A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful Study Guide

A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful by Edmund Burke

BOOKRAGS

Contents

Plot Summary

A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful is philosopher Edmund Burke's short examination of human passions - what they are, and what excites them. Specifically, Burke focuses his study on two elusive concepts, the Sublime and the Beautiful.

Taste is first examined by Burke, defined as the faculty that makes judgments upon art and "works of imagination." Taste is determined by the Senses, the Imagination, and by own's own Reasoning or Judgment, working in concert. Taste is universal and Man only differs in it by degree mostly.

Next to be examined are pain and pleasure. These, along with the lack of either, indifference, are the basic states of being. They are both substantive, "positive" passions and are not simply defined as the lack of the other. Important are passions directed towards self-preservation, of which pain and its ally danger are the strongest. On the other hand are societal passions, further divided into sympathy (putting ourselves in someone's place), imitation (copying others, from which custom and tradition springs) and ambition (the desire to "one-up" or fellow man, to copy but to also better).

The Sublime is defined as a quality derived from fear and terror, both subsets of pain. Sublimity depends upon us regarding an object with horror, but not so much that we feel immediately physically threatened or are in severe pain. The Sublime is thus a state between indifference and total pain. Obscurity (not knowing an object perceived), powerlessness, privation, great magnitude (physical size), and infinite proportion (seeming to never end) are all factors contributing to the feeling that an object is sublime. These qualities can be transferred to senses other than sight.

On the other hand, Beauty is defined as a quality which provokes the passion called love. While proportion is not a factor in Beauty (and here Burke rejects centuries of thinking about the "ideal" human form), smallness, smoothness, gradual variation, delicacy, and cheerful colors are qualities contributing to Beauty.

Burke then attempts to find real physical causes for passions. He contends that Beauty (and love) put the body in a state of relaxation and relative inactivity, while the Sublime (and terror/fear) make the body tense and anxious. For example, a Sublime object may activate many more rods and cones in the eye and make them vibrate to a much greater magnitude than a thing of beauty, which would vibrate the cones in a much more nuanced and pleasing manner.

Burke's final subject is words, which can excite passions because they invoke in the listener's mind the ideas of the objects they, by custom, represent. However, words do not have to represent real objects, and in fact much of their power is derived by compounding ideas and arriving at exciting concepts that do not exist in the real world.

Prefaces, and Introduction On Taste Part I

Prefaces, and Introduction On Taste Part I Summary and Analysis

Preface to the First Edition: Burke states that he conceived of and wrote this volume because he and others were "greatly at a loss" for a theory of our passions. Previous theories of beauty or the sublime are confusing and inaccurate, and "beauty" in particular has been an abused and too-general concept.

To fix this state of affairs, Burke will diligently examine passion, survey those things that influence passion, and investigate the laws of nature as they apply to passion.

Preface to the Second Edition: Burke has amended several portions of the original work, after conferring with friends and listening to what the public had to say about the first edition. However, he believes the central idea of the text is sound, and it remains untouched. Anything added is only meant to clarify, exemplify, or enforce, rather than materially alter what is being said. He has also added the "Introduction On Taste" section which he considers a good preamble to the meat of the theory.

Burke addresses those who, with the first edition, were disappointed it was not a larger dissertation and that it did not cover more ground. It is impossible to cover every single aspect of the sublime and beautiful; Burke only hopes to provide a general theory as a tool that might be used to then examine something more specific. Some people who have objected to his volume have objected not to his theory but to some particular passage, which according to Burke is the wrong way to judge.

Introduction On Taste Part I: Though it may seem on the surface that Taste is widely divergent and individual, Taste, like Reason, is a phenomenon that can be explained, and it is governed according to universal laws and standards.

While definitions limit what is being defined according to our own notions, there is some virtue in arriving at a definition (only after investigation). In the most general sense possible, Taste is defined as that faculty which forms a judgment about "works of imagination and the elegant arts."

In order to perceive external objects, may relies on the Senses, the Imagination, and Judgment. In respect to the Senses, as mankind has in common the same sensory organs, it can be assumed that men perceive external objects the same, and therefore, objects excite and influence pleasure and pain in the same way, in every person. In this way, to everyone honey is sweet and vinegar is sour, and it is generally acknowledged that sweet things taste better than bitter things. However, this isn't to exclude the notion that one man may prefer vinegar to honey; this is a preference, not a fundamental

sensory difference. If the man says the taste of vinegar is sweet, however, we may conclude that his senses are corrupted and that he has gone mad to some degree or another.

Introduction On Taste Part II

Introduction On Taste Part II Summary and Analysis

Sight operates like taste, in the way that men perceive objects the same way. A peacock is more beautiful than a hen to most anyone, a sunrise is beautiful, light is more pleasing than darkness. In fact, sight is less complicated than taste because taste has a medicinal component; that is, some have learned to tolerate bad-tasting drugs or herbs because of the positive health effect they have on the body.

Imagination is also involved in perception, as it can add something new to that which is perceived; however, Imagination is limited by sensory experience; one's imagination must start with an actual object - it cannot start with nothing. Therefore, even the imagination starts with the same basic standards laid down by the Senses - that is, that sweet things are tasty and light is preferred to darkness, etc. Also in regards to Imagination, man takes pleasure in finding the resemblance an imagined thing has to the original sensory experience. We seek to find the resemblance something has to our range of sensory experiences. In this way, even a crudely carved statue is admired for its resemblance to the human form.

Knowledge comes to play in the instance of Taste as it pertains to the Imagination. Someone with no knowledge of statuary may find even the crudest statue a marvelous work of art. The difference between this man and someone with a lifetime of experience judging statuary is Knowledge, and not Taste. Taste is the same in the men; they both long to find resemblances between the statuary and the actual human form as they have experienced it. Burke gives the example of a Turkish emperor presented with a statue, the decollated (beheaded) head of John the Baptist. The emperor remarks that the skin isn't properly shrunken around the neck. So while the emperor's actual sensory experience with a beheaded head gives him superior knowledge of the subject of the statue, his Taste is the same as the sculptor who sculpted it. They both desire as accurate a resemblance as possible.

Even people who like different authors and books have Taste that differs very little, for books have things like admiration for the hero, action, a passionate romance, and certain other things in common, regardless of the particular author. In fact, Taste usually differs only in degrees. The example is provided of two men judging the smoothness of a series of marble tables. They may disagree as to which is the smoothest, but of course smoothness as a quality of all the tables is without doubt, and this is the sort of Taste Burke is after. To examine the degrees of an aspect of taste is deemed Judgment.

