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## UNIT 3    APPLIED AESTHETICS: WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

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### 3.0    OBJECTIVES

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“Applied Aesthetics is the application of the branch of philosophy of aesthetics to cultural constructs” Applied aesthetics seems to derive a new shape, an enriched stature, thus aesthetics is made ever moving, ever growing by additions of some sort at each step. Invigorated in strength, enriched numerously with precious additions and constructs, it compares well with *life* itself, which according to the Veda is ‘gigantic’, *Prano Virat*, it is ever growing, ever flowing like a river or stream, without a break to look back, or to beat a retreat, it is not like a stagnated pool of water, which gives foul smell; it is refreshed each moment, it always gives fresh look of novelty, poise, patience. By applying aesthetics to various aspects of life and nature, it aims is to make it more suited to enlarge it into gigantic Bunyan tree of knowledge and also to make it an interdisciplinary and multi-dimensional branch of study. As above mentioned, it is a philosophy though some have called it ‘a science of beauty’. The question is, should it be treated as ‘philosophy’ or ‘science’ or both. The answer would be; it is both, i.e. Science and Philosophy at the same time. It is philosophy, since it is rooted in ‘life’, in ‘being’, and ‘existence’. It is science, because it is growing and developing with every scientific explorations, it aims at a ‘systematic study’ of everything, since ‘science is a systematic study of anything’, which is the way, the word ‘science’ is defined.

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### 3.1    INTRODUCTION

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Aesthetics have been applied to several aspects or department of study and a discussion on these would be rewarding and would prove the value, importance of such a study. Recent studies have gone to apply aesthetics in the fields of music, poetry, art criticism, information technology, mathematics, films, movies, television, video, plastic arts, Digital arts, Maps, Marketing, performing arts, literature, gastronomy, Website design, industrial designs etc. We may lay down some of these for illustration.

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## 3.2 WORLD OF MUSIC/APPLIED AESTHETICS OF MUSICOLOGY

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Before discussing these, one fact seems to be essential to mention. The different theories of aesthetics have been adopted by different aestheticians and in what they hold, their scheme or theory differs from other aestheticians. Mention of several names have been given in my earlier paper and here again, names of some such figures will come in this context right from the Socratic time till date. This is not meant to repeat their names, but to mention their theories as gleaned from their thoughts and works. Really speaking, a history of aesthetics ought to have been a better option, but my concern is not that sort of study, I am not in a position to attempt for fear of transgression of my permissible limit of space.

Musicology is a vast area and involves lot of concepts and it is not possible to place many aspects of it in a short compass. Music is considered a great art and aesthetics too. It is different from noise or voice or poem, though all these come from the same organ of speech and all these are communicable. It has been observed in free encyclopedia, “Traditionally, the aesthetics of music or musical aesthetics concentrated on the quality and study of the beauty and enjoyment of music - Plaisir and Joissance

The origin of this philosophic subdiscipline is sometimes attributed to Baumgarten in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century followed by Kant. Through their writing, the ancient term ‘aesthetics’, meaning sensory perception, received its present day connotation. In recent decades philosophers have tended to emphasize issues besides beauty and enjoyment. Aesthetic is a sub-discipline of philosophy, however, many musicians, music critics, and other non-philosophers have contributed to the aesthetics of music.”

### Cultural Reconstruct

It has been stated previously that aesthetic is ‘cultural-construct’, and so it is also believed very often, that music are culturally influenced, that the music’s appeal seems to be dependent upon the culture in which it is practiced, as we find in case of “Beethoven’s musical passages are sounded highly dissonant to his contemporaries do not sound dissonant to the listeners today.” According to Adorno Theodore W, there is a physical background which defines sound being proper or improper. “Proper sound is perceived as gentle sound, while improper sound is more or less considered nice sounding depending on what the listener is used to listening to. “Harry Partch and Kyle Gann have studied and tried to popularize microtonal music and the usage of alternate musical scales. Modern Composers like Lamonte Young, Rhys Chattam and Glenn Branca paid much attention to a scale called just intonation”.

