

# Quest For Beauty And Novelty Of Women

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## **Abstract:**

*This research paper examines the varied philosophical notions of beauty and novelty. It explores the traditional perspective, which highlights the organisation of essential components into a consistent entirety and the significance of balance, concord, and balance. The utopian viewpoint, influenced by thinkers such as Plato, Schiller, and Hegel, considers aesthetics as flawless harmony and a connection between the tangible and ethereal domains. The pleasure-seeker approach links attractiveness with enjoyment and the personal encounter of joy. Furthermore, the synopsis explores the correlation between aesthetics and beauty or yearning, a motif present in diverse philosophical lineages. In general, this expedition provides perspectives into diverse philosophical comprehendings of attractiveness and innovation, illuminating its manifold essence.*

**Keywords:** Beauty, novelty, philosophical conceptions, classical view, idealist perspective, etc.

## **Introduction**

The essence of attractiveness is one of the most long-lasting and debatable topics in Western philosophy, and is—with the essence of art—one of the two fundamental matters in the chronicle of philosophical aesthetics. Elegance has historically been included among the supreme principles, alongside virtue, veracity, and equity. It is a fundamental concept among ancient Greek, Hellenistic, and mediaeval philosophers, and was pivotal to eighteenth and nineteenth-century thought, as exemplified in discussions by such intellectuals as Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume, Burke, Kant, Schiller, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Hanslick, and Santayana. By the commencement of the twentieth century, beauty was in deterioration as a topic of philosophical investigation, and likewise as a principal objective of the arts. Nonetheless, there was rejuvenated fascination in Beauty and originality critique of the notion by the 1980s, notably within feminist philosophy.

## **Philosophical Conceptions of Beauty and Novelty**

The manifestation of diverse philosophical interpretations regarding the concepts of beauty and novelty becomes apparent upon contemplation of the multiple perspectives expounded upon subsequently. Various perspectives can encompass multiple expressions, and it is possible for some of these expressions to exhibit contradictions. An illustration of this can be seen in Kant's perspective on beauty, which posits that it entails disinterested pleasure. This notion incorporates certain aspects of hedonism. On the other hand, Plotinus's ecstatic neo-Platonism encompasses not only the unity of the object but also the emotional response of love or adoration. The divergent and occasionally incompatible nature of these perspectives should be duly acknowledged, as certain philosophers attribute beauty solely to its utility, while others associate it with the concept of being devoid of practical value.

The variations in these perspectives exemplify the intricate nature of beauty as a philosophical construct. The authors illustrate that the concept of beauty cannot be easily simplified into a singular definition, as it encompasses a diverse array of interpretations and understandings. The perspectives underscore the subjective and multifaceted character of beauty, allowing for the inclusion of personal experiences and cultural divergences in its interpretation.

In essence, the philosophical inquiry into the concepts of beauty and novelty serves as an invitation to cultivate an appreciation for the multifaceted nature and varied range of aesthetic encounters. This prompts individuals to actively participate in continuous dialogues and introspection regarding the essence of aesthetics, along with its importance in our existence and its influence on our comprehension of the surrounding environment.

## **The Classical Conception**

The classical notion of beauty, as expounded by Heinrich Wölfflin and endorsed by Aristotle, centers on the concept of flawless equilibrium and the arrangement of fundamental elements into a cohesive whole. During the period of the Italian Renaissance, this concept was manifested in various forms of artistic expression, such as artwork and architecture, wherein each individual shape and form attained a sense of independence while maintaining harmony with the overall composition. According to Wölfflin (1932, 9-10, 15),

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Aristotle posits that aesthetic pleasure is derived from the particular arrangement and configuration of elements within a sentient being or any other entity. This viewpoint is substantiated by the field of mathematical sciences, specifically through the examination of concepts such as arrangement, balance, and precision. Although the classical concept of beauty is occasionally represented by numerical equations such as the golden ratio, it encompasses more than just mathematical principles. The aforementioned examples, including Euclid's *Elements*, the Parthenon, and the artistic principles formulated by Polykleitos, serve as illustrations of this concept. In the second volume of Aristotle's work, specifically in tome 2, page 2322, the reference is made to a specific passage, denoted as [1450b34].