What we normally refer to as taste in everyday life is a matter of judgment. Differences in tastes are differences in judgment, and judgment can be clouded by a host of vices, such as ignorance, prejudice, and rashness. Should all these vices be removed we would find that even everyday taste would vary little.

Some may think that Taste is largely instinctual and in fact does not involve careful examination and judgment, but the most refined Taste is the result of careful judgment, knowledge, and diligent exercise of the sensory faculties. Judgment taken in haste should be suspect, and in fact those with the greatest capacity for Taste will frequently alter judgments as they consider the matter further or gain knowledge.

Part I

Part I Summary and Analysis

Section I: Curiosity is one of the simplest and earliest emotions, defined as a pleasure for novelty. Children are perpetually curious because everything is new, and so they are fascinated by everything before them. But curiosity is very superficial, easily satisfied, borne of restlessness and anxiety. As things cease to become new, curiosity is subject to diminishing returns.

Section II: Pain and pleasure are basic states of being. They are not defined by the other (i.e., pain is a lack of pleasure) but are in fact distinct phenomenon. The three basic states - pain, pleasure, and indifference - are so essential to the human condition that they can hardly be defined.

Section III: Pain and pleasure are not related to one another. The absence of pain is not pleasure.

Section IV: Delight, in this present mode of inquiry, is defined as the removal of pain, seeing as the removal of pain is not pleasure per se.

Section V: The expected and gradual removal of pleasure sends the human mind back to indifference. An abrupt cut in pleasure is defined as disappointment, whereas the sense that pleasure can never be had again from the same sensory experience/object is called grief.

Section VI: Our passions are directed towards either self-preservation or society. Pain and danger are associated with self-preservation, and they are perhaps the strongest of all the passions.

Section VII: Pain is a more powerful passion than pleasure. Sublimity is associated with pain therefore, since sublimity is the highest emotion that can be attained. Certain conditions must be achieved for sublimity to exist, which will be forthcoming.

Section VIII: Society-based passions are further divided into those of the sexes, between male and females, the general society, and everything else. Unlike self-preservation, these passions are based upon pleasure, not pain.

Section IX: Health and well-being provide only a small pleasure, but propagation of the species (that is, sex) provides a high degree of pleasure, for it is natural for man to be designed with a great incentive to continue the species.

Section X: Only brutish men relate to generation of the species with lust only. Normal men combine the innate pleasure of sex (propagation) with more subtle social passions to form love, or what Burke calls the beauty of the sex.

Section XI: General society is an indifferent state of being; however, particular society such as good company and lively conversation constitute a pleasure, while solitude from society is usually a pain.

Section XII: Societal passions are further divided into three forms: sympathy, imitation, and ambition.

Section XIII: Sympathy is seen as a substitution, an attempt to put ourselves into another's position. This is where the sublime is possible, as with art, for we can derive pleasure from representations (art) of objects that are in reality terrifying, painful, wretched, or tragic.

Section XIV: Sympathy is pleasurable, and we can take pleasure not only in art, but in the real tragedies and misfortunes of others. We read a tragic real history with the same zeal and excitement we read a fictional fable. This reaction is "antecedent" to reason.

Section XV: We must be out of any real danger before any pleasure can be taken in tragedy, and we do not wish initial tragedy on anyone or thing. While we hope London is not devastated by an earthquake, if an earthquake happens to the city while we are away, we will rush to the ruins of London and take some degree of pleasure in surveying these ruins.

Section XVI: One more societal passion is imitation. We derive pleasure from copying others. This innate fact is the root cause of many customs, traditions, and much of how society operates.

Section XVII: If our pleasure ended at imitation, the human race might never get anywhere. Instead, more pleasurable than imitation is the will to outpace one's neighbor, to do something not merely exactly the same, but better. This is called ambition, the last societal passion.

Section XVIII: This section is a brief recapitulation of the preceding sections.

Section XIX: The sort of investigation Burke has embarked upon shows the wisdom of the Creator, for the deeper we delve into the mind, the more evidence we see of a design and a Creator behind it. While Burke believes he is fundamentally correct, there may be some incorrect assertions on his part. However, in these matters it is best to "stir the waters" and ask questions and develop theories regardless, for science must not stagnate but instead be forever in motion in order to advance.

Part II, Sections I - IX

Part II, Sections I - IX Summary and Analysis

Section I: Astonishment is the highest form of sublimity in nature, in which we regard an object with horror and can only concentrate on that single object.

Section II: Fear is the apprehension of pain and/or death, and as such it is a powerful passion. It is the ruling principle of the sublime.

Section III: Obscurity is an important component of terror and of the sublime. Once a thing is fully known, apprehension of it vanishes; fear depends upon the "unknowability" of an object.

Section IV: Physical representation of an object (the drawing of a castle) provides a clear picture of that object, and as such can only excite the passions as much as or less than the actual castle. On the contrary, a verbal description of the castle involves Obscurity and the imagination, and as such can excite the passions of the listener greatly. Obscurity excites and clearness dulls.

Section V: Power is an important factor in the sublime. An object we have power over is not sublime, while an object we are powerless over excites our passions and fears and is therefore sublime. An example given is an ox versus a bull. Both are strong animals, but the ox is meek and able to be guided, whereas the bull is fierce and not able to be tamed. Therefore the bull is sublime and the ox is not. Similarly, we fear God when we speak of His power chiefly, rather than other characteristics. Without his power over us, God would not excite the passions necessary for sublimity.

Section VI: Privation (lack), be it in the form of solitude, darkness, etc. is terrible (that is, terror-inspiring) and therefore a great root cause of pain.

Section VII: Greatness of size (Magnitude) is a cause to consider something sublime. So too, however, is the opposite extreme, microscopic littleness, as in atoms, for they escape the senses (Obscurity).

Section VIII: Infinity is another source for the sublime, be it actual or (more likely) perceived. We cannot with our senses grasp the scope of an infinite object or idea, and thus our horror and our imagination are both excited.

Section IX: Succession (one object next to another) and uniformity (sameness between successive objects) are the two conditions necessary for artificial infinity. A circular building to Burke evokes a feeling of infinity for this reason. A cross-shaped building, as a cathedral, and indeed any building with a large amount of right angles, do not evoke infinity but in fact limit the sensual and the imagination.