The word cultural construct has been defined as “the idea that the characteristics people attribute to such social categories as gender, illness, death, status of women, and status of men is culturally defined.”

The aesthetics of music plays paramount importance to compositional structure; while the other issues concerning the aesthetics of music include, lyricism, harmony, hypnosis, emotiveness, temporal dynamics, resonance, playfulness and colour.

## As Historically Viewed – Music Continued

Taken into historical perspective in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, music was considered to be out of the realm of aesthetics. William Hogarth wrote his treatise ‘The Analysis of Beauty’, he used the word, but he held that music’s role is relevant, only in so far as it is in its proper accompanishment for the dancers. By the end of the century, “the topic of music and its own beauty came to be distinguished from cases in which music is a part of a mixed media, as it is in *opera and dance*. I. Kant was the most influential figure on the work of aesthetics, argued that instrumental music is beautiful, but ultimately trivial-compared to fine arts, it does not engage the understanding sufficiently and it lacks moral purpose”. In order to display the combination of genius and taste that combines ideas and beauty, respectively, music must be combined with words, as in song and opera”.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Century is called the ‘era of romanticism in music’, during which some critics and composers argued, that, “music should and could express ideas, images, emotions or even a whole literary plot”. In 1813, E.T.A. Hoffman contended that music was fundamentally the art of instrumental composition. Five years later, Arthur Schopenhauer, in his book “The World as Will and Representation” argued on accounts of linking music and metaphysics, that instrumental music has representational capacities. Edvard Hanslick seriously countered this thesis and waged “war of the Romantics”. This resulted into division of aesthetics in two competing groups, the one group pleading for formalism (eg. Hanslick) who emphasized that the rewards of music are found in appreciation of musical form or design, while on the other side, Richard Wagner, etc the anti-formalists who regarded musical form as a means to other artistic ends. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, took detached view of the classical / romantist disputes. He gave the auditory and optical sensation “equal billing in his aesthetics”. He wrote, “Complex suggestiveness, the awakening of the vistas of memory and association, and the stirring of our flesh with picturesque mystery and gloom, make a work of art romantic”. He stated that the “Classical brands these effects as coarse and tawdry, and prefers the naked beauty of the optical and auditory sensations, unadorned with frippery or foliage”.

In 20<sup>th</sup> Century, some scholars like the poet-Ezra Pound tried to bring Poetry closer to Hanslick’s ideas about the autonomous, self-sufficient character of music (Bucknell 2002). It was believed that music was pure because it did not represent any thing, or make reference to anything beyond itself. Albert Schweitzer is one of the dissenters of this view and has argued against the alleged ‘purity’ of music in a classic work of Bach. “Far from being a new debate this disagreement between modernists and their critics was a direct continuation of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century debate about autonomy of music.”

Igor Stravinsky, a most prominent composer in 20<sup>th</sup> Century defended the modernist idea of musical autonomy. He contends that the only relevant thing “is his apprehension of the contour of the form, for form is everything. He can say nothing whatever about meanings” (Stravinsky 1962,) Although it is the common phenomenon that listeners often look for meanings in music, but Stravinsky says that these are distractions from the musical experience.

The most prominent development of 20<sup>th</sup> Century, is that distinction has been drawn between ‘higher’ and ‘lower music as analogous to the distinction between art and popular music. Theodor Adorno’s distinction may lead to question of

social life, since he has a Marxist leaning and “Capitalist mode of thinking are capable hearing beauty in dishonest terms”. Kivy’s work in 1970s was important to aesthetics. According to him, analytic philosophy pays little attention to the topic of musical beauty. Instead of this, Kivy emphasized on the “nature of emotional expressiveness in music. He spoke of “authentic performances of older music and argued that much of the debate was incoherent because it failed to distinguish among four distinct standards of authentic performance of music” (1995).

In 2004, Simon Frith said that “bad music” is a necessary concept for musical aesthetics. He held that there are two types of bad music. He gives three characteristics of bad music, inauthentic, (in) bad taste and stupid. His method is based in sociology. ‘Bad’ is ‘Keyword here, it suggests that aesthetics and ethical judgments are tied together here: not to like a record is not just a matter of taste; it is also a matter of argument, and argument that matters.’”