Polykleitos's Canon, widely regarded as a sculpture exemplifying impeccable symmetry, possessed a deeper significance as a lost treatise on aesthetics. The harmonious proportions delineated in the Canon, as expounded upon by the esteemed physician Galen, encompassed the intricate balance inherent within the human body. The concept of symmetry in classical literature extends beyond mere bilateral reflection, encompassing the idea of harmonious and quantifiable proportions among various elements that contribute to aesthetic allure. The ethical significance of symmetry is also evident in Plato's portrayal of virtuous souls as being balanced in the *Sophist*. According to Pollitt (1974, 15),

Vitruvius, a prominent architect from ancient Rome, embodies the classical concept of aesthetics through his influential theories, which prioritize fundamental principles such as organization, arrangement, proportion, harmony, embellishment, and distribution. The concepts referred to in Greek terminology encompass arrangement, diathesis, *oeconomia*, and other associated terms.

Vitruvius posits that the concept of order within the realm of architecture entails the skillful integration of various constituent elements, taking into account the overarching arrangement of ratios, with the ultimate objective of achieving a harmoniously proportioned end result. The concept of proportion is of utmost importance in attaining a refined aesthetic by effectively presenting each element within its respective context. This involves ensuring that the height of elements is aligned with their width, and that the width is aligned with their length, thus maintaining a balanced correspondence throughout.

Moreover, symmetry is a fundamental element of aesthetic appeal, denoting the harmonious alignment of distinct elements within a given design. Similar to the human anatomy, architectural symmetry is achieved through the coordination of various units, such as the cubit, foot, palm, and inch, resulting in *eurhythmy* or symmetry. This harmonious relationship among different components within the overarching blueprint gives rise to architectural symmetry.

Vitruvius's formulations underscore the classical comprehension of aesthetic principles in architectural design, placing significant emphasis on the significance of orderly arrangement, harmonious proportions, and balanced symmetry. Architects can attain visually pleasing designs that align with the classical concept of beauty through the adherence to these principles. According to Vitruvius (26-27),

Aquinas, under the influence of Aristotelian philosophy, posits three essential conditions for the concept of beauty. Initially, the author asserts that beauty necessitates either honesty or flawlessness, as any compromised aspects are deemed unattractive. Furthermore, Aquinas places significant emphasis on the crucial role of attaining a proper equilibrium or harmony in the pursuit of beauty. In *Summa Theologica* I, 39, 8, the author ultimately discusses the concept of lucidity, wherein vividly colored objects are linked to the notion of exceptional beauty.

During the 18th century, Francis Hutcheson presented a mathematical viewpoint regarding the concept of beauty. The author posits that the inherent beauty of objects can be attributed to a harmonious balance between uniformity and variety. When the uniformity of entities is equivalent, the degree of elegance is directly related to the level of diversity that is present, and conversely. Hutcheson frequently employs numerical language and references mathematical equations, such as those derived from Euclid, as exemplars of exceptional entities. Additionally, the author acknowledges and appreciates the complex elegance exhibited in the natural world, serving as a manifestation of the underlying physical laws elucidated by Newton. Hutcheson (1725) posits that grand concepts and cosmic energies, such as gravity, serve as manifestations of the inherent wisdom and magnificence found within nature's fundamental design (Hutcheson, p. 29, 38).

In his seminal work titled "A Philosophical Investigation into the Source of our Notions of the Exquisite and the Majestic," Edmund Burke puts forth persuasive arguments and provides contrasting examples that challenge the prevailing belief that beauty is exclusively contingent upon precise proportions among constituent elements. Burke critically examines the conventional understanding of beauty and presents alternative viewpoints. The arguments put forth by the individual in question stimulate intellectual contemplation and encourage a reassessment of the significance of ratios in the determination of attractiveness.

