

Talk title: Thomas Reid's Disjunctive Realist Aesthetics

Abstract:

I discuss Thomas Reid's 'Essay on Taste' (1785), focusing on an unusual feature in his (already unusual) aesthetics: his claim that there are two different 'senses' of taste, instinctive and rational. I argue that Reid attempts thereby to characterize the anticipatory/progressive phenomenology of aesthetic appreciation (emphasized more recently by Alexander Nehamas). I suggest also that the disjunctive character of his theory reflects the complexity of aesthetic appreciation, as combining an inward- and outward-oriented valuation, and thus potentially taking significantly different combinatorial forms.

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