Part II, Sections X - XXII

Part II, Sections X - XXII Summary and Analysis

Section X: Great magnitude is an essential quality for sublime buildings, but great magnitude in only a single dimension (say, length) is not sublime. The dimensions must work together, and the architect must "deceive" the eye by building what can be perceived as infinite or great rather than being infinite (which is impossible) or great, to achieve sublimity.

Section XI: Infinity can also be pleasing. In springtime when young animals are born, they are pleasing because we imagine them to have very long lives ahead of them, which to the present moment seems infinite.

Section XII: A source of greatness is difficulty. If a work was difficult to pull off, it is necessarily great.

Section XIII: Magnificence is a source of the sublime, defined as a great collection of things which are themselves splendid or valuable. An example is the starry night. One star shining might not be magnificent, but the sheer number and disorder of the stars in the sky confuse the senses, evoke a sense of the infinite, and are magnificent.

Section XIV: Extremes of light and darkness are sources of the sublime. Extreme light overwhelms the senses, creating obscurity and spurring imagination as surely as total darkness.

Section XV: To evoke sublimity, it is better the inside of a building be dark. Darkness evokes greater passions than light (being associated with the unknown/fear), and darkness creates obscurity, to the point that objects become unknown or look different in partial light than in full light.

Section XVI: The correct colors to use, either in art or interior design, to evoke sublimity are the "fuscous" colors, drab and dark colors like black, brown, and deep purple.

Section XVII: Sound can also be a source of the sublime. A loud noise can inspire terror, and therefore sublimity.

Section XVIII: Suddenness in sound increases sublimity, where gradations in sound decrease sublimity. With suddenness we are "on our guard" and have a perception of danger.

Section XIX: Low, uncertain, intermittent sounds can also cause sublimity. Uncertain sounds heard at night while in bed, for example, cause dread and a fear of the unknown.

Section XX: Animal sounds/cries are also capable of causing sublimity.

Section XXI: Taste and Smell are also senses that are capable of the sublime, though to a lesser degree than other senses. Truly extreme tastes/smells are simply painful rather than sublime, but in more moderate magnitudes they can achieve sublimity.

Section XXII: Actual physical pain, the feeling of it, is a natural cause for the sublime.

Part III, Sections I - VIII

Part III, Sections I - VIII Summary and Analysis

Section I: Beauty is defined as the quality in objects that cause the passion of love or something similar to love. Love is separate from lust or desire. Beauty is distinct from the sublime.

Section II: Proportion, defined as the measurement of relative quantity, does not have any effect or influence on beauty. As evidence, Burke submits the vegetable kingdom (and plants), and finds beauty in flowers of every and any proportion, and even plants very disproportionate or otherwise disorderly.

Section III: Proportion is also not a factor in beauty in the animal kingdom. A swan is beautiful and a peacock is beautiful, yet they have vastly different proportions. All "beautiful" species have vastly different proportions.

Section IV: Proportion is also not a factor in beauty among humans. Burke questions philosophy and art's great and historic pursuit of ideal proportions in the human figure. A human may be found or an artist may craft a human figure with these "ideal" proportions and arrive at a very ugly person; likewise, someone may have vastly different proportions than the ideal yet still strike our eye as beautiful.

Section V: Deformity, or disproportion, is not the opposite of beauty, and beauty should not be defined as lack of deformity. Deformity is the lack of the whole or complete form. A perfectly undeformed person may not be beautiful.

Section VI: Beauty is not the result of fitness, defined as the parts of a creature being well-adapted to answer its end. If it were, we would call the pig, whose snout and head are well-adapted to digging, beautiful, or the pelican beautiful because of its bag-like beak for catching fish.

Section VII: Though not related to beauty, proportion and fitness are nonetheless important. They figure in to art and the philosophical and scientific contemplation of the world. When we at last understand how the gears in a watch work, we appreciate the fitness and proportion of the watch in an intellectual way, and our passions remained unengaged. Or if an anatomist discovers how a muscle in the human body works, he can appreciate the design bestowed upon man by the Creator, though again beauty does not come into the consideration.

Section VIII: This section is a recapitulation of the previous sections.

Part III, Sections IX - XXVII

Part III, Sections IX - XXVII Summary and Analysis

Section IX: Perfection is not beauty, in fact "beauty in distress" is "much the most affecting beauty."

Section X: Beauty is not tied to virtue, which the mind ascribes to people. Burke claims that we hold our fathers as virtuous and "justly venerable," but for the reasons of our parenting and discipline, fathers are distant and strict and therefore we cannot love our fathers entirely. However, we love our grandfathers, who are not charged with disciplining or raising us.

Section XI: Confounding beauty and virtue is dangerous and can lead to an inaccuracies and all sorts of whimsical theories on the subject.

Section XII: Having described what beauty is not, beauty is a quality that acts "mechanically upon the human mind by intervention of the senses." Burke will not proceed to describe instances of beauty.

Section XIII: Beautiful objects are comparatively small. Witness how many languages use some form of "little" to append to those the speaker is fond of: darling (little dear). And in nature, we usually find the smaller animals - birds, cats - to be beautiful and the larger ones to not be.

Section XIV: Smoothness is an essential quality to beauty. Burke cannot think of something in nature that is beautiful and rough. Everything from a woman's smooth skin to the smooth stream in the countryside falls under this category.

Section XV: Gradual variation and the lack of sudden angles or protuberances is also a quality of beauty. Thus, round curves in women, or a dove.

Section XVI: Delicacy is another aspect of beauty. A thing must appear fragile to be beautiful. A robust oak tree is not beautiful, but a delicate flower is. A woman's beauty is enhanced by her delicate nature and timidity (the mental state analogous to delicacy).

Section XVII: Color rules for beauty are as follows: cheery, fair colors are preferred over brown or dusky colors. Light rather than bold colors are more beautiful. And variations in color are preferred to a single solid color.

Section XVIII: A recapitulation of the preceding sections.

Section XIX: Physiognomy (features of the face) is an important component of overall beauty and should have those qualities that beauty are made of - smoothness and delicacy, etc.

Section XX: The eye, to be beautiful, must be clear, have a pleasingly slow movement, and be symmetrical to other features of the face.

Section XXI: Ugliness is the opposite of beauty. Ugliness is not usually a sublime idea, unless it is accompanied with great terror.

