

Phil 347 – Aesthetics, Michigan State University, Philosophy Department

Dr. Christian Lotz, Class Essay - Topics

This particular **paper assignment** is designed to give you the opportunity to deepen your understanding of Kant and Hegel. First, go over your notes on Kant and Hegel, and recall what we discussed in class. Second, study (again) the main parts of the texts discussed. Keeping this in mind, choose one of the essay questions below and begin to organize your thoughts. It is very important that you first try to come up with an outline of what you have in mind, since an outline will help you structure what you want to say in your paper. Then, think about how to formulate appropriate answers to the question and decide which issues are connected to them. Finally, in the introduction to the paper, let your reader know how you intend to answer the main questions or how you intend to argue for your main points. I expect that you come up with a *precise introductory part*. Be aware that the brevity of this essay is challenging in several regards:

- it requires you to be very well organized and
- it requires you to make a selection (do not try write about *all* aspects of the question; rather, be clear about your aspect)
- it requires you to demonstrate how to explain a complex position/concept in a *precise* and *articulate* manner. Please check the class web site if you need more help on writing assignments.
- it requires you to include page references to Kant/Hegel.
- it should contain a list of references

Format:

Please type up your answer and **turn in your brief paper by Dec 8** (slip it under my office door (507 South Kedzie). Clearly indicate your name!! No late papers will be accepted! The length of the paper should be around **5 pages (no more than 1500 words)**, it should be double spaced with 1 inch margins, Times New Roman 12pt font should be used.

Reminder:

To be clear on 5 pages is more difficult than you might think. Accordingly, expect that you have to invest *at least* one full day for the construction and preparation of this little essay. The introduction should be precise, but not be longer than a brief paragraph. Don't speculate; I would like to see how capable you are in applying selected concepts that we learned in class and how well you are able to analyze the material discussed.

Essay Questions (choose ONE)

1. Critically compare Kant's and Hegel's conception of aesthetics (make a selection of aspects!)
2. Explain how Hegel rejects the idea that art can be dealt with within a theory of taste
3. Explain the nature of art and our need for it, according to Hegel (especially study again pp.29-32)