evocative intuition of an object of immensity or overpowering force becomes an intuition of an object of filth or disgust; and the power of the faculty of reason becomes the ambivalent, explosive power of the immediate, the nonsymbolic, the prerational, and the maternal as they appear within language. In short, Kristeva, in an almost point-by-point fashion, inverts and undermines the Kantian sublime, transmuting its difficult exaltation of the rational into a shameful and disgusted joy in the revolting, all the while retaining much of the Kantian sublime’s dynamic structure.

Like the sublime, the experience of abjection is one most people have felt. It is embodied – literally – in an overwhelming sense of revulsion in the squalid or horrific presence of such intolerable things as filth, excrement, vomit, blood, contamination, decay, or, what Kristeva identifies as the epitome of the abject, a corpse. In addition to disgust, however, the experience of the abject includes an illicit pleasure or joy, which Kristeva associates with Jacques Lacan’s notion of *jouissance* – an excessive, transgressive pleasure that one experiences as a kind of suffering. A central task of *Powers of Horror* is to explain the mechanism behind this deeply unsettling affect, thereby explaining, on Kristeva’s view, the origin of subjectivity.

Kristeva’s account of the genesis of abjection contains two interrelated moments: one diachronic, exploring the evolution of the abject emotion in the psychic development of the child, and the other synchronic, examining the psychic structures through which abject affects manifest in the consciousness and language of fully formed, mature subjects. Beginning with the diachronic, Kristeva hypothesizes that prior to what Lacan terms the “mirror stage” of psychosexual development – roughly, the stage at which a child recognizes her own reflection in the mirror as such – the infant inhabits a psychic space utterly unlike anything experienced by the mature subject. In this state, the infant, under the full sway of biological-psychic drives, has yet to distinguish between subject and object. The infant thus experiences itself as undifferentiated from those things nearest to it and, in particular, from its mother, who is the most intimate and involved element of its world. Borrowing from Plato’s *Timaeus*, Kristeva calls this state *chora*.

<sup>17</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l’horreur* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1980); *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) (PH).

The infant, of course, does not remain in this state for long; the drives affecting it begin almost immediately to orient its developing psyche in such a way that it soon separates itself from its environment, thereby taking the first, crucial step toward the formation of an ego. This elementary process of separation is carried out through the mechanism of abjection – that is, through a casting-off of the other as “radically excluded” (PH 2) – and the first thing abjected is the thing closest to the infant: the body of the mother. “The abject confronts us,” Kristeva writes, “... with our earliest attempts to release the hold of *maternal* entity even before existing outside of her” (PH 13). With this abjection of the maternal, an inchoate subject begins to emerge, but it is as yet lacking the well-defined, or at least definable, objects necessary for its full and proper functioning as a subject; at this point it has only the archaic mother, which, as abjected, is not a proper object. The infant begins to obtain objects, thereby finally developing into a full subject, only when it acquires the symbolic and linguistic resources of human culture, which Kristeva, following Lacan, relates to the figures of the father and the law.

Importantly, this transition to subjecthood does not result in the abject’s being relegated to an archaic and elementary mechanism buried under the symbolic order’s proliferation of subjects, objects, and their signs. Quite to the contrary, the subject’s immersion in the symbolic order is founded on and structured by the abject; the subject ensures its existence as such only by violently casting away everything that might blur the boundary between it and its objects, that might transgress the codes and injunctions of symbolic exchange, thereby threatening the coherence and stability of its ego. In this way, the “archaic economy [of the abjected *chora*-state] is brought into full light of day, signified, verbalized. Its strategies (rejecting, separating, repeating/abjecting) hence find a symbolic existence, and the very logic of the symbolic – arguments, demonstrations, proofs, etc. – must conform to it” (PH 15). Moreover, it is only now, when the consolidation of the subject and its symbolic installation are accomplished, that the abject begins to appear as such, as repulsive and loathsome. As the subject develops and becomes more fully integrated into the symbolic order, encountering new threats to its stability and integrity, the ranks of the abject swell beyond the abjected maternal to encompass those materials mentioned earlier: inter alia filth, decay, and death.