Section XXII: Gracefulness is closely related to beauty, and has similar characteristics. It is chiefly concerned with posture and motion. A graceful person has delicate, symmetrical, smooth motions and posture.

Section XXIII: An elegant object has a smoothness and a regularity; elegance is close to beauty, only differing in the regularity requirement. An elegant object which is very large in physical dimension goes beyond elegant to become what Burke deems specious, or fine.

Section XXIV: To be beautiful to the touch, or feeling, an object must be smooth, soft, varied in surface yet gradually and not suddenly.

Section XXV: Beauty in sounds is similar to the other senses described - smooth, soft, delicate, varied but only gradually. Loud sounds, disharmony, and sudden shifts in tone are not beautiful.

Section XXVI: Beauty in taste and smell are highly coordinated with the other senses. The beauty of something visual may be enhanced by taste and smell; on the other hand, something disagreeable to the taste or smell will likely be visually ugly.

Section XXVII: Beauty and the Sublime are compared. Beauty is small, delicate, smooth, gradual, brightly-colored, knowable and well-lit, associated with pleasure; the Sublime is large, rough, angular, gloomy, dark, and associated with pain. The two may sometimes blend or appear next to each other, but that doesn't mean they are the same or are related, just as black and white are not related but combine to form gray.

Part IV, Sections I - VII

Part IV, Sections I - VII Summary and Analysis

Section I: While Burke will now attempt to uncover the causes behind the sublime and the beautiful, he does not pretend to be able to arrive at the very fundamental and first cause. Man can only unravel nature and science to a certain degree, and after that he is

Section II: The cause Burke is seeking is not to be found in association, as there is a genuine and natural cause, and not merely an association as created by the fallible human mind.

Section III: Pain and terror result in similar symptoms of the body - teeth set, forehead wrinkled, voice capable only of shrieks and groans. The only difference between pain and terror is that pain affects the mind via the body, and terror affects the body via the mind. The end result is the same physicality.

Section IV: Burke mentions a monk named Campanella who was able to mimic facial expressions very accurately. As such, if he mimicked an angry face, he found himself becoming angry, and Burke states this is true in his own personal case. The mind and body are so closely linked that facial expressions can cause the emotion that are expressing rather than the other way around.

Section V: The Sublime is caused by terror, and thus any object which produces terror in the body is the ultimate cause of the Sublime.

Section VI: There is an instance when pain can be a cause of delight. Naturally, an inactive body is subject to pain, both physical atrophy and mental atrophy in the form of melancholy and depression. The body is "happy" when at work, and though labor and physical exertion is a sort of pain, this pain nevertheless causes a cessation of pain the inactive body would otherwise suffer.

Section VII: When pain and terror are not life-threatening or particularly severe/torturous, they in fact can cause delight. In the way that an inactive body needs the pain of exertion, the inactive mind needs the pain of terror to keep it exercised and functioning. Thus the notion of the sublime.

Part IV, Sections VIII - XXV

Part IV, Sections VIII - XXV Summary and Analysis

Section VIII: Burke will, in the proceeding sections, attempt to explain why things that are not dangerous produce a passion like terror.

Section IX: Large things visually cause something like terror because larger things affect more rods and cones of the eyes. When most or all of the rods and cones are vibrating, this sensation is something akin to pain and thus to terror. If a large object is perceived only in parts, the eye and head must still move quickly and frenetically to take it all in, producing a similar pain sensation to the rods and cones.

Section X: In addition to being large, the terror-inducing object must be uniform. Variation in color/light would allow the engaged rods and cones to rest between observing different states, allowing a sort of organ relaxation contrary to terror. A large object of one monolithic color/visual quality keeps the rods and cones fully engaged at all times.

Section XI: The "artificial infinite" is another thing that can cause terror. If a sound penetrates the ear, a loud sound, and it continues at irregular intervals, the mind is tense (and thus, terrified) because of the expectation of hearing more sounds, and the surprise at the irregularity of the intervals.

Section XII: The sounds in Section XI must be uniform and not dissimilar, or else the tension dissipates and terror becomes more difficult to achieve.

Section XIII: Succession in the visual sense can also cause terror and therefore the sublime. An example is given of a colonnade of exactly uniform columns. The eye will "vibrate" with the first object, and the next column will increase and enforce that same vibration, until all the columns are seen and the effect is one huge uniform vibration that affects the mind and induces terror. On the other hand, if each column were differently-shaped or -colored, the eye would vibrate differently upon gazing upon each one, ruining the cumulative effect and not reaching the terror threshold.

Section XIV: Burke refuses a previous assertion by Locke that total darkness is "no ways troublesome." On the contrary, when we are in total dark we have no idea in what degree of safety we stand. The uncertainty about what is around us and what sort of danger we might be in is enough to induce terror.

Section XV: To "prove" that darkness (and blackness, which are made nearly identical) are naturally terror-inducing, Burke provides the example of a boy born blind who by some miracle operation gained his sight at fourteen years old. The boy instinctively recoiled at black objects, and upon accidentally seeing "a negro woman" the boy was struck with "great horror" (!). That vision was a completely new phenomenon to the boy

proves that "blackness" was not an phobia borne of association but in fact an innate phobia.

Section XVI: Darkness is inherently terrible (painful) because the iris contracts (to allow for a larger pupil) to such a degree that the nerves are strained and the iris retreats past its natural limits. Also, the eye is constantly in search of light and is functioning to perceive light, and so in the total absence of light there is an innate strain on the eye as it searches for something not there. Anecdotally, Burke reports that anyone trying to perceive objects in darkness suffer from eye strain and pain.

Section XVII: Blackness convulses the eye, because it is a lack. The eye expects to see something, and if it sees black instead it suddenly goes into a state of relaxation, as there is nothing hardly to see. But this relaxation state is suddenly changed to an aware state by means of a sudden convulsion, much as a sleeping person is rocked into a wakeful state after a bad dream.

Section XVIII: Blackness is gotten used to after awhile, but never completely, and it always leaves us with a sense of melancholy and slight dread.

Section XIX: When a body loves, which is the same as experiencing something beautiful, the eyelids droop, the head falls to one side, the mouth goes slack, the hands fall to the sides, as Burke has observed. It is obvious from these symptoms that beauty causes a total relaxation of the "solids of the whole system" of the human body. Love is the passion produced by this relaxation.

Section XX: Smoothness was previously associated with beauty, and because beauty causes relaxation, so does smoothness. The gentle stroking of a smooth-coated animal will allay violent pains and cramps in the hand, for example.

