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Peter Kivy
The Seventh Sense

Francis Hutcheson and Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetics

Second Edition

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Peter Kivy

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*For Richard Kuhns
Teacher and Friend*

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Preface

I have tried to do two things in this book: first, to make an analytic study of Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* in some detail and completeness; second, to trace the development in Britain of its leading idea, the sense of beauty, to its decline at the close of the eighteenth century. Part I occupies itself with the former task and can be read as a self-contained unit. Part II, along with relevant portions of Part I, can be read as a history of the sense of beauty in the British Enlightenment. And Parts I and II together are what the [original] subtitle of this book describes: *A Study of Francis Hutcheson's Aesthetics, and Its Influence in Eighteenth-Century Britain*.

I see my work as a study in eighteenth-century *aesthetics*, and I have, therefore, not scrupled to use the noun “aesthetics” and the adjective “aesthetic” wherever they have seemed to me to be appropriate. But in spite of the fact that the terms, in *something* like the way we now use them, were coined in the first half of the eighteenth century, and that philosophers since Plato have been concerned with metaphysical and epistemological issues raised by the concept of the beautiful, and what *we* now call the fine arts, objections have been raised to the use of these terms in describing the work of the eighteenth-century critics and philosophers.

There are two answers to these objections: a short answer and a long one.

I do not know exactly what the long answer is. It would require a detailed study of Enlightenment reflections on art and beauty with the specific end in view of determining what was being done and whether what was being done differed significantly enough from what we do in the name of “aesthetics” to be denied that name. The present study, along with many other works of eighteenth-century scholarship, may contribute to the eventual long answer. But the long answer cannot be given here.

The short answer is that surely what was done in the eighteenth century in the way of philosophy of art, of taste, of criticism, and of beauty is more like what we call “aesthetics” than it is like anything else. It is different, too, of course. But who would expect it to be in every respect the same? A theory can be different from a contemporary aesthetic theory and still be an *aesthetic* theory. There was, to be sure, no word in eighteenth-century Britain that exactly captured our word “aesthetics”; for although the word was coined, it was not currency in the British Isles until after the period with which we are concerned. But Newton, after all, did what the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries called “natural philosophy.” Should we boggle at calling it “physics”? Such linguistic scruples would be too fussy—and misleading in the bargain.

It is with pleasure that I acknowledge, now, some old debts, and some newly incurred ones. To my former teachers, Arthur Danto, Albert Hofstadter, Richard F. Kuhns, Jr., and James J. Walsh, this book owes much substance and much of the philosophical spirit it may have. To George Dickie and Elmer Sprague it now owes further improvements in its philosophical and historical content. It owes its mistakes to its author.

P.K.

New York City

June 1974

Preface to the Second Edition

When I published *The Seventh Sense*, in 1976, it became the first book on Francis Hutcheson's aesthetics and philosophy of art in English, or, so far as I know, in any other language. It remains, so far as I know, the *only* such book. That certainly is part of the reason I thought to reissue it now, in a second, enlarged edition. It has long been out of print, and I regularly receive enquiries concerning how copies might be obtained. So I gather that there still is an interest in it, as I know there is in its subject.

But there is more to it than that. Were it merely that *The Seventh Sense* is the only book on Hutcheson's aesthetics, I don't think that alone would warrant its republication. What *does* warrant it seems to me to be both its singularity *and* the ever-growing pursuit of aesthetics in the philosophical community, bringing along with it the inevitable growth of interest in the subject's modern origins. These origins are agreed, on all hands, to lie in the early eighteenth century, and in Britain. Furthermore, a very good case can be made for thinking of Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, of 1725, as the inaugural work. It is certainly the first book-length study in what we now call philosophical aesthetics.

Of course I would not have contemplated a second edition of *The Seventh Sense* if I did not think that, in 1976, I had got things more or less right about Hutcheson, and the rest of the authors I wrote of in the book. And because I think that, I have decided to reprint the book as it is, without revisions. However, needless to say, I only did get things “more or less” right. I have continued to think and write about Hutcheson, and eighteenth-century aesthetics, and many others have contributed to the ever-growing literature on the subject. In the process, I have become clearer about some things, less sure of others, and, of course, have also, from time to time, changed my mind. And I thought, therefore, that

the best way of “revising” *The Seventh Sense* was not to lay violent hands on it, but to reprint, as a supplement to the book, a collection of my essays on Enlightenment aesthetics that bear on Hutcheson and his influence in the eighteenth century. These essays have appeared, over the years, in various journals and collections, and provide, in their own way, my “revisions” of *The Seventh Sense*. They comprise Part III of the present volume, and their publication history is as follows.

