

DEVELOPMENTS IN AESTHETIC THEORY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
ARC 1015

EDMUND BURKE

A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757)

Recapitulation [of Beauty]

On the whole, the qualities of beauty are: to be comparatively small; to be smooth; to have a variety in the direction of the parts; to have those parts not angular, but melted as it were into each other; to be of a delicate frame...; to have its colours clear and bright; but not very strong and glaring; or if it should have any glaring colour, to have it diversified with others.

Of the Sublime

Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger ... is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I say the strongest emotion, because I am satisfied the ideas of pain are much more powerful than [pleasure]. 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.

Attributes of the Sublime

Terror... Obscurity... Privation... Vastness... Infinity... Succession and Uniformity...

UVEDALE PRICE

Essays on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful (1794)

[There exist] numberless objects which give great delight to the eye, and yet differ from [both] the beautiful as from the sublime... These objects form a distinct class, and belong to what may properly be called the picturesque.

The picturesque not only differs from the beautiful ... but arises from qualities the most diametrically opposite. One of the most essential qualities of beauty is smoothness; [its] absolute equality and uniformity of surface [prohibits] little variety or intricacy.... I am therefore persuaded, that the two opposite qualities of roughness, and of sudden variation, joined to that of irregularity, [and "*partial and uncertain concealment, (which) excites and nourishes curiosity*"] are the most efficient causes of the picturesque.

A temple or palace of Grecian architecture in its perfect entire state, and with its surface and colour smooth and even, either in painting or reality, is beautiful; in ruin it is picturesque.... Gothic architecture is generally considered as more picturesque, though less beautiful, than Grecian; and upon the same principle that a ruin is more so than a new edifice.