Section XXI: Sweetness also causes relaxation, because sweetness is smooth. Microscopically, sugar particles are found to be round, and by the tongue experiencing the smooth rolling about of sugar particles, sweetness and therefore pleasure manifests.

Section XXII: Sweetness is also relaxing, by anecdotal evidence. The sweet smell of flowers is very relaxing, children are calmed by milk which has sugar in it, and in many languages like French and Italian, soft and sweet are signified by the same word. Sugary oil also has a calming effect on the stomach.

Section XXIII: Variation is also a "beautiful" quality. Much like the baby is rocked to sleep or children enjoy the oscillatory motion of swinging, variation produces a pleasing "rising and falling" that is pleasing to the eye.

Section XXIV: The large and gigantic of size is in most cases contrary to the beautiful. However, the opposite is not as strictly true; while there are small beautiful things (a hummingbird), other small things are not beautiful, like dwarfs among the human race, who "present us with a very disagreeable image."

Section XXV: Color corresponds to similar conditions for beauty as sections above. It should be varied but not greatly or suddenly so, it should be clear and viewable by the eye rather than muddy or difficult to see.

Part V

Part V Summary and Analysis

Section I: Words affect us in very different ways from natural objects but nonetheless excite passions and therefore should be discussed in this inquiry.

Section II: The power of words, especially poetry, is their ability to affect the mind by causing it to think of the ideas or objects for which those words, by custom, stand. Thus, uttering the word "horse" will evoke the idea of a horse, while uttering a more abstract word like "virtue" will in turn evoke a long string of simpler associations and objects, as there is no thing in the world directly referred to by "virtue."

Section III: Children, being so malleable, are sometimes provided words and given associations before anything related to the words are even experienced. Thus, something pleasant is "good" and painful is "bad" without specific encounters with good and bad things or circumstances.

Section IV: Some words evoke a picture in one's mind about the object referred to by that word, but more complicated or abstract words many times do not come with a ready picture for the mind to digest, and neither should they, for the mind and soul are nonetheless effected by the word.

Section V: Images do not need to be associated with words in order for words to have power. Burke gives examples of several contemporary blind men who could describe objects with uncanny accuracy, having never seen them before.

Section VI: Poetry is not an art of imitation, but an art of substitution, subbing sounds (of words) in place of reality.

Section VII: Words can excite passions deeply for three reasons. One, we are easily affected by the passions of others (sympathy), and words are our greatest way of relaying passions felt. Two, many words represent some abstract concepts that cannot be sensually experienced in nature but nonetheless excite passions greatly, things like war, famine, and death. Three, words allow us to combine concepts and representations in new and complicated ways, giving an old concept new life (and thus new interest, new sparks of the imagination, and new passions). Burke provides the example of Milton describing a "universe of death," a compound and complex phrase, both terms for which we have no sensory experience.

Characters

Edmund Burke

Burke is the author of the volume and he is very much present in this inquiry. Burke claims modesty and humility in this enterprise, fully acknowledging he may not get all the details right, yet he is significantly confident that his core theories are correct and are not in need of alteration. He believes science and philosophical inquiries are necessary to advance civilization forward, and that the sometimes "stagnant waters" of science should also be troubled from time to time, and that is what he compares the inquiry in this volume to.

Burke is clear and methodical in his reasoning, presenting most every assumption in a separate section, and then following up his assumption with some sort of proof. His variety of proofs include: an example from classic literature, such as passages from Virgil's poetry or Milton's Paradise Lost; anecdotal evidence, as when Burke hears of a blind boy miraculously given sight at the age of fourteen with an instant abhorrence for black objects; his own personal testimony, as when he admits to being aroused suddenly by a nightmare while sleeping to prove the terror induced by darkness; and generally-held notions or scientific explanations, such as his (quite antiquated) notions about how the eye operates.

The Beautiful Woman

Speaking from an essentially chauvinist point of view, Burke frequently makes mention of the ideally beautiful woman, and what makes her so beautiful. Men are predisposed towards loving women and finding them beautiful, first of all, because nature and the Creator have instilled in Men a great pleasure to be associated with propagation of the species (that would be the orgasm of sexual intercourse). However, only "brutish men" associate women with sexual lust only; true love as a passion is a mixture of lust with more subtle and nobler desires - desire to be near someone, to care for them, to understand them.

Burke disputes the long-held notion that there is a certain ideal or "golden" proportion - sizes of parts of the body relative to other parts - that of itself imparts beauty. Rather, beauty can come in all shapes and sizes. One real quality of beauty is smoothness. A beautiful woman has very smooth skin and a smooth complexion. Another quality is variation, but gradual variation, and certainly no sharp angles or sudden protuberances. For this, Burke focuses on the region "between the neck and breasts" of a woman, remarking on its curves and gradual variations. Another quality of beauty is delicacy. A woman must be a delicate thing, not sturdy or strong. In behavior, Burke translates this quality as timidity, also the characteristic of a beautiful woman.

The Turkish Emperor

A Turkish emperor is presented with a statue of the decollated (beheaded) head of John the Baptist, and he observes that it is a fine piece of art, except that the skin hasn't properly shrunken from the neck as it would in a real decapitation. In this case the Turkish emperor has superior knowledge of anatomy (having seen with his own eyes a beheaded head), but his Taste (for the human form) is the same as the sculptor who sculpted the head. In this way a novice with no knowledge of statuary can find the work of a middling "vulgar" artist terrific, yet still have the same Taste as a master critic of statuary.

The Brute

A brutish man relates to women and the pleasure derived from propagating the species only with lust. A more refined and normal individual mixes lust with subtler desires in order to form love for a beautiful woman of his attention.

Virgil

Roman poet Virgil is held up by Burke as a poet of great skill, and he frequently refers to passages from Virgil's works to prove or otherwise illuminate a point.

Milton

Similar to Virgil, Milton is a frequently quoted poet by Burke as he intends to expand upon a point or assertion he has made.

Campanella

Campanella is a monk referenced by Burke as a man who could exactly mimic the facial expressions of anyone around him. By doing so, he could "get inside the head" of someone and feel what they are feeling. If Campanella mimicked an angry face, he would become angry. This example is provided by Burke as evidence that the physical and the mental work in very close concert.