The perspectives offered by Aquinas, Hutcheson, and Burke present significant contributions to the philosophical understanding of beauty, presenting diverse viewpoints that enrich the exploration of beauty's essence and its connections to ratios, harmony, consistency, diversity, and other relevant considerations. In the aforementioned publication by Hutcheson (1725, 38), the author Edmund Burke redirects our attention towards the domain of plants in

order to question the notion that beauty is exclusively contingent upon precise proportions among constituent elements. The author highlights that although the plant kingdom lacks any counterparts as exquisite as blossoms, these floral structures showcase a diverse array of forms and characteristics, resulting in a wide variety of patterns. Burke elucidates the paradoxical aspect of botanical beauty, wherein voluminous blossoms can flourish on diminutive shrubs, while minuscule blooms can thrive on substantial trees, yet both are regarded as aesthetically pleasing. The author proceeds to challenge the concept of aesthetically pleasing proportions by analyzing instances such as the swan, characterized by a long neck but a short tail, and the peacock, characterized by a short neck but a tail that surpasses the combined length of its neck and body. According to Burke (1757, 84–89),...

Burke expands his critique to encompass the human physique, placing emphasis on the notion that although certain elements are commonly believed to exhibit specific proportions relative to one another, it is imperative to establish that these proportions in isolation are the sole determinants of aesthetic beauty. The author claims to have conducted a thorough examination of these ratios and has discovered that they can maintain consistent proportions among individuals who exhibit significant variations in physical attractiveness. According to Burke (year), artists possess the ability to allocate proportions to different segments of the human physique, resulting in the creation of forms that can be perceived as highly attractive or unattractive. According to Burke (1757, 84–89),...

Through an examination of diverse plant structures and the intricate ratios found in human beings, Burke presents a compelling argument that questions the prevailing belief that beauty is exclusively determined by specific ratios among various elements. The observations made by the individual in question prompt a more comprehensive comprehension of beauty, one that encompasses a range of diverse elements, intricate characteristics, and subjective interpretations.

### **The Idealist Conception**

The interpretation of Plato's association with classical aesthetics can vary. Within his body of work, the author delves into the intricate interplay between aesthetics, beauty, and the innate yearning for eternal existence. In Plato's Symposium, Socrates recounts the philosophical insights imparted by his esteemed mentor, Diotima, wherein she establishes a connection between the perception of beauty and its association with sensuality and the innate human inclination towards procreation. Nevertheless, the inclination towards reproduction is fundamentally interconnected with a profound longing for everlasting existence, since the continuation of life provides a fleeting glimpse into the realm of immortality.

According to Diotima, the individual engaged in the pursuit of love desires to attain and maintain perpetual possession of the beloved entity. This suggests that the quest for aesthetic appeal is closely connected to a desire for immortality. The pursuit of eternal life is regarded as a fundamental component of the concept of love. The human desire for the eternal existence of moral and aesthetically pleasing qualities gives rise to a desire for immortality. According to Plato's Symposium (206c–207e),...

Within this particular framework, the endeavor to attain beauty transforms into a journey characterized by the pursuit of harmony and flawlessness. Plato posits that individuals who possess an inclination towards aesthetic appreciation should initially cultivate a profound admiration for the physical beauty exhibited by an individual's body, thereby acknowledging its inherent association with the beauty inherent in all bodies. The lover's ardor and elevation are intensified by extending their admiration to encompass all aesthetically pleasing physical forms. The emphasis in this context transitions from the specific to the general, highlighting the interrelatedness and egalitarian nature of all aesthetically pleasing manifestations.

Plato's examination of the concept of beauty in the Symposium surpasses conventional aesthetic considerations, delving into the domains of beauty, longing, and the yearning for eternal existence. This statement underscores the profound influence of aesthetics and its significance in the endeavor to attain loftier principles. According to Plato's Symposium (206c–207e), the following statement is made: "Plato, 558–59."

Moreover, the quest for understanding beauty extends beyond the confines of the material world. One must develop an appreciation for the notion that the aesthetic qualities of the soul and spirit hold comparable, if not superior, importance to the physical attributes when it comes to the admirer of beauty. It is imperative to acknowledge the potential existence of ethereal beauty within an outwardly unappealing appearance, and to appreciate its capacity to evoke a profound yearning for meaningful dialogues that foster the development of virtuous qualities.