Adorno was a Marxist and he was hostile to popular music on the ground that popular music is simplistic and repetitive and encourages a fascist mindset”. He held that whether good or bad it sounds to audience... music is genuinely good if it fulfills a positive political function. In tune with Adorno, Theodore Gracyk argues that ‘conceptual categories and distinctions developed in response to ‘art’ music are systematically misleading when applied to popular music” (1996). The Indian aestheticians also speak of *guna* or *dosa* as the two criteria for acceptance or non – acceptance.

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### 3.3 APPLIED AESTHETICS IN MATHEMATICAL DOMAINS

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It sounds almost odd to hear that aesthetic principles are somehow or other linked to mathematics, since mathematics discusses and plays with number games, while aesthetics concerns with beauty. So the question at once arises, what part has mathematics to play with beauty or reversely, has beauty anything to do with mathematics! At least, we know, as a student of philosophy, that Russell and Whitehead were mathematicians. *Principia Mathematica* is a great work not only for the mathematicians, but to the philosophy students. C.S. Peirce was an astronomer yet he is revered as a true philosopher. The Indian system of samkhya is a system far too enriched than any other philosophy including the lofty system of Vedanta, though, the word ‘Samkhya’ comes from the word ‘Samkhya’, which means number, so it may be deduced that number/or for that matter mathematics, has some relation with philosophy, and since aesthetics have been called both philosophy and science, there must be some common denominator to make initial beginning. It may be remarked that the concepts, such as, symmetry and complexity are used for analysis in theoretical aesthetics, but there is a difference between aesthetic considerations of applied aesthetics in general and that used in the context of the study of mathematical beauty. “Aesthetic considerations such as symmetry and simplicity are used in the areas of philosophy, such as, ethics and theoretical physics and cosmology to define truth, outside of empirical considerations.” John Keats in his Ode on a Grecian Urn boldly made beauty and truth as synonymous, saying “Beauty is truth and truth beauty”. Does mathematic speak of truth apart from beauty, so that the same may be applied so mathematics? It is pertinent, Reber R. Schwartz, N. Winkelman. P, wrote a paper

entitled “Processing Fluency and aesthetic pleasure: Is beauty in the perceiver’s processing experience?” (In *personality & social Psychology Review* 8(4) 364-382) held that, “the fact that judgments of beauty and judgments of truth are both influenced by processing fluency, which is the case with which information can be processed, has been presented as an explanation for why beauty is sometimes equated with truth, “The recent research found that people often use beauty as an indication for truth in mathematical pattern tasks. One may be reminded of Bacon’s words, if you want accuracy do mathematics. Does this mean that mathematics is always going to truth rather than plead for fictitious things? Is it not a fact that while doing mathematics, one feels infinite joy after one solves the sum. Many of the mathematicians hold that they derive aesthetic pleasure from their works on mathematics, who describe mathematics as beautiful. Mathematics have been compared with music and poetry. Russell expressed his views or his sense of mathematical beauty in the following memorable words, “Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty... a beauty cold and austere, like that of Sculpture, without appeal to any part of our weaker nature, without the gorgeous trappings of paintings or music, yet sublimely pure, and capable of a stem perfection such as only the greatest art can show. The true spirit of delight, the exaltation, sense of being more than Man, which is the touchstone of the highest excellence, is to be found in mathematics as surely as poetry” (The study of Mathematics) Paul Eros expresses his views most emphatically by saying, “why are numbers beautiful? It’s like asking why is Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony beautiful. If you can’t see why, someone can’t tell you. I know numbers are beautiful. If they aren’t beautiful, nothing is.”

### **Mathematics, Beauty & Philosophy**

There are several mathematicians who hold, that the joy of doing mathematics is closer to discovery than invention. William Kingdon Clifford in his lecture to the Royal Institution titled “Some of the conditions mental development”, said, “There is no scientific discoverer,, no poet, no musician, who will not tell you that he found readymade his discovery or poem or picture that that it came to him from outside and that he did not consciously create it from within.” Does it not mean that beauty comes from within than fro without!