John Locke

Locke is a philosopher that Burke both borrows from in several instances (as in the "Words" sections of Part V) and refutes in one instance. Locke asserts that total darkness does not induce terror, and Burke, with deference, begs to differ.

The Boy with Miracle Sight

To prove that darkness (and its very close brother, blackness) is innately terror-inducing, Burke uses the second-hand example of a blind boy who has a miracle operation at the age of fourteen which restores his sight. With a brand new visual faculty and no associations formed, the boy becomes uneasy and frightened around black objects. This to Burke proves that black is inherently terror-inducing.

The Creator

A Divine Creator is behind all the marvelous mysteries of the human mind, according to Burke. By delving deeper into the mysteries of the mind, as Burke is doing with this inquiry, we come to a deeper appreciation for God's intricate design and wisdom.

Objects/Places

Taste

Taste is defined as the faculty that allows us to form judgments about "works of imagination and the elegant arts." Taste is universal among all rational human beings; apparent differences in taste are really differences in knowledge or impairments in judgment.

Pain and Pleasure

Pain and Pleasure, along with the absence of either, Indifference, are given as the three essential passions, or states of being. Pain and pleasure are defined as "positive" qualities; that is, pain is not defined as the absence of pleasure or vice versa. Both exist.

The Sublime

The Sublime is the quality found in an object which inspires horror, but not so much horror that the viewer feels their life is threatened or that they are in great pain. It is based on pain rather than pleasure.

Fear and Terror

Fear, the apprehension of pain and death, and its closely-related cousin terror, the apprehension in the mind that causes physical tension in the body, are the principle causes of the Sublime.

Obscurity, Large Size, Powerlessness, Privation, and Feeling

These qualities are factors that contribute to an object being regarded as Sublime.

Magnificence

Magnificence is defined as a great collection of things which are themselves splendid or valuable. An example is the starry night. Magnificence is one source for the Sublime.

Color

Ideal colors for the Sublime are moody, gloomy, and dark. Black, brown, and deep purple qualify. On the contrary, for the Beautiful, ideal colors are cheery and bold, like red, blue, and green.

Beauty

Beauty is the quality of an object which incites the passion of love. Love is a combination (in the instance of love between a man and woman) of lust and subtler passions, involving wanting to be close to someone and care for them.

Proportion

Proportion, defined as the measurement of relative quantity, is not a factor in determining whether something is beautiful. By asserting this, Burke flies in the face of centuries of debate about the ideal proportion for beauty in the human body.

Smallness, Smoothness, Gradual Variation, and Delicacy

These qualities are factors that contribute to an object being regarded as Beautiful.

Themes

The Sublime

Along with the Beautiful, the Sublime is a major focus of this work. The Sublime derives ultimately from pain, one of the basic states of the body. Up from pain is terror or fear, the apprehension of pain and death, and it is from terror that the Sublime principally stems from. The Sublime is essentially the quality of an object which inspires in a human being horror. However, the horror must not be so great as to be real physical pain, or a true danger to physical well-being. Whereas being in a great earthquake would not be sublime, surveying the wreckage of the ruins from an earthquake after the fact would be. Several qualities of an object combine to contribute to Sublimity.

Obscurity is how clear or knowable an object is; the less knowable or "sense"able an object is, the more apprehension and uncertainty it instills in us, and therefore the more sublime. Darkness, as a chief agent of visual obscurity, is argued as an inherently terror-inducing quality. Large size is another aspect of sublimity, when an object is too large to take in, 'short-circuiting' our sensory faculties. Powerlessness is a third aspect. The ox is not sublime because he is timid and harmless and we have power over him to do whatever we want him to do; on the contrary, the bull is wild and fierce and cannot be channeled in useful directions, and thus he is more likely to be sublime. Privation is a fourth factor. When we as humans are deprived of light, society, or other necessities, we are filled with terror. Finally, actual (rare) or artificial (more common) feelings of infinity also contribute to the Sublime. A round building in architecture may be said to possess an infinite feeling to it, as it has no boundary angles but instead a certain uniformity that loops infinitely.

The Beautiful

Along with the Sublime, the Beautiful is a major focus of this work. Beauty is defined as the quality of an object (and Burke frequently "objectifies" women for the purposes of this theory) that incites the passion of love. Beauty then is opposed to the Sublime, as it is derived from pleasure rather than pain. Importantly, perfection, fitness (the appropriateness of a part to its function), and proportion are NOT aspects of beauty, as may have previously been supposed by philosophers and artists. While these factors may exist in a beautiful object, they are largely unrelated. The opposite of beauty is ugliness, but it is not deformity, which Burke contends is a lack of the complete form rather than a lack of beauty.

As with Sublimity, Beauty has a few contributing qualities. While the Sublime features huge objects, beautiful objects are usually small. They are also smooth, like a smooth leaf, a smooth stream, or the smoothness of a woman's skin. Gradual variation is a subtle quality of beauty, involving pleasing variety (versus the monotony and oneness that the Sublime objects depend upon) and lack of sudden angles (for vision) or

changes in tone or harmony (for music and sounds). Delicacy is another aspect of beauty, involving a certain fragility associated with beautiful objects. In this case, beautiful women are expected to be delicate and timid in the way they carry themselves. These qualities not only apply to sight but to the other four senses.

Physical Causes of Passions

In Part V, Burke attempts to trace the root causes of passions. To the modern reader blessed with much better knowledge of anatomy and psychology than Burke had access to, this part is perhaps the least convincing and most quaint portion of the inquiry. In general, speaking again of the focuses of the inquiry, the Sublime and the Beautiful, the Sublime is caused by tension, vibration, and overstimulation of the sensory organs and other parts of the body, while the Beautiful works as a sort of relaxant, decreasing tension and stimulation. A colonnade composed of a vast number of identical columns is sublime, because the eye's retina on which the column image is "painted" vibrates not just with one column but with the multitude of columns. This vibration, enforced and enhanced by each proceeding column, causes a great deal of activity, tension, energy in the eye, mind, and eventually body, and the human is arrested by the sublime image of the colonnade. By contrast, a lover gazing upon his object of beauty (his wife, perhaps) is observed to have a slackened mouth, droopy eyelids and head, idle hands at his side, etc. The body is now devoid of activity and is in fact relaxed by gazing upon beauty.

