

The Theory Of The Sublime From Longinus To Kant

Throughout the history of aesthetics, the concept of the sublime has played a significant role in understanding human reactions to the world around us. From the ancient Greek philosopher Longinus to the Enlightenment thinker Immanuel Kant, the theory of the sublime has evolved and shaped the way we perceive and appreciate beauty in its most profound and overwhelming forms.

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from Longinus to Kant

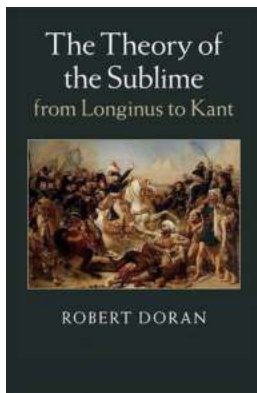


ROBERT DORAN

The Sublime in Ancient Greece

In ancient Greece, Longinus crafted the first comprehensive theory of the sublime in his treatise "Peri Hupsous" or "On the Sublime." He described the sublime as a transcendent experience that evokes awe, overpowering the viewer with its magnitude and grandeur. Longinus believed that sublime works of art and

literature possess the power to transport the audience beyond ordinary emotions, offering a glimpse into the divine.



The Theory of the Sublime from Longinus to Kant

by Robert Doran (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 1176 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Print length : 323 pages



Longinus emphasized that the sublime is not merely associated with beauty but goes beyond it. He argued that while beauty pleases the senses, the sublime elevates the soul and expands the mind. This concept laid the foundation for later discussions on the sublime, shaping the way we perceive artistic and natural phenomena.

The Evolution of the Sublime in the Enlightenment

During the Enlightenment period, the focus on reason and individualism led to a reexamination of the sublime. The philosopher Edmund Burke debated Longinus' views, suggesting that the sublime arises from experiences that invoke fear and terror. He believed that sublime experiences are characterized by the feeling of danger and the desire for self-preservation.



“When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience.”

Burke's emphasis on the emotional response to the sublime marked a shift in the understanding of the concept. The sublime was no longer purely transcendent but also intimately tied to the individual and their subjective experience of fear and awe.

Kant's Aesthetic Judgment and the Sublime

In the late 18th century, Immanuel Kant further explored the concept of the sublime in his seminal work, "The Critique of Judgment." Kant distinguished between two types of sublime: the mathematical and the dynamic sublime.

The mathematical sublime occurs when one encounters immense natural objects or landscapes that provoke a sense of awe and wonder. In contrast, the dynamic sublime arises when confronted with powerful or terrifying forces of nature, such as storms or waterfalls. Kant argued that the experience of the dynamic sublime is connected to the concept of the moral sublime, which signifies the superiority of reason over emotion.



“It is only through the sublime that the mind raises itself to a feeling of its own dignity, and can become conscious of its own powers.”

According to Kant, the experience of the sublime allows us to transcend the limitations of our senses and connect with our highest faculties. It enables us to realize our capacity for moral reasoning and reinforces our sense of freedom and autonomy.

The Modern Notions of the Sublime

The theories of Longinus, Burke, and Kant have paved the way for modern interpretations of the sublime. While the essence of the sublime remains consistent, contemporary discussions often emphasize its relation to human existence, the grandeur of nature, and the technology-driven world we inhabit.

The sublime continues to inspire artists, writers, and thinkers, as it offers a gateway to explore the ineffable and the infinite. It compels us to confront the limits of our understanding and appreciate the vastness and complexity of the world we live in.

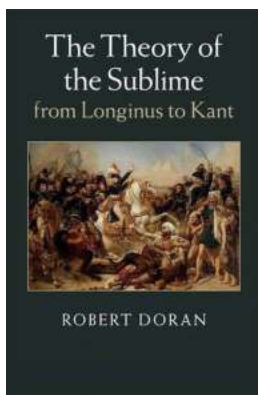


The Significance of the Sublime Today

The theory of the sublime from Longinus to Kant has left an indelible mark on our understanding of aesthetics and the human experience. It reminds us that true beauty often lies beyond the conventional and ordinary, evoking emotions that are both terrifying and exhilarating.

By contemplating the sublime, we are reminded of our place in the universe and our capacity to appreciate the awe-inspiring aspects of existence. It invites us to explore our own perceptions, emotions, and intellect, providing a profound insight into the complexities of human consciousness.

In , the theory of the sublime has evolved throughout the centuries, shaping our understanding of beauty, emotion, and the transcendental nature of art. From Longinus' divine experience to Kant's moral and aesthetic judgment, the concept of the sublime invites us to appreciate the grandeur of the world and our place within it.



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In this book, Robert Doran offers the first in-depth treatment of the major theories of the sublime, from the ancient Greek treatise *On the Sublime* (attributed to 'Longinus') and its reception in early modern literary theory to the philosophical accounts of Burke and Kant. Doran explains how and why the sublime became a key concept of modern thought and shows how the various theories of sublimity are united by a common structure - the paradoxical experience of being at once overwhelmed and exalted - and a common concern: the preservation of a notion of transcendence in the face of the secularization of modern culture. Combining intellectual history with literary theory and philosophical analysis, his book provides a new, searching and multilayered account of a concept that continues to stimulate thought about our responses to art, nature and human events.



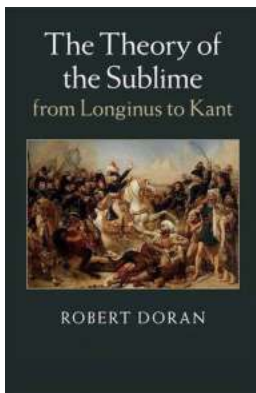
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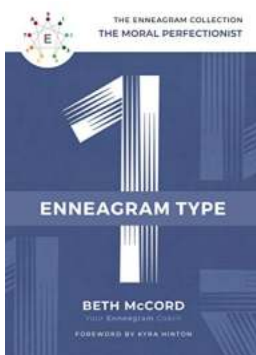
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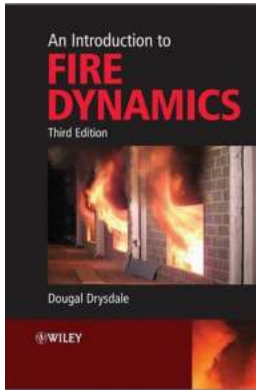
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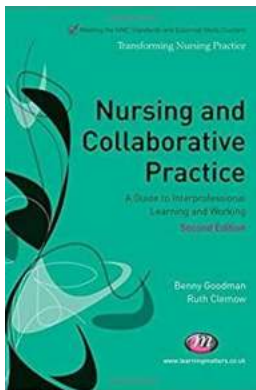
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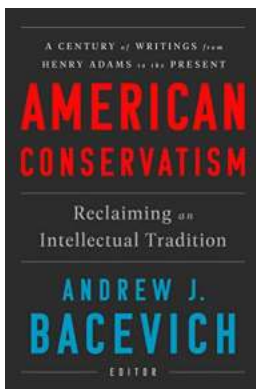
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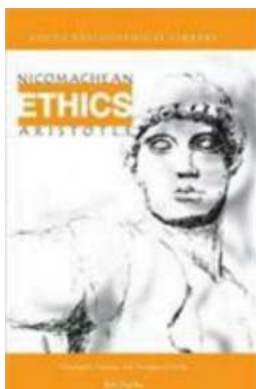
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