As individuals embark on their journey towards appreciating beauty, they gradually find themselves contemplating the aesthetic value inherent in legal frameworks and societal establishments. It is acknowledged that there exists an interconnectedness among various manifestations of beauty, leading to the realization that the aesthetic appeal of the human physique holds a relatively diminished significance. This revelation serves as a catalyst for their continued progression, prompting them to reflect upon the grandeur of regulations, institutions, and knowledge.

During this narrative, the protagonist embarks on a metaphorical voyage, gradually progressing up a celestial staircase, advancing from individual instances of beauty to a comprehensive and all-encompassing notion of beauty. These entities

surpass the boundaries of the material world and explore the fundamental nature of aesthetic appeal. Ultimately, individuals achieve the pinnacle of enlightenment, gaining a profound understanding of the intrinsic nature of beauty. At this juncture, the significance of human existence is truly enhanced.

The Symposium by Plato presents a depiction of Plato that emphasizes the profound influence of beauty and love in personal development and transformation. The proposition posits that the endeavor to attain aesthetic beauty has the potential to engender profound philosophical revelations and a more profound comprehension of the fundamental essence of existence. The overarching objective is to comprehend the fundamental nature of aesthetics and acknowledge its intrinsic significance in shaping an individual's worldview. The reference provided is from Plato's Symposium, specifically from pages 561-563 (Symposium 210a-211d).

In contrast to the classical aesthetics that prioritize the integration of distinct elements and a unified whole, the concept of elegance, as conceptualized in this context, is perceived as a state of faultless harmony or the fundamental essence of harmony itself. Plotinus presents a critique of the conventional conception of aesthetics, which posits that beauty emerges from the harmonious arrangement of elements and their interconnectedness, as well as the appeal of color.

Plotinus posits that the quality of attractiveness cannot be attributed to entities that lack constituent parts, but rather, it is exclusively present in composite and holistic entities. The aesthetic appeal of individual elements resides not solely within their individual qualities, but rather in their collective integration to create a harmonious entirety. Hence, the aesthetic appeal of a whole entity is contingent upon the aesthetic appeal of its individual components; it cannot be derived from elements that lack aesthetic qualities. This principle should be applied universally.

Plotinus argues that color's beauty, as well as the radiance of the sun, should be excluded from the realm of aesthetic pleasure due to their absence of components and proportion. The author poses inquiries regarding the aesthetic appreciation of specific phenomena, namely gold, nocturnal thunder, and constellations. According to Plotinus in his work *Ennead I,6*,

In the context of auditory experiences, it is imperative to exclude simplicity as a defining characteristic of beauty. However, within a comprehensive and grand arrangement, each individual pitch possesses the potential to be individually pleasing.

Plotinus presents a critique of the conventional conception of beauty by highlighting the significance of harmony and the cooperative interaction of various elements in the formation of a visually appealing entirety. The author proposes that the concept of beauty extends beyond mere visual perception and encompasses a more profound comprehension of the intrinsic harmony that permeates the universe.

Plotinus posits that flame possesses a unique status as a tangible entity due to its perpetual upward movement, delicate structure, and its close association with the incorporeal realm. The luminosity of the object symbolizes the enlightenment associated with the underlying idea. Both Plotinus and Plato share the common objective of surpassing all forms of diversity and attaining a state of unity, wherein all avenues converge towards the concepts of the Good, the Exquisite, the Authentic, or the Transcendent. According to Plotinus in his work *Ennead I,3*,

The perception of the Divine's magnificence that surpassed ordinary human experience continued to exist during the Medieval era, alongside a contrasting aesthetic characterized by simplicity and restraint. The experience encompassed a significant amount of happiness that ultimately merged into a unified and transcendent harmony. In the sixth century, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite expounded on the concept that the entire realm of creation exhibits a profound yearning for the divine, positing that the cosmos itself was brought into being through the benevolent and radiant beauty of God. The perception of sensuous and aesthetic pleasures was regarded as expressions of the vast and exquisite abundance of the Divine, captivating and enchanting individuals.