Each quality that is a factor in either the Sublime or the Beautiful also have physical manifestations. If a great (that is, large) object fills one's view, and is composed of the same color, surface texture, etc., to the point there is no variation, that monolithic object will overawe and overstimulate the eye and mind, for the eye and mind have nothing to relax with or vacillate between. On the contrary, Burke uses the beauty of the area between a woman's neck and breasts to demonstrate that variation - very slight variations in "topography" shall we say as the collar bone protrudes and then falls away, slight variations in color, of roundness, etc. - lead to a very pleasing and relaxing sensation for the eyes, which can "rise and fall" comfortably to take in the variations.

Style

Perspective

Burke dances the line between authoritative philosopher, a man to be trusted and who is capable of making the assertions he is making, and a modest and humble observer who is basing his theories on the sort of common-sensical judgments and prudent observations most anyone is capable of.

As someone wishing to project the persona of an intellectual, rational philosopher who is basing his assertions on sound rhetoric rather than wild speculation, Burke is careful to lay out his theories in a very systematic, step-wise way, by way of discrete Sections which build upon one another, but which are "digestible" enough to ensure maximum comprehensibility.

Burke uses a variety of methods to prove his various assertions and theories. He may quote a passage from Virgil or Milton to demonstrate the power of words; or provide anecdotal scientific or anthropological evidence; or provide an analogy that would provide a concrete example and clarity of the abstract notions being discussed for an otherwise confused reader; or, Burke may provide his own testimony, his own experience as a human being. In this way, he is appealing to a wide an audience as possible. That is, someone who might remained unconvinced by his analogy might be convinced when he provides anecdotal evidence.

Tone

The tone Edmund Burke establishes is energetic, lively, and inviting, seeming to ask the reader to join in and ponder the questions alongside Burke; but in the mode of authority and professional philosopher, Burke also is sure to keep his distance and keep to the rigor that has become customary in philosophical treatises, treating the reader not as a friend or conversation partner but as another rational being, capable of high thought, interested in the debate at hand.

Burke is frequently sure to mention his own imperfections (and the imperfections of his inquiry), and the fact that his inquiry is by no means meant as some sort of ultimate or comprehensive dissertation on the matters at hand. Besides modesty being a sort of customary requisite of such a work, Burke wishes both to inform readers of the scope of the piece, and ward off detractors or critics who might deem the work too superficial. Burke is also smart in safeguarding the integrity of the core of his piece by making the core separate from auxiliary proofs and secondary assertions and the like. Burke anticipates that critics might savage specific examples or quibble over minor points, and thus he states that minor imperfections or irrational suppositions in the work do not take away from the central point being made. Finally, Burke feels it necessary to announce why the inquiry is a valuable text in the first place, stating that even if some portions are

wrong, it is necessary in science to "stir the waters" in order to advance, for even a wrong theory may lead to something fruitful. Ultimately, as modesty is customary, it is also customary to announce that one's work is really the product of doing God's work, for as Burke maintains, any insights into the human mind and condition serve to uncover more of God's divine design, leading to a deeper appreciation of Him.

Structure

A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful is divided into five parts, not including two prefaces to two different editions, and in introduction (absent from the first edition) on the subject of Taste. In the Prefaces, Burke explains why he undertook this inquiry, how it has been received, and what changes he made between the first and second editions. In the Introduction On Taste, Burke defines Taste, explains why it is a universal attribute, and lists the factors that influence Taste. Part I introduces passions, including Pain and Pleasure as the most basic of these passions. Burke further divides passions into self-preservation and societal passions. Part II explores the Sublime, how it is defined and what qualities of an object contribute to the Sublime. Part III explores Beauty in a way similar to Part II's exploration of the Sublime. Part IV involves Edmund Burke's attempt to ground the passions in physical causes, such as vibrations in the eye for visual objects. Part V concentrates on spoken words; how they are different from natural objects and how they are yet able to incite passions.

Burke proceeds very methodically, marking off each assertion on the way by Sections with convenient summary headings, and then occasionally summarizing what has been said in previous sections in a new section. An editor's introduction, textual note, select bibliography, chronology of the life of Edmund Burke, and explanatory notes complete the slim volume.

Quotes

"The characters of nature are legible it is true; but they are not plain enough to enable those who run, to read them. We must make use of a cautious, I had almost said, a timorous method of proceeding. We must not attempt to fly, when we can scarcely pretend to creep. In considering any complex matter, we ought to examine every distinct ingredient in the composition, one by one; and reduce every thing to the utmost simplicity; since the condition of our nature binds us to a strict law and very narrow limits." Preface to the Second Edition, p. 4

"The mind of man has naturally a far greater alacrity and satisfaction in tracing resemblances than in searching for differences; because by making resemblances we produce new images, we unite, we create, we enlarge our stock; but in making distinctions we offer no food at all to the imagination; the task itself is more severe and irksome, and what pleasure we derive from it is something of a negative and indirect nature. A piece of news is told me in the morning; this, merely as a piece of news, as a fact added to my stock, gives me some pleasure. In the evening I find there was nothing in it. What do I gain from this, but the dissatisfaction to find that I had been imposed upon? Hence it is, that men are much more naturally inclined to belief than to incredulity." Introduction On Taste, pp. 17-18

"On the whole it appears to me, that what is called Taste, in its most general acceptation, is not a simple idea, but is partly made up of a perception of the primary pleasures of sense, of the secondary pleasures of the imagination, and of the conclusions of the reasoning faculty, concerning the various relations of these, and concerning the human passions, manners and actions. All this is requisite to form Taste, and the ground-work of all these is the same in the human mind; for as the senses are the great originals of all our ideas, and consequently of all our pleasures, if they are not uncertain and arbitrary, the whole ground-work of Taste is common to all, and therefore there is a sufficient foundation for a conclusive reasoning on these matters." Introduction On Taste, pp. 22

"The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we everywhere find of his wisdom who made it. If a discourse on the use of the parts of the body may be considered as an hymn to the Creator; the use of the passions, which are the organs of the mind, cannot be barren of praise of him, nor unproductive to ourselves of that noble and uncommon union of science and admiration, which a contemplation of the works of infinite wisdom alone can afford to a rational mind; whilst referring to him whatever we find of right, or good, or fair in ourselves, discovering his strength and wisdom even in our own weakness and imperfection, honouring them where we discover them clearly, and adoring their profundity where we are lost in our search, we may be inquisitive without impertinence, and elevated without pride; we may be

admitted, if I may dare to say so, into the counsels of the Almighty by a consideration of his works." Part I, Section XIX, p. 48