At this point, we arrive at the synchronic account of the abject, its outlines clearly visible and bearing a striking resemblance to the Kantian sublime as interpreted by Lyotard. Through the representational resources of the symbolic order, those things we call abject affectively testify to – or negatively present – the inexorable presence and power of a memory that lies beyond that order and is rigorously unrepresentable. The content of this memory, which conditions every experience of the subject, lies at the limit of thought, where thought shades into “spasmodic” affect. Thus we find in the synchronic concept of the abject something of the transcendental notion of limit origins discussed by both Lyotard and Deleuze: just as the sublime shows us the condition for the possibility of critical thought in the supersensible or the origin of rhythm in chaos, the abject “takes the ego back to its source on the abominable limits from which, in order to be, the ego has broken away – it assigns it a source in the non-ego, drive, and death” (PH 15). Like the sublime, moreover, in which something alien to the order of imaginative presentation intrudes on and disrupts the functioning of that order, the appearance of the abject “shatters the wall of representation and its judgments,” despite the fact that its occurrence is possible only through the representative structures of the symbolic (PH 15). The experience of this process of negative presentation generates the simultaneous feelings of pain and pleasure characteristic of abjection. The symbolically ordered psyche’s structural and necessary inadequacy to the appearance of the unrepresentable memory evoked by the abject engenders a feeling of revulsion in the subject, an overwhelming emotion of disgust and terror. At the same time, this negatively sensed memory is discovered to possess an unexpected power: it offers the possibility of a form of expression that momentarily transgresses the narrow strictures of the symbolic, resulting in the frenzied pleasure of *jouissance*.

1  
abject  
of  
presence  
memory  
beyond  
representable

Despite these substantial similarities between the sublime and the abject, however, the nature of the unrepresentable in the latter could not be more different from that belonging to the former. Rather than the exalted rational idea of the absolute, or even the unprecedented power of the rhythm of the trans-sensible, in the abject we encounter the discomfiting but undeniable trace of a form of organic existence in the subject's prehistory, long ago overwritten and prohibited. The abject thus testifies not to the power of a living or renovated capacity, as in the sublime, but to the inexorable return of a long-forgotten event.

Contrast  
to  
Kant's  
Deleuze

Insofar as the entry of the infant into the symbolic order constitutes the moment when abjection becomes the foundation for social and psychic organization, language, as the fundamental expression of the symbolic, has a special place in the analysis of abjection. Accordingly, Kristeva finds in the language of what she calls the "speaking subject" a host of abject traces, for example, Freud's "parapraxes," jokes, obscenities, and laughter. For Kristeva, it follows that literature is one of the privileged artistic forms for the expression of the abject. In particular, she sees in modernist literature an especially strong gravitation toward the experience of abjection. Referring to the increasing disappearance of religious authority in modern Western societies (whose relation to abjection she spends a good bit of the book exploring), Kristeva writes:

In a world in which the Other has collapsed, the aesthetic task – a descent into the foundations of the symbolic construct – amounts to retracing the fragile limits of the speaking being, closest to its dawn, to the bottomless "primacy" constituted by primal repression. Through that experience, ... "subject" and "object" push each other away, confront each other, collapse, and start again – inseparable, contaminated, condemned, at the boundary of what is assimilable, thinkable; abject. Great modern literature unfolds over that terrain: Dostoyevsky, Lautréamont, Proust, Artaud, Kafka, Céline. (PH 18)

Like the sublime of Lyotard and Deleuze, then, Kristeva's abject finds a special expression in modern art. Whereas Lyotard and Deleuze, however, see the sublime in modern art to possess an almost unequivocally affirmative power, Kristeva finds in the modern literary use of the abject a more ambivalent, pessimistic, and menacing gift: not the joy of a "very intense life" but the *jouissance* of an eminently fragile and blasted existence, "a ridiculous little infinite," as Kristeva writes, quoting the French author Louis-Ferdinand Céline (PH 134). Through its language, prosody, and style, the literature of abjection gives us the power – the power, as her title suggests, of horror – to laugh in the face of what disgusts and terrifies us – "a piercing laughter" (PH 133), "the laughter of the apocalypse" (PH 204). But this laughter overcomes nothing, neither the strictures of symbolic discourse (it only points, flashingly and transgressively, to their instability) nor the frailty of the human animal (it only remarks its absurdity). Thus Kristeva's abject, a perversion of the sublime, places the subject starkly before the fragility of the organism – the "paltry thing" that Deleuze's trans-sensible rhythm seeks to surpass – laughing, almost deliriously joyful, but without hope of transcendence, "bare, anguished, and as fascinated as it is frightened" (PH 206).

#### FREDRIC JAMESON

We conclude our treatment of the postmodern sublime with Fredric Jameson, whose approach to the issue is very different from that of Lyotard, Deleuze, or Kristeva. Unlike them, Jameson is not so much a postmodern theorist of the sublime as a critic of postmodernism and the aesthetic of sublimity it has engendered – an aesthetic that, in his view, is little more than a symptom of the postmodern inability to marshal a critique of what he calls "late capitalism." He does not put forward his own conceptualization of the sublime but deploys the concept, ready-made, in his analysis of postmodernism. Nonetheless, his conception of the sublime, as articulated in his influential essay "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,"<sup>18</sup> shares with

<sup>18</sup> Fredric Jameson, "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," in *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991) (PCL).

those of our other three thinkers a foregrounding, à la Kant, of an irresolvable but forced heterogeneity between the capacity of presentation and a set of unrepresentable objects – in this case, the networks and flows of advanced capitalism.