Umberto Eco cites Suger, the Abbot of St Denis in the twelfth century, who depicted a lavishly-furnished church. Suger experienced the beauty of the house of God and was summoned away from external concerns by the multi-colored gems. Engaged in contemplation, he pondered the sacred virtues and felt as if he resided in an unfamiliar realm, transcending the earthly muck and the heavenly purity. Through the grace of God, he believed he could be transported from the lower to the higher world in a transcendental manner. (*Eco 1959, 14*)

This passage highlights the transformative power of aesthetic experiences in connecting the tangible with the intangible and evoking a sense of residing in a realm that transcends earthly limitations. It reflects the profound impact of beauty and the divine abundance on the human spirit.

In the contemporary age, the notion of beauty as a connection between the physical and the divine has been explored by thinkers such as Shaftesbury, Schiller, and Hegel. They see art and the encounter with beauty as a fundamental link or pathway between the human and the divine realms. Shaftesbury proposes three tiers of beauty: the beauty created by God in nature, the beauty produced by human beings through their creative intellect (such as art), and ultimately, the intellect itself that creates these artists (which is, in turn, attributed to God). The protagonist Theocles in Shaftesbury's work elaborates on this "tertiary classification of aesthetics," highlighting that the beauty that shapes even intellects

encompasses all the splendors shaped by those intellects, serving as the principle, origin, and wellspring of all beauty. According to Shaftesbury, all human creations, including architecture and music, can ultimately be traced back to this ultimate realm of supreme and dominant beauty.

Schiller, in his writings, expresses similar ideas that have had a significant influence on the development of aesthetics within German Idealism. His articulation of the relationship between beauty, art, and the human spirit resonates with the belief that the encounter with beauty elevates our consciousness and unites the physical and the spiritual aspects of our existence. The ideas put forth by Shaftesbury and Schiller emphasize the transformative power of art and beauty, offering a means to access and experience the divine in our human lives. (*Shaftesbury 1738*, 228–29)

Schiller posits that the concept of beauty, if it exists, cannot be derived from any particular tangible instance but rather serves to guide our evaluation of every tangible instance. It is an abstract notion that rectifies and directs our understanding. Beauty, for Schiller, is an essential characteristic of humanity and has the power to transform individuals into harmonious wholes, complete in themselves.

In Schiller's view, beauty, amusement, and creativity are intertwined and serve the purpose of harmonizing the sensory and the rational, the inherent and the divine. It is through this process of integration that we, as beings existing simultaneously in both realms, find liberation. This concept aligns with Plato's notion of the staircase, where beauty serves as a means of ascending towards the conceptual or ethereal realm. However, Schiller's focus seems to be more on merging the realms of nature and spirit rather than transcending physical reality entirely, as Plato suggests. It is through the realm of art, characterized by beauty and freshness, that this integration is achieved. (*Shaftesbury 1738*, 228–29) Schiller's perspective emphasizes the transformative power of beauty and art in bridging the gap between the sensual and the rational, the physical and the spiritual. It is through the experience of beauty and the creative process that individuals can achieve a harmonious synthesis of their inherent nature and their divine aspirations.

Hegel's philosophical perspective on beauty aligns with the ideas of Schiller and Shaftesbury, as well as the metaphysical concepts of Plotinus and Plato. Hegel emphasizes the harmonization of opposites within the philosophical idea of beauty. The genuine essence of beauty, according to Hegel, combines metaphysical universality with tangible specificity.

