

Reading Questions for October 5

These questions cover three different sources. One is by René Descartes and is from a letter he sent to someone named Mersenne. Another is by David Hume and called “Of the Standard of Taste.” A third is by Immanuel Kant and is called *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

In the course of examining the question “What is beauty?” we are taking a quick tour through history. In particular, we are seeing what six of the most important philosophers in the history of Western Philosophy have to say with regards to beauty. For today, we are looking at modern philosophy.

*Questions:*

1. What are the key things that Descartes says about beauty in his letter to Mersenne from 18 March 1630? What do you think, is he right about them? Why?
2. What are the key things that Hume says about beauty in paragraph I.XXIII.8, i.e. the one starting “All sentiment is right ...” What do you think, is he right about them? Why?
3. What are the key things that Kant says about beauty in Section 7 (97-8)? What do you think, is he right about them? Why?