Chapter XIII. The Logic of Taste: The First Fifty Years. This was commissioned by George Dickie and Richard Sclafani for their popular collection, *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977).

Chapter XIV. Hutcheson's Idea of Beauty: Simple or Complex? Criticism of my view on the frequently misunderstood question of whether, for Hutcheson, the idea of beauty is simple or complex drew this response. It was originally published in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, L (1992).

Chapter XV. The “Sense” of Beauty and the Sense of “Art”: Hutcheson's Place in the History and Practice of Aesthetics. The 300th anniversary of the birth of Francis Hutcheson was celebrated at the University of Glasgow, 8–11 April 1994. I was invited to give a lecture on that occasion, and this chapter is the result. It was first published in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, LIII (1995).

Chapter XVI. Hume's Neighbour's Wife: An Essay on the Evolution of Hume's Aesthetics. This was originally a talk delivered at the Tenth Hume Conference of the David Hume Society, Trinity College, Dublin, 26 August 1981, and was then published in the *British Journal of Aesthetics*, XXIII (1983).

Chapter XVII. Hume's “Sentiments” in the Essay on Taste. When invited to contribute an essay to the *Festschrift* for my good friend Göran Sörbom, this is what I came up with. It appeared in *Aesthetic Matters: Essays presented to Göran Sörbom on his 60th Birthday*, ed. Lars-Olof Åhlberg and Tommie Zaine (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1994).

Chapter XVIII. The Logic of Taste: Reid and the Second Fifty Years. This essay was an invited contribution to the collection, *Thomas Reid: Critical Interpretations*, ed. Stephen F. Barker and

Tom L. Beauchamp (Philadelphia: Philosophical Monographs, 1976).

Chapter XIX. Seeing (and so forth) is Believing (among other things): On the Significance of Reid in the History of Aesthetics. The origin of this essay was an invitation to give a plenary lecture at a meeting in Aberdeen University, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the publication of Thomas Reid's *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*. It was published in *The Philosophy of Thomas Reid*, ed. Melvin Dalgarno and Eric Matthews (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989).

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Part I Hutcheson's First "Inquiry"

"I have here followed the common opinion of men's having but five senses, though, perhaps there may be justly counted more. . . ."

John Locke

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I Just Before Hutcheson

(1) The name of Francis Hutcheson is associated in ethics and aesthetics with the doctrine of “internal senses.” The Third Earl of Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, is generally credited with having established the notions of the moral sense and sense of beauty in Britain. But the doctrine in its characteristic form, that is, the doctrine which represented moral and aesthetic judgments as perceptual or emotive rather than rational, was the work, mainly, of Hutcheson.

Hutcheson was convinced by the analogy between sense perception and critical judgment. The ability to perceive, Locke had claimed, is innate, immediate, not under the control of the will: so also, Hutcheson insisted, is the ability to recognize the beautiful (and other aesthetic qualities). There was, of course, nothing particularly novel in this; such observations were rife in the seventeenth century. Hutcheson's originality lay in his re-expression of these insights in Lockean terms.

In this chapter I attempt to introduce *some* seventeenth-century concepts which presaged, in one way or another, the aesthetic sense doctrine as Hutcheson later formulated it. And as the aesthetic sense doctrine is so largely a British product, for the most part I confine myself to its British forerunners. To do anything more would require catching Leviathan with a fish-hook.

(2) In seventeenth-century British philosophy there were already full-fledged theories of inner senses and faculties, both

moral and aesthetic; and there can be very little doubt that they were familiar to Shaftesbury, who was looked upon by those he influenced as at least co-founder of the aesthetic sense school. Shaftesbury's philosophical debt is owed most heavily to the Cambridge Platonists.¹ They, in their turn, are indebted, in a negative way, to Hobbes; for "it was largely in conscious opposition to Hobbism that they defined their position."² But the Cambridge Platonists are indebted also to a pre-Hobbesian thinker, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, often called the father of Deism, who, as early as 1624, in the *De Veritate*, had set forth a position in clear anticipation of the Cambridge group, as well as the later aesthetic sense school.³