It is contended further, that the result of mathematics are or have no dependence on the world we live in. For example, the theory of the natural number is fundamentally valid without regard to the context. Some mathematicians go a bit further to truth and often become more a mystic than remain a mathematician. Pythagoras and his school believed in the literal reality of numbers: Seen from the modern perspective, his mystical treatment of numbers was that of a numerologist rather than mathematician. It turns out that what Pythagoras had missed in his world-view was the limits of infinite sequences of ratio of natural numbers – the modern motion of real number. “Galileo Galilei had said, “mathematics is the language with which god wrote the universe” Badion believed that deep relation exists between mathematics, poetry and philosophy. He said ontology is mathematics. This is a pointer that mathematics is beauty too and philosophy besides.

The role of Mathematics is Vital in science, technology and engineering, but it is difficult to enjoy, appreciate mathematics in passive way. In mathematics there is no analogy of the role of the Spectator, audience or viewer. That’s why Russell



calls it austere beauty of mathematics. Mathematics is a complete world within itself. It cares itself and leaves the world to care for itself.

There are also vital role of aesthetics in mathematical humour, mathematical joke, in music and art. There are many mathematical examples to show all that, which cannot at present be elaborated.

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### 3.4 APPLICATION OF AESTHETICS IN INFORMATION FIELD

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In 1970s, Abraham Moles and Freider Nake were the first to analyze *links between aesthetics, information processing and information theory*. It would be interesting to note that the word information might have derived from the word “Form”; might be, owing to the use of “form” in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, both of whom believed in the unchanging rational essences or forms, which shape everything we know; also both believed that nothing could be understood without grasping its forms.” Aristotle differed with Plato, what he called ‘the Separation of the forms’. “Plato insisted that Forms were the true reality, that the world of appearances copies them. Aristotle held that Forms are never separated from things in this way. The one exception to this is the *unmoved Mover*. “Which is pure Form. It is the goal towards which all things strive. Literally the word ‘*information*’ taking the form of something into one’s mind and letting that form shape the mind. Jargen Schmidhuber (1990s) described about a alogrithmic theory of beauty, which takes into account the subjectivity of the observer and postulates. According to him, “the aesthetically most pleasing one is the one with shortest description, give the observer’s previous knowledge and his particular method for encoding the data.” This relates to alogrithmic information theory and minimum description length, as in mathematics’ formal language, Works of Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht were inspired by Jurgen Schmidhber and they *distinguished between what is beautiful* and what is *interesting*. The former corresponds to the first derivative of subjectively perceived beauty. In such case,” the premise is that any observer continually tries to improve the predictability and compressibility of the observations by discovering regularities such as repetitions and symmetries and fractal self similarity.... (this) leads to improved data compression... this compression progress is proportional to the observer’s internal reward, also called curiosity reward.” (Schmidhuber’s writings). In the world of arts and literature, it has been said “brevity is the soul of wit”, quite in the same way, precision and brevity offers beauty to mathematics.

It has been widely acclaimed that aesthetics in information technology has focused upon the study of human-computer interaction and user-friendly devices and software applications. There is also one branch of aesthetics in this regard a term as “*software aesthetics*” is used often. Aesthetics useful in information technology since it is applied in act of designing software itself. A short and powerful code is called ‘beautiful’. Well programmed code in aesthetics, given right conditions, elegant code can run faster and efficiently and is prone to less error. Some men try to refer to and compare good design and ‘cost-saving’. But the question of ‘good design’ and ‘cost-saving’ and their interlinking would only imply, that cost would justify everything and, then the conclusion would be that one is doing business and have gone miles away from art, then art would become redundant. So some people ‘speak of the word’ user-friendly instead of any other. In fact,

“no aesthetician makes ‘user-friendliness’ as canonical and necessary in a work of art. To base art on the ‘user-friendliness’ is only to devoid art from beauty. For Dijkstra, truth was primary, and beauty the automatic result.” May it be said truth idealized and practice is beauty indeed!

### **Application of Aesthetics in Website Design**

The recent researches in aesthetics emphasize on user satisfaction and pleasure. Users are guided by several dimensions and factors of his choice etc, Lavie and Tractinsky mention about two main dimensions, one “*classical aesthetics*” and “*Expressive aesthetics*.”