Hegel sees beauty, particularly imaginative beauty, as a pathway that leads from the sensory and specific realm to the ultimate and liberating realm. It is a journey from limitation to the boundless, echoing the ideas of Schiller, Shaftesbury, Plotinus, and Plato. Hegel also links beauty and art with intellect and soul, asserting that the beauty of art, being engendered by the spirit, surpasses the beauty of nature. Artistic creativity transforms the material world through the essence of the artist. (*Hegel 1835*, 22)

This concept finds its culmination in the thinking of Benedetto Croce, who goes as far as to deny that nature can ever be aesthetically pleasing or argues that the beauty of nature is merely a reflection of the beauty of art. According to Croce, the true significance of organic allure lies in the fact that certain individuals, objects, and places possess a quality akin to poetry, art, statuary, and other crafts, exerting an impact on us similar to the aesthetic experience of art. (*Hegel 1835*, 2)

Overall, these perspectives highlight the interconnectedness of beauty, art, the human spirit, and the transformative power of creativity in transcending the limitations of the physical world and accessing the realm of the sublime.

## Love and Longing

Edmund Burke, in line with a long-standing tradition, defines aesthetics as the characteristics in entities that elicit beauty or a sentiment akin to it. This subjective aspect of the beauty experience is a recurring theme in discussions of aesthetics, even in seemingly objective contexts. Schopenhauer, for example, emphasizes the subjective elements of beauty, such as delight and tranquility. Plotinus, on the other hand, approaches beauty with a sense of euphoria, considering it to be undeniably non-subjective. (*Burke 1757*, 83)

The connection between beauty and beauty has a historical correlation in idealistic explanations of aesthetics. In ancient Greek mythology, the association of beauty with beauty is exemplified by Aphrodite, the deity of love, who won the Judgment of Paris by promising Paris the most beautiful woman in the world.

Sappho's famous fragment 16 further highlights the subjective nature of beauty. She asserts that while some people may find beauty in a multitude of horsemen or infantry, or in a grand fleet, for her, beauty is whatever one loves the most. In *Phaedrus 236c*, Socrates even acknowledges "the beautiful Sappho" as having superior understanding in matters of beauty. (*Sappho*, 16)

Plato's dialogues, particularly the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, discuss aesthetics within the context of amorous beauty. In the *Symposium*, love is portrayed as arising from a sense of lack and abundance. Love is depicted as a state of deprivation or deficiency that seeks fulfillment in beauty—an image of impermanence and eternal yearning. Love is always in a state of longing, desiring to possess the beautiful. If this endless yearning could be directed towards truth, it would become a path to wisdom. This concept has been revisited by various thinkers, including the Romantics, who romanticized and idealized love as a representation of the infinite. [*Plato*, 483]

Contemporary research on aesthetics has rekindled this notion and shifted the focus from gratification to beauty or yearning, which are not necessarily completely pleasurable experiences but serve as the experiential counterpart of beauty. Both Sartwell and Nehamas reference Sappho's fragment 16 as an epigraph. Sartwell defines beauty as "the subject of yearning" and characterizes yearning as an intense and unsatisfied craving. He sees it as an essential condition

of limited beings in time, where we are constantly in the process of relinquishing what we possess and are therefore perpetually in a state of yearning. Nehamas views beauty as a symbol of our insufficiency, indicating an art that resonates with our longing. He states that beautiful things do not remain distant but instead direct our attention and longing towards everything else we must grasp or obtain in order to comprehend and achieve, thereby enlivening our perception of existence and giving it new form and direction.

### **Hedonist Conceptions**

In the 18th century, many intellectuals, who were inclined towards empiricism, explained beauty in relation to delight or pleasure. Ludovico Antonio Muratori, for example, described beauty as something that gratifies, satisfies, and enchants us by evoking pleasant impressions. Similarly, Francis Hutcheson, in his investigation into the source of our notions of beauty, begins with a discourse on pleasure. He suggests that objects embodying a complex proportion of consistency and diversity are capable of generating delight. (refer to Carritt 1931, 60)

Hutcheson argues that while there may be delight in basic sensory experiences, there are greater delights in the intricate notions of beauty, symmetry, and melody. He highlights that we are more enchanted by a beautiful face or a righteous image than by the sight of a single color, and we find greater contentment in a scene with a well-ordered structure than in a plain and unadorned landscape. Hutcheson acknowledges that even these latter manifestations of beauty are not entirely straightforward. In music, for example, the delight of an exquisitely formed composition far surpasses that of a single tone.