Lord Herbert's foreshadowing of the sense of beauty is revealed in his doctrine of "Natural Instincts" and the "Common Notions" to which they give rise — a doctrine which may derive its general features from Stoic philosophy.⁴ For Lord Herbert, the criterion of truth is common agreement; such agreement is guaranteed by common subjective faculties and divinely established harmony between these faculties and their objects. "Whatever is believed by universal consent must be true and must have been brought into conformity in virtue of some internal faculty." The internal faculties or natural instincts are bestowed upon men by "divine Providence, some measure of which is imprinted upon our mind."⁵

Natural instinct seems to denote both an active and a passive faculty. It is passive in that the presence of an object is required to occasion its activity: "when it is stimulated by objects, whether things or words or symbols, we must believe that a Common Notion will result." The Common Notions pertain to the totality of human knowledge, including nature, religion, morality, and the beautiful:

[N]atural instincts are expressions of those faculties which are found in every normal man, through which the Common Notions touching the internal conformity of things, such as the cause, means, and purpose of things, the good, bad, beautiful, pleasing, etc., especially those Notions which tend towards the preservation of the individual, of species, of kinds, and of the universe, are brought into conformity independently of discursive thought.⁶

Surely there is a superfluity of innate principles here. “At first sight,” as W. R. Sorley remarked, “this seems like the faculty-psychology run mad.”⁷ Yet Sorley added, and I think with some justice, that the very number of the “faculties” Lord Herbert is committed to militates against their being thought of as entirely distinct principles. “They are so numerous that it would be almost impossible for Herbert to assign them that degree of independence which was frequently ascribed to the ‘faculties of the mind’ by psychologists of a recent generation.”

The immediacy of the Natural Instincts is continually emphasized by Lord Herbert. “Common Notions are brought into conformity immediately, provided the meaning of the facts or words is grasped; while discursive reason works slowly by means of species and its Questions, moving for ever to and fro, without recourse to apprehension.” This immediacy, opposed to the deliberate operation of the “discursive reason,” is, according to Lord Herbert, particularly exemplified by the perception of beauty:

Natural Instinct anticipates reason in perceiving the beauty of proportions of a house built according to architectural principles; for reason reaches its conclusions by a laborious consideration of the proportions, first severally and then as a whole, and even in the process itself is constrained to rely on Common Notions. And the same point can be noticed in judging beautiful features, or graceful forms, or harmony in music. For it is not necessary to call any plain man who takes immediate pleasure in such things a mathematician or a musician.⁸

Lord Herbert's conception of an aesthetic instinct — with its emphasis upon the anticipation of reason by a faculty of immediate perception — is very close indeed to the early aesthetic sense school, although there is as yet no attempt to classify judgments of the beautiful as sensate.

(3) Among the Cambridge group, external evidence points to three men as obvious influences on Shaftesbury: Benjamin Whichcote, whose *Sermons* Shaftesbury brought out in 1698, Henry More, and Ralph Cudworth, both of whom are referred

to in Shaftesbury's writings. In the realm of moral theory, More is particularly important for our purposes. Shaftesbury was basically a moral aesthetician: in the Platonic tradition, he saw no distinction between the philosophy of the good and the philosophy of the beautiful. "Beauty . . . and good," he wrote, ". . . are *one and the same*."⁹ Thus, any anticipation of the moral sense can, in relation to Shaftesbury, be considered at the same time an anticipation of the sense of beauty. And we have in More's *Enchiridion Ethicum* (1666) a clear anticipation of the former, which must have been well known to Shaftesbury.

More argues that "there is something which is simply and absolutely good, which in all human Actions is to be sought for."¹⁰ This simple quality of goodness (if we may be permitted to use the phrase of a different Moore) is recognized by reason; but it is "savored," so to speak, by a moral "sense": "the relish and delectation thereof, is to be taken in by the *Boniform Faculty*." Thus, although the discovery of goodness, ultimately, is a rational discovery, the pleasure that we take in its contemplation arises from a distinct moral faculty: a *sense of Virtue*.¹¹ More give us, then, "a specifically ethical sense, perceiving and desiring absolute good, and in no way co-extensive with the will, the intellect, or both."¹²

More's *sense of Virtue* is not, properly speaking, a faculty of judgment; that is still the province of reason. It perceives "absolute good" only in the limited sense of *tasting*, not *discovering*. But it is a *sense*; it is a moral faculty which feels. So although More has not made the crucial distinction between "perceiving the true" (knowledge) and "sensing the good" (feeling) which Kant attributed to Hutcheson and his school,¹³ he has, nevertheless, made a great stride in that direction by positing a sensate moral faculty. He is half way, and more, toward Hutcheson's moral sense.