#### **Classical-Expressive Aesthetics**

Classical aesthetics was effective from the beginning to 18<sup>th</sup> Century. These notions emphasize orderly and clear design and are closely related to many of the design rules advocated by usability experts, “Expressive aesthetics is created by the designers’ creativity and originality and by the ability to break design conventions.” The two are clearly distinguishable. According to Moshagen and Thielsch, there are four core dimensions of website aesthetics, eg. simplicity, diversity, colours and craftsmanship. The first two are treated as “formal parameters of aesthetic objects of empirical aesthetics. Colours are very critical property of aesthetic objects. Craftsmanship addresses the skillful and coherent integration of the relevant design dimensions. While simplicity is highly correlated to classical aesthetics as held by Lavie and Tractinsky, the other three factors could be treated as deeper differentiation of expressive aesthetics.

**Colour** – The role of colour in arts / aesthetics are important which require another long discussion, which can’t be included here.

#### **Aesthetics and Cartography**

The word cartography means, the art and science of making maps, usually in geographical sphere. Cartography was once an art using pen and paper but today, computers rule mapping. Aesthetics in cartography relates to visual experience of map reading. It can take two forms; “responses to the map itself as an aesthetic object (eg. through detail, colour and form) and also the subject of the map symbolized, often the landscape (eg. a particular expression of terrain which forms an imagined visual experience of the aesthetic.” It has been said that aesthetics are not by-product of design “If it is taken that aesthetic judgments are produced within a certain social context, they are fundamental to the cartographer’s symbolization and as such are integral to the function of maps. While making aesthetic judgments the cartographers have to ensure that the content forms a clear expression of the theme (s). Antiques maps are generally considered valuable in aesthetics, which may seem to be deprived from their styles of ornamentation.”

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## **3.5 APPLIED AESTHETICS RELATED TO DIGITAL ART AND A HOST OF VARIED FIELDS**

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The term “digital art’ is a word which forcing the present world people for clear and categorical acceptance; it is a by product of computer programming that raises some fresh questions as to what truly constitutes art. People working in

this area have to justify (as their bounden duty), why to use computer rather than a traditional medium. Computer art has been in use for over 25 years and that a majority of the images are flooding our senses each day, through a wide number of different media are created digitally. These new developments in art-making tools have made a revolution in commercial art, photography, television, music, film etc. The digital art is now making inroads in the world of fine arts, which has started haunting the mind of people for a serious consideration, what the art has to offer”! what separates it from what has been and what are the characteristics that will determine what digital art brings to the unfolding contemporary art scene and the continuing history of artistic to expression?” what does this imply? Has all art now become dead, Is there no new artist to give profound art. Has artist failed to create anything “new and improved”. What people now are searching for, it is style. That style-makers have by now, created a sufficient number of broadly defined styles to fit all occasions and visual statements. Style is new tool of expression. Some great scholars have now realized that the most important thing about current digital art is not how it looks, but who is making it any why? In the present scene no Pop art which grew against “Abstract Expressionism” is an example of aesthetics of today’s two dimensional digital art, it grew after coldwar through 40s and 50s. The Abstract Expressionism which once served the purpose of incorporating the metaphysics of American Romanticism into modern style, but then subsequently art wanted a return to the real world and the return they chose “was not that of nature but post war mechanized and mediate world of mass communication, mass production and mass consumption.” Pop Art have harvested good returns and it has been providing a basic structure providing and supporting formation of a Digital Art aesthetics and computers have served the ends of any number of styles, genres, etc. The European Pop artists were connecting aesthetics to Social comment. Digital art was pressed into service in advertisement, photography, comic strips, mass media, prints, in business, in culture, POP Art, Photo-Realism, Installation, Conceptual, Environmental/Earth works, Video Art, visual art, writer, designer, film maker, musician, mass communication, digital imaging of software. These is a difference between *Pop Art* and *Digital Art*. While Pop Art used a similar *flat*, non-expressive representation to reflect on depersonalization in a consumer culture, Digital art represents a return to artistic passions in a culture where expressive appearance is valued over material truth. In a sense, Pop Art dealt with ideas observed in a culture of commerce and mass communication, while Digital Art Springs forth from the artists that are now living in the unfolding results of that culture.”