While Hutcheson emphasizes the attributes of the beautiful entity, he consistently asserts that beauty is focused on the human experience of pleasure. It's important to note that the concept of enjoyment can be separate from Hutcheson's specific artistic inclinations, which may differ from those of philosophers like Plotinus. The idea that beauty is linked to pleasure, however, remains central in Hutcheson's perspective, and the delight that is the focal point of beauty itself has concepts rather than objects as its subjects. (*Hutcheson 1725, 22*)

In the *Treatise of Human Nature*, David Hume expresses a similar perspective on beauty. He describes beauty as an arrangement and configuration of components that, by nature, tradition, or personal preference, is suited to bring delight and contentment to the mind. Hume suggests that pleasure and pain are not only closely associated with beauty and its absence but are actually integral to them.

While Hume's explanation may appear somewhat unclear regarding whether beauty is found in the experience of pleasure or in the perception or concept that evokes it, he is primarily discussing the "feeling of beauty." In this context, feeling refers to a pleasurable or painful response to impressions or ideas, and the experience of beauty is seen as a matter of refined or exquisite pleasures. (*Hume 1740, 299*)

During the era of Immanuel Kant's *Third Critique* and for about two centuries thereafter, the direct correlation between beauty and pleasure was considered a commonplace idea. Intellectuals often classified beauty as a specific type of gratification. George Santayana, for example, as we have noted, while acknowledging the role of the object or experience that evokes pleasure, strongly identifies beauty as a distinct kind of enjoyment.

The consequence of the empirical approach to beauty, or perhaps its ultimate manifestation, is the assertion by empiricists that terms like "beauty" lack objective substance and are merely expressions of subjective preference. Philosophers such as Hume and Kant were not claiming that beauty is solely a matter of sentiment or pleasure in order to make it subjective, but rather to emphasize the importance of critical agreement in aesthetic judgments. However, once this initial acknowledgment is made, the basis for agreement seems to be subjective and dependent on individual preferences.

In this view, it is argued that there are no objective grounds to support the agreement on aesthetic evaluations over conflicting opinions. According to A.J. Ayer, terms like "beautiful" and "repulsive" are used to convey emotions and elicit reactions, rather than to make statements of truth. This leads to the conclusion that there is no objective basis for aesthetic judgments and no possibility of debating matters of aesthetic value. (*Ayer 1952, 113*)

All significant assertions, according to Ayer, either concern the meaning of terms or are based on experience, which can be validated or invalidated through observations. Statements like "that music is beautiful" lack empirical or conceptual substance and simply express the positive attitude of a particular observer. They indicate pleasure, similar to a contented exhalation. Therefore, the question of beauty is seen as not a genuine question and can be safely abandoned or left to individual perspectives. Many philosophers in the 20th century have taken this position and moved away from discussions of beauty altogether.

### **Use and Uselessness**

In the Kantian tradition, philosophers recognize the experience of beauty as one of disinterested enjoyment, where aesthetic judgments are made independently of practical considerations. Immanuel Kant emphasizes the notion of uninterested pleasure and mental detachment in the encounter with beauty. Edward Bullough further distinguishes the

beautiful from the merely pleasant by highlighting the necessity of separating the phenomenon from pragmatic concerns. (Kant 1790, 45)

However, there are philosophers who take an opposing view and associate beauty with its usefulness or appropriateness for practical purposes. One example is Aristippus of Cyrene, an ancient pleasure-seeker, who considered an attractive woman, young man, or lad to be valuable precisely because of their beauty. According to Aristippus, the use of beauty should be embraced, and utilizing beauty for advantageous purposes is not considered wrongdoing. (*Diogenes Laertius*, 94)

These differing perspectives highlight the complexity of the concept of beauty and its various interpretations throughout history. The term "beauty" can accommodate conflicting explanations, reflecting the diverse ways in which philosophers have approached and understood its nature.

In Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, Socrates engages in a conversation with Aristippus, exploring different perspectives on beauty and its relationship to utility. Aristippus argues that beauty is valuable and should be embraced for its usefulness in achieving beneficial objectives. Socrates, on the other hand, questions whether the pursuit of beauty solely for practical purposes aligns with the pursuit of virtue and moral excellence.

This dialogue between Socrates and Aristippus reflects the contrasting viewpoints on beauty and its role in ethics and personal values. While Aristippus emphasizes the practical benefits of beauty, Socrates raises deeper philosophical questions about the nature of virtue and the pursuit of a good life.

It is important to note that Aristippus' perspective on beauty as usefulness should be understood within the context of his broader philosophical outlook and hedonistic approach to life, which prioritized the pursuit of pleasure and immediate gratification.

*Socrates: In brief everything which we utilize is regarded both commendable and attractive from the identical standpoint, specifically its utilization.*

*Aristippus: Why, therefore, is a manure-container an exquisite object?*

*Socrates: Indubitably it is, and a gilded shield is unsightly, if the one be exquisitely tailored to its function and the other poorly. (Xenophon, Volume III, viii)*

In Berkeley's dialogue *Alciphron*, he presents a perspective similar to that of Aristippus and Xenophon, highlighting the connection between beauty and usefulness. Berkeley asserts that beauty is what gratifies, but he emphasizes that it gratifies in terms of practicality and appropriateness. According to this view, objects are aesthetically pleasing when they are employed in a manner that aligns with their intended purposes. (Berkeley 1732, 174; refer to Carritt 1931, 75)

Berkeley suggests that the appropriate proportions and adaptation of components in an object contribute to its effective utilization and functioning. This perspective implies that beauty is not solely based on immediate perceptible qualities but requires contemplation and practical consideration. It emphasizes the understanding of an object's purpose and the evaluation of its suitability for that purpose. (Berkeley 1732, 174–75; observe Carritt 1931, 76)

Ananda Coomaraswamy, influenced by the perspective linking beauty to usefulness, argues that a beautiful masterpiece or handiwork is commendable or unfavorable based on its skillful and genuine execution, whether it fulfills its intended purpose or not. According to Coomaraswamy, the distinction between different creations of art, such as a cathedral and an airplane, or a hymn and a mathematical formula, lies in their individual execution and fulfillment of their intended functions.

Roger Scruton, in his book *"Splendor"* (2009), explores a modified Kantian perspective on beauty and grandeur, presenting various examples to support his argument. Scruton suggests that we perceive something as beautiful when we take pleasure in contemplating it as an entity in itself, appreciating its intrinsic value and its displayed structure. While Scruton acknowledges the Kantian framework, he questions the subjective/objective distinction, drawing a comparison between encountering a beautiful thing and sharing a kiss.

Scruton argues that when we kiss someone we love, it is not merely a physical act, but a way of expressing deep beauty and invoking the essence of the other person into our existence. He asserts that this act brings about a profound delight, challenging the notion that beauty can be reduced solely to subjective experiences.

## Conclusion

In summary, the investigation of philosophical notions of beauty and novelty unveils the opulence and intricacy of this everlasting subject. The traditional perspective emphasizes the importance of balance, concord, and equilibrium in constructing a cohesive and visually appealing entirety. On the contrary, the visionary viewpoint accentuates aesthetics as flawless harmony and a method of linking the tangible and ethereal domains. The pleasure-seeker approach emphasizes the subjective encounter of enjoyment and bliss as fundamental to beauty. Moreover, the correlation between attractiveness and beauty or yearning emphasizes the deep sentimental and philosophical aspects linked to aesthetic encounters. These assorted notions illustrate that attractiveness is a versatile notion, with differing interpretations across diverse philosophical customs. Whether it is characterized by formal attributes, spiritual transcendence, or the sensation of delight, attractiveness remains a captivating and subjective phenomenon. By scrutinizing these diverse viewpoints, we acquire a more profound comprehension of the intricate essence of attractiveness and originality. Such expedition stimulates continuous rumination and admiration of the aesthetics that

encompass us, inciting us to ponder upon the significance of elegance in our existence and its influence on our cognitions and sentiments.

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