For Jameson, postmodernism is not a component of modernism, as it is for Lyotard. Rather, Jameson understands postmodernism as a radically new development in the cultural history of the West, a general trend in culture that manifests itself in a number of diverse ways, but that can be traced in every instance to the transformations undergone by capitalism in the second half of the twentieth century. “What has happened,” he writes, “is that aesthetic production today has become integrated into commodity production generally” (PCL 4). As a result, the long-standing and fundamentally modern distinction between “high” cultural forms and commercial production has disappeared, effaced by capitalism’s demand for ever-new commodities. This postmodern mutation of culture, moreover, “does more than merely replicate the logic of late capitalism; it reinforces and intensifies it” (PCL 46). This is because, Jameson argues, the expropriation of cultural production by commodity capitalism and the concomitant disappearance of the autonomy of the cultural sphere lead to the foreclosure of all “critical distance” from which to mount any sort of critique (in the Marxist sense of a “critical theory”): “Distance in general (including ‘critical distance’ in particular) has very precisely been abolished in the new space of postmodernism” (PCL 48). The result for culture is the entire symptomatology of the postmodern: “A new depthlessness ... ; a consequent weakening of historicity ... ; a whole new type of emotional ground tone ... which can best be grasped by a return to older theories of the sublime” (PCL 6).

Why this return to the sublime? Jameson argues that in response to the “depthless,” “simulacral” aesthetics of the postmodern, we come increasingly to experience the world in such a way that it “momentarily loses its depth and threatens to become a glossy skin,” an experience in which we suffer a kind of mixed emotion of exhilaration and terror (PCL 34). This experience of a “camp or ‘hysterical’ sublime” often explicitly evokes, Jameson claims, the unrepresentable complexity of contemporary technologies – technologies, he observes, that have more to do with reproduction, representation, communication, and computation than with traditional production. Beneath this preoccupation with technology, however, lies a more fundamental concern: the “whole new decentered global network of ... capital itself” (PCL 38). Thus the postmodern resurrection of the aesthetics of the sublime is ultimately an attempt to represent, in a displaced or disguised way, the properly unimaginable complexity of advanced, multinational capitalism. In fact, Jameson sees the postmodern sublime as the figure in which “this whole extraordinarily demoralizing and depressing original new global space ... has become most explicit, has moved the closest to the surface of consciousness, as a coherent new type of space in its own right” (PCL 49). The postmodern sublime, in other words, is the most acute symptom of late capitalism’s thorough saturation of culture and concomitant vitiation of critical distance from which forms of resistance may originate.<sup>19</sup>

Yet for all the “demoralizing and depressing” conclusions he draws, Jameson does not believe that late capitalism and the rise of postmodern culture exclude the possibility of any politically interventionary aesthetics. Specifically, he holds out the promise of an aesthetics of “cognitive mapping” as a form of “pedagogical political culture” strong enough to counter the disorienting and disempowering effects of postmodernism. This “new political art,” he says, “will have to hold to the truth of postmodernism, that is, ... the world space of multinational capital ... at the same time at which it achieves a breakthrough to some as yet unimaginable new mode of representing this last” (PCL 54). Because, however, the “world space of multinational capital”

<sup>19</sup> For a more recent and thoroughgoing critique of the theories of the postmodern sublime, see Jacques Rancière, *Le Destin des images* (Paris: La Fabrique, 2003); *The Future of the Image*, trans. Gregory Elliott (New York: Verso, 2007), esp. chap. 5, “Are Some Things Unrepresentable?” 109–38.

A more  
“problematic”  
sublime  
à la  
Jameson

is, as Jameson says, an "impossible totality ... only dimly perceivable" (PCL 38) – an "unrepresentable" but not unknowable "global world system" (PCL 53) – the aesthetic practice through which that space is conceptually mapped will have to participate in the very attempt to present the unrepresentable that characterizes the postmodern sublime as conceptualized by Lyotard. Thus, despite Jameson's dissatisfaction with postmodern artistic expressions of the aesthetic of sublimity, he presupposes as the exigent task of aesthetics today precisely the same function of the sublime proposed, in one way or another, by the theorists of the "postmodern sublime" considered here: the evocation through presentational means of an "object" that is inherently and irresolvably heterogeneous to the order of presentation.

An unrepresentable "world space of multinational capital" (130)

← See Jacques Rancière "Are Some Things Unrepresentable?"  
109-38 of The Future of the Image (2007)