There has been lots of criticisms against Digital art itself, rather than on the role of aesthetics in the process of applying it to Digital art etc. The question is, what is style? In the above discussion the word ‘style’ has been used. The word ‘style’, it may be mentioned in relation to visual arts refers to the aspects of the visual appearances of a work of art which relate it to other works by the same artist or one from the same period, training location, “School” or art movement. This may involve all the elements and principles of art, and other factors, often very difficult to analyse precisely.

### **Aesthetics in Visual Art:**

The word “visual arts’ covers a very wide area, we have the whole art history to show its length and breath, it covers painting, sculpture, and architecture. Art



history covers a survey of art throughout human history, “classifying cultures and periods by their distinguishing features, it also includes art historians, museum curators, auction house, personnel, private collectors, and religious adherents. Some important writers of the field include Adams Laurie (his book Art Across Time/E.H. Gambrich (his Story of Art) Hugh Honour and John Fleming (his Visual Art: A History), Marilym Stokstand (his Art history) David G. Wilkins, Bermard Schultz, Katheryn M. Linduft (Art Past, Art Present) etc. are works to be read deliberated and discussed.

### **Film, Television and Video:**

These topics of various disciplines are also covered under applied aesthetics. The aesthetics of cinematography is said to be closely related to still photography. Sound recording, editing and mixing are highly important areas of films and are often closely related with the musical score. Art direction, costume design, make up, sets of shooting are all intertwined and are controlled, under the director’s guidance and sensibility. Montage or editing is one very important area unique to film, Video and television. “The timing, rhythm and progression of shots form the ultimate composition of film.”

### **Aesthetics in the Sphere of Painting:**

Aesthetical consideration play important part is visual art i.e. related to sense of vision, for example in painting, sculpture, whereby not only sense of vision is important but also sense of smell, hearing and touch are considered essential. The form of work is subject to an aesthetic as much as the content. In painting, conventionally, there is three dimensional representation rather than a two dimensional canvas, so well understood that most people do not realize that they are making an aesthetic interpretation. This notion is the basis of abstract impressionism,” Some of the aesthetics effect in visual art include” variation, juxtaposition, repetition, field effects, symmetry/asymmetry, perceived mass, subliminal structure, linear dynamics, tension and repose, pattern, contrast, perspective, 3 dimensionality movement, rhythm, unity/gestalt, matrixiality and proportion.”

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## **3.6 APPLICATION OF AESTHETICS IN OTHER FIELDS**

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### **In Marketing/Business**

Aesthetics play important part in business/marketing field, in aesthetic qualities of consumer product, by making of beautiful cover of the product, “trade dress”, in branding, in its commercial representation, in sophistication, colour harmony, sytlishness, catchy jingles, slogans, craftsmanship, attentiveness, authenticity or the related perceived experiences, associated with product consumption, “Reputation of the producer also counts much. “Human curiosity, self gain or mental adjustment is what drives marketing development itself.”

### **Application of Aesthetics in Food Stuff / Gastronomy**

Importance of aesthetic of taste is an important aspect. The taste of palate also is related to smell, sight etc. which arouse question of aesthetic taste. When a dish is served to a person, the person sees the colour of food stuff placed on his table, he gets the smell and by these considerations in mind, the person feels that the

food would be very tasteful and pleasing to the tongue. The smell of the spices, the colour of the vegetable or other items give a pleasant feeling and man relishes to enjoy the tasty food. Though it is well-known that too much spicy food, too much oily food, may not be good for the stomach to easily digest, but without caring for that, one is likely to eat more than his appetite. Even in case of water, one prefers a clean, white, odourless water. All these show the acceptability of food or water depends on the sight and smell, which are satisfying to aesthetic sense.

