**Neuroaesthetics, its opportunities and tasks**

In present cultural situation, philosophy can’t ignore the study of the brain, if it doesn’t want to be speculative, and if it wants to remain scientific.   
Main philosophical trends should "keep up with the times" and take into account recent studies. George Miller identified six major disciplines that formed the basis of cognitive science: experimental psychology of cognition, philosophy of mind, neuroscience, cognitive anthropology, linguistics, computer science and artificial intelligence [1, p. 37].

Concerning aesthetic theory the situation is worse. It is based on three pairs of categories: beautiful - ugly, sublime - mean, tragic - comic. There are many suggestions concerning the origins of these couples and each of them is satisfactory for a particular type of philosophizing, but an important thing escapes from aesthetic theory: pure speculativeness of these categories. We criticize their origins, but do not change our aesthetic tools. Speculativeness can be removed by abandoning these categories, but it also means that we enter the sphere of opinions, where objects of art can’t be classified. However, there is a way to talk about art from the inside: starting from the brain. We need neuroaesthetics.

What does neuroaesthetics mean? Eric Kandel, in his book "The Age of insights" identifies its appearance at the intersection of cognitive psychology and researches in the study of the brain. It answers the question: how our brain perceives art [2]. It is recognized and proved that the objects themselves are not beautiful, but the universal laws of perception, dating back to the laws of the brain, make them so [3, p.4]. These laws don't make art mechanistic, because the brain is plastic [3, p.124]. These ways of processing visual information just create conditions for our perception of art, but its content is determined by culture [4, p.256].

Neuroaesthetics has great perspectives and broad fields of research. To illustrate its achievements, I will use the visual perception methods classification, based on the universal laws of the brain, proposed by V. Ramachandran.

1. The law of contrast. Perception of contrast was necessary for primates moving in the twilight, where they had to distinguish between objects. In nature most of the fruits are red, which contrasts with green. This helps animals to identify which fruits can be consumed. Human perception of color was influenced by that. Contrasting objects appear to be more attractive [4, p.258]. Painting is not just a certain contrast, but also a certain meaning. Some artists tried to eliminate the semantic center in order to refer to the basic perceptions (suprematists, Fauves, Cubists, Futurists, etc.). Is it possible to classify such works within any categories of classical aesthetics?

2. The law of isolation. Resources of attention are limited, so a sketch can sometimes have greater impact than a full-color work. When we look at a full-color picture, attention is diverted to colors, whereas a sketch of the same subject allows focusing on the contour [4, p.260].

3. The law of unpleasantness of coincidence. We rarely see people full face or in profile. Usually we see others at two-thirds or three-quarters. Our brain identifies atypical situations as "suspicious coincidences", and such images look unattractive [4, p.272].

4. Symmetry. Attractiveness of symmetrical objects for our perception is evolutionary conditioned. Visual field is always filled with a variety of objects. Living systems are the most symmetrical ones, so we like symmetry [4, p.277].

Criteria of attractiveness are connected to physiological and evolutionary processes. Sometimes we "like" a work of art, to which classical categories of aesthetics cannot be applied. For example, Vereshchagin's "The Apotheosis of War". Can we say that this picture is beautiful or sublime? What we feel is probably a bizarre combination of a suitable object of perception and a meaning, which came from our culture.

Studies of art should be performed, so to say, from the bottom up. First, we identify the "strength" of an art's object from the brain's point of view, then from the cultural point of view. The last is simply not to be seen, if the artist is not initially able to correctly identify a "work space" which will be comfortable to perception. What would such an analysis look like, and what's the importance of it for aesthetic theory?

Let's say we have a picture. It's well painted in terms of laws of perception. This is the basic level. It allows you to add a meaning. We estimate (non-reflexively) "how this is depicted" and it gives us an opportunity to evaluate "what is depicted." Classic aesthetic categories focus on "what is depicted" or "what's happening". Taking into account the achievements of modern neuroscience, it is necessary to propose the terms that would explain "how this is depicted " and "how this is happening."

So, objects of art could be named: strong, neutral and weak, without classifying them by genre, of fitting them into classic categories of aesthetics. This is just how they are perceived from the brain's point of view.

Despite its idealism this classification has an advantage. An object of art, within the same genre, or even within the work of one artist, can be seen by itself, without being tied to a tradition.

Principles and concepts of classic aesthetics are not sufficient for today's realities, so neuroaesthetics is needed. Its theoretical suggestions can be experimentally tested, which will allow a new level of objectivity for the aesthetics. Neuroaesthetics should become a special education program that can find its place and wide use in art schools, colleges, institutes of arts, in philosophy and psychology departments of universities.

**Bibliography**

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