"No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear. For fear being an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever therefore is terrible, with regards to sight, is sublime too, whether this cause of terror, be endued with greatness of dimensions or not; for it is impossible to look on any thing as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous. There are many animals, who though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because they are considered as objects of terror. As serpents and poisonous animals of almost all kinds. And to things of great dimensions, if we annex and adventitious idea of terror, they become without comparison greater. [...] Indeed terror is in all cases whatsoever, either more openly or latently the ruling principle of the sublime." Part II, Section II, pp. 53-54

"Having considered extension, so far as it is capable of raising ideas of greatness; colour comes next under consideration. All colours depend on light. Light therefore ought previously to be examined, and with it, its opposite, darkness. With regard to light; to make it a cause capable of producing the sublime, it must be attended with some circumstances, besides its bare faculty of shewing other objects. Mere light is too common a thing to make a strong impression on the mind, and without a strong impression nothing can be sublime. But such a light as that of the sun, immediately exerted on the eye, as it overpowers the sense, is a very great idea. Light of an inferior strength to this, if it moves with great celerity, has the same power; for lightning is certainly productive of grandeur, which it owes chiefly to the extreme velocity of its motion. A quick transition from light to darkness, or from darkness to light, has yet a greater effect. But darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than light." Part II, Section XIV, p. 73

"It is true, that the proportions laid down as causes of beauty in the human body are frequently found in beautiful ones, because they are generally found in all mankind; but if it can be shewn too that they are found without beauty, where it exists, always can be assigned to other less equivocal causes, it will naturally lead us to conclude, that proportion and beauty are not ideas of the same nature. The true opposite to beauty is not disproportion or deformity, but ugliness; and as it proceeds from causes opposite to those of positive beauty, we cannot consider it until we come to treat of that. Between beauty and ugliness there is a sort of mediocrity, in which the assigned proportions are most commonly found, but this has no effect upon the passions." Part III, Section V, pp. 94-95

"The next property constantly observable in such objects is Smoothness. A quality so essential to beauty, that I do not now recollect any thing beautiful that is not smooth. In trees and flowers, smooth leaves are beautiful; smooth slopes of earth in gardens;

smooth streams in the landscape; smooth coats of birds and beasts in animal beauties; in fine women, smooth skins; and in several sorts of ornamental furniture, smooth and polished surfaces. A very considerable part of the effect of beauty is owing to this quality; indeed the most considerable. For take any beautiful object, and give it a broken and rugged surface, and however well formed it may be in other respects, it pleases no longer." Part III, Section XIV, pp. 103-104

"As common labour, which is a mode of pain, is the exercise of the grosser, a mode of terror is the exercise of the finer parts of the system; and if a certain mode of pain be of such a nature as to act upon the eye or the ear, as they are the most delicate organs, the affection approaches more nearly to that which has a mental cause. In all these cases, if the pain and terror are so modified as not to be actually noxious; if the pain is not carried to violence, and the terror is not conversant about the parts, whether fine, or gross, of a dangerous and troublesome pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror, a sort of tranquility tinged with terror; which as it belongs to self-preservation is one of the strongest of all passions. Its object is the sublime. Its highest degree I call astonishment; the subordinate degrees are awe, reverence, and respect, which by the very etymology of the words shew from what source they are derived, and how they stand distinguished from positive pleasure." Part IV, Section VII, p. 123

"It may be worth while to examine, how darkness can operate in such a manner as to cause pain. It is observable, that still as we recede from the light, nature has so contrived it, that the pupil is enlarged by the retiring of the iris, in proportion to our recess. Now instead of declining from it but a little, suppose that we withdraw entirely from the light; it is reasonable to think, that the contraction of the radial fibres of the iris is proportionately greater; and that this part may by great darkness come to be so contracted, as to strain the nerves that compose it beyond their natural tone; and by this means to produce a painful sensation." Part IV, Section XVI, p. 132

"It is to explain the true cause of visual beauty, that I call in the assistance of the other senses. If it appears that smoothness is a principal cause of pleasure to the touch, taste, smell, and hearing, it will be easily admitted a constituent of visual beauty; especially as we have before shewn, that this quality is found almost without exception in all bodies that are by general consent held beautiful. There can be no doubt that bodies which are rough and angular, rouse and vellicate the organs of feeling, causing a sensation of pain, which consists in the violent tension or contraction of the muscular fibres. On the contrary, the application of smooth bodies relax; gentle stroking with a smooth hand allays violent pains and cramps, and has therefore very often no mean effect in removing swellings and obstructions. The sense of feeling is highly gratified with smooth bodies. A bed smoothly laid, and soft, that is, where the resistance is every way inconsiderable, is a great luxury, disposing to an universal relaxation, and inducing beyond anything else, that species of it called sleep." Part IV, Section XX, p. 137

"The common notion of the power of poetry and eloquence, as well as that of words in ordinary conversation, is; that they affect the mind by raising in it ideas of those things for which custom has appointed them to stand. To examine the truth of this notion, it may be requisite to observe that words may be divided into three sorts. The first are such words as represent many simple ideas united by nature to form some one determinate composition, as man, horse, tree, castle, etc. These I call aggregate words. The second, are they that stand for one simple idea of such compositions and no more; as red, blue, round, square, and the like. These I call simple abstract words. The third, are those, which are formed by an union, an arbitrary union of both the others, and of the various relations between them, in greater or lesser degrees of complexity; as virtue, honour, persuasion, magistrate, and the like. These I call compounded abstract words." Part V, Section II, pp. 149-150

Topics for Discussion

How is Beauty defined by Edmund Burke? What qualities are necessary in an object for it to be beautiful?

How is the Sublime defined by Edmund Burke? What qualities are necessary in an object for it to be sublime?

Burke contends that human passions are directed toward either self-preservation or towards society. Which specific passions fall into either category? Which is the stronger division of passions, and why?

How is it that a novice art critic, who marvels at a crudely done statue of the human figure, and a master art critic, who would haughtily dismiss the same piece, have the same Taste? If they have the same Taste, what accounts for the difference in their vastly different appraisals of the same piece?

How does Burke relate his inquiry, and scientific investigation in general, to the Creator? How does humanity's relationship with the Creator change as more is discovered? What relationship does the philosopher have to God?

Why, according to Burke, is the drawing of a castle less capable of inciting strong passions than the verbal description of the same castle?

What three reasons does Burke give to explain why spoken words are capable of inciting great passions?