### **Applicability in Neuroscience or Neuro Aesthetics**

Neuro aesthetics was pioneered by Senir Zeki which is a cognitive science. Senir explains the “prominence of great art as an embodiment of biological principles of the brain, namely, that great works of art capture the essence of things just as vision and the brain capture the essentials of the world from the ever changing stream of sensory input.”

### **Aesthetic Consideration in Urban Living**

It is generally said that half a population live in cities where one finds agreeable planned city. There are quite a good number of traits of a planned city, “ethnic and cultural variety, micro-climate that promote a diversity of vegetation, sufficient public transportation, public art, street art, clubs, parks, silvery street light, nice buildings, scenic geography (oceans or mountains etc.) public spaces, musical variety in local radio, or street musicians, enforcement of laws that abate noise, crime and pollution.”

### **Website Design Aesthetics and Credibility**

Website design influences user’s perception of site credibility. With it a related term is page *aesthetics*. If one sees the page which has credibility, in a few seconds, he feels satisfied, a content with higher aesthetic treatment is judged as having higher credibility.

### **Aesthetics in Designs**

Design is a very broad meaning word and it covers designs of different spheres or aspects eg. industrial design, Architecture and interior design, fashion design, landscape design etc. Designers need many aesthetic qualities to improve the marketability of manufactured products. One special section of designers are employed by the companies for this purpose. The architectural designers use their own techniques for this. The interior designers also use their own techniques. Similarly, fashion designers/landscape designers have their own techniques to attract the attention of the customers in their way. Thus aesthetical consideration can not be lost sight of or ignored at any cost. In the era of designs specially which has become too sophisticated these days.

### **Post Modern Aesthetics and Psychoanalysis**

The early 20<sup>th</sup> Century artist, poets and composers, have tried to broaden the existing notion of beauty, art, aesthetics. Eli Sigmund of America founded Aesthetic Realism (1941) saying “The world art and self explain each other: each is the aesthetic oneness of opposites”. Much discussion is still required on this aspect.

### Computational Inference of Aesthetics

Computer scientists since 2005 have attempted to develop methods to infer aesthetic quality of images, in which or whereby large number of manually rated online photograph were used to “teach” computers about what visual properties are of relevance to aesthetic quality. The Acquinic engine, developed at Penn State University, “rates natural photographs unloaded uploaded by users.” Besides this, a relatively successful development have been made with regard to *chess* and *music*. It calls for a discussion on Aesthetics and sports world.

### Aesthetic as applied to Ethics (Linking through Poetry)

Ethics is paramount to aesthetics since aesthetic is the science or art (?) of beauty? Keats identified truth and beauty in his own terms. But, how many are the philosophers, who try to read Keats! It has been said as to why people do not read Keats, or for that matter poetry is stated by one Scholar thus “Perhaps... because poetry is branch of human thought that they can not colonise, so they despise it as meaningless” not Philosophy”.

It may be said, “If our minds create our reality, the beauty is something we create that pleases in a positive influence... because our mind recognize it as something constant. Consistency lets us control our lives and helps us find purpose or truth. Could beauty be our link to real truth. That would mean that we could study our brains reaction to something that is beautiful and we could find some strong link to truth. In other words, beauty is beauty for a reason.” Keats suggestion is that between truth and beauty there exists an equilibrium which outlives individuals; the truth of beauty is external and often overwhelming as a consequence. In a letter (Nov. 22, 1817), he said “what the imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth”, but “it also evokes a unity between truth and beauty which, because of our need to categorize all experience has become unutterable or was never utterable.” Of course, Keats seems to owe Aristotle’s views. In Wordsworth, it is a contrast, as said by some he saw beauty and truth as something lost we have lost perfection. For Blake, “it is a fall which exists as a part of our being, is an engrained in human temperament as a urge to procreate”. But we are living in a world of discord and not even two person’s perception of truth, and by implication therefore of beauty are the same. Our way of thinking may go to hold that “all perception is relative, all kind of beauty perceivable is either consensual or physiological. That there is no ideal truth or ideal beauty or even mysterious unity of purpose between the two is therefore meaningless.”

### As related to Philosophy in General

In the philosophical context of India, the truth is beauty and goodness both at the same time. The three form a unity of truth-consciousness force-and bliss, it is sat, it is chit, it is also ananda; bliss, infinite joy. These three combined is the name of Absolute Brahma, such view is most comprehensive, all inclusive, It requires elaboration. In this regard, views of Henry David Thoreau, Santayana, Nietzsche Bosanquet are important which may be discussed in the light of aesthetic judgment which also requires a multiplication of pages in writing.

### In the Light of Ethical Theories

The question of ethics seems to run into complication, because there is lack of agreement between people as to the fact that which behavior should be endorsed

as moral values. In this regard, there are two theories (i) Deontological theory (ii) teleological theory. Deontological theory of ethics propose that people should use moral value, consistently regardless of the consequences. The other eg. teleological theory is in contrast to deontological theory of ethics, also called consequentialist. They consider the use of moral values to be dependent on the desired consequences. “Deontological theories of ethics are similar to inherent aesthetic theories in that they both consider value of art to be within an artistic experience, with little or no regard for the consequences of the experience. Inherent aesthetic theories consider a particular aesthetic perspective to be appropriate in all situations, while consequential aesthetic theories permit the adoption of aesthetic perspective according to the consequences that are desired. Teleological theories of ethics are similar to consequential aesthetics theories because they both consider consequences.” From the point of view of saleability, a thing may be thrown in the market, but for personal enjoyment, the artwork that are beautiful may be preferred.

### **Applicability in Literary Fields Poetics/Rhetoric**

Aesthetic work on poetics/Rhetoric was first stated by Aristotle. Poetics is concerned with drama. At some point, Aristotle’s original work was divided into two, each ‘book’ written on separate role of papyrus. The first part focuses on tragedy, the second part is adduced to comedy. He distinguishes between the genres of “poetry” in three ways (a) their means – language, rhythm and harmony, used separately or in combination (b) their objects – agents good or bad (c) their modes of representation. After this, he defines tragedy which consists of six parts, (i) plot, (*mythos*) (ii) character (*ethos*). Under this, four types are included as good, consistent appropriate and consistently inconsistent (iii) thought (*dianoia*) (iv) diction (*lexis*) (v) melody (*melos*) (vi) spectacle (*opsis*). In definition of tragedy, he uses the words pity, terror, the catharsis of such emotion. The catharsis concept is very important from the point of aesthetics and can be dwelt upon in detail separately.

### **Axiology, Ethics, Aesthetics**

Axiology has been said to be, “aesthetics plus ethics, it studies values, of beauty plus virtue respectively. Aesthetics may be *easier, but can show ethics’s value: ethics are aesthetics*”. All the great religions (monotheism, henotheism) and even most pagan ones involve axiology. It is contended that axiology helps to answer the question how are we to assess ‘values in life’. Axiology is a branch of science that deals with human values. It studies two kinds of values (i) Ethics throws light on what is ‘right’ and good in individual and social conduct (2) Aesthetics emphasizes the concept of ‘*beauty*’ and ‘*harmony*’. Natural science describes human behavior, axiology explains and measures the foundations of our thought process. To value is to set or fix priorities. Axiology measures person’s capacity to value. We have its branches like comparative aesthetics, comparative ethics and comparative axiology. There are also its two branches, formal aesthetics, and axiological aesthetics the latter focuses on the theory that no one person is alike. It is said that “Impeccable customer service, cutting edge treatments and educated medical professional is what you can expect at Axiology Aesthetics”.

### Check Your Progress I

**Note:** Use the space provided for your answers.

- 1) Describe how aesthetics is related to culture.

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- 2) Explain the application of aesthetics in ethics.

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## 3.7 LET US SUM UP

Applied ethics is a very new branch of study and a very vast one, it is still in its infancy stage. Though at present stage, the walls of departmentalization of any subject is crumbling, opening up open-spaces, new vistas for the interdisciplinary study, but such study as intended at the country level has led to lots of complications both to the teacher as well as the students. This may lead to overstress to the students specially. But the broadening of the vistas of knowledge cannot be disregarded, far less stopped in the interest of knowledge in general, which is the clarion call of all and sundry also, which is the clarion call of philosophy.

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## 3.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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