(4) While the seventeenth-century British philosophers approached the sense of beauty, a second stream of thought was converging on it from another quarter. I make reference to the concept of "taste" as a faculty of judgment, which was bequeathed to the Enlightenment by the French critics.

The history of the term “taste” in its aesthetic and critical use has never been exhaustively treated¹⁴; nor can such a task be undertaken here. It must suffice for our purposes to examine some characteristic “aesthetic” uses of the term in seventeenth-century criticism which may have been of direct influence in the development of the aesthetic sense.

The introduction of “taste” as a full-blown mental faculty seems to have been accomplished by the Spanish moralist Baltasar Gracián in the mid-seventeenth century. Of particular influence was his *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (1647), which was translated into Dutch, English, French, German, and Italian during the seventeenth century. Good taste is not treated here purely as an aesthetic or critical concept, but rather as a faculty of liking and disliking in relation to a wide variety of objects—the wider the better, in fact: “The extent of a man's capacity is to be known by the loftiness of his taste. Great ability requires many objects to satisfy it. . . .”¹⁵ Such “loftiness of taste” seems to be an acquired, rather than an inborn, disposition—emphasis, in any case, being placed upon its development. “There is room for cultivation here, just as in the case of mind. . . .,” Gracián writes.

As a critical and aesthetic concept, “taste” developed most fully during the seventeenth century in the writings of the French. It came to be associated more and more with feeling (*sentiment*) and instinct; it was a subtle, nonrational faculty of perception, that which it perceived an equally subtle quality, often characterized by the timeworn phrase *je ne sais quoi*. Gracián's influence seems to have reached France as early as 1656, at which time Saint-Evremond (of particular interest here because of his long residence in London) was already writing of “taste” (*gout*) as a disposition to be pleased by the “refined” (*delicat*) in various objects.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter the Chevalier de Méré was writing extensively of taste and the *je ne sais quoi*.¹⁷ Important, too, are Dominique Bouhours' *La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit* (1687) and the earlier dialogues, *Entretiens d'Ariste de d'Eugène* (1671), one of which is concerned explicitly with “Le *Je ne sais Quoi*.”

For Bouhours the *je ne sais quoi* is not solely a critical

concept: rather, it still bears the wider connotations of Gracián's "taste"; he writes,

[I]t is a grace which brightens beauty and other natural perfections, which corrects ugliness and other natural defects, . . . it is a charm and an air which informs every action and every word, which has its part in the way one walks and laughs, in the tone of the voice, and even in the slightest gesture of the socially acceptable person.¹⁸

But there is little doubt that Bouhours thought of it as a quality peculiarly relevant to beauty in general, and art in particular.

The *je ne sais quoi* belongs to art as well as nature. For, without mentioning the different manners of painters, what charms us in those excellent paintings, in those statues so nearly alive that they lack only the gift of speech, . . . what charms us, I say, in such paintings and statues is an inexplicable quality.¹⁹

The "inexplicable" *je ne sais quoi* is perceived by a nonrational faculty: a "tendency and instinct of the heart, . . . the most exquisite feeling of the soul for whatever makes an impression on it, a marvelous liking and what might be called a kinship of the heart. . . ." ²⁰ This "instinct" bears two characteristics later to be associated by Hutcheson with the sense of beauty: immediacy and freedom from control of the will, both of which were considered by Hutcheson and many others as infallible marks of sense perception. Bouhours states:

[T]hese mysterious qualities which produce the effect of beauty or ugliness, so to speak, cause in us mysterious feelings of inclination or aversion which are beyond reason and which the will cannot control. They are impulses which forestall reflection and freedom. We can stop them in their course but we cannot prevent their arising. These feelings of liking or disliking take shape in an instant and when we are least aware of them. We love or hate at once without awareness in the mind, and, if I dare say so, without knowledge in the heart.²¹

But if Bouhours' "instinct" is nonrational, it is by no means in conflict with reason. Reason and instinct tell the same tale, although in a different way; they are in perfect rapport. Thus,

Bouhours later defined taste as “a harmony, an accord of the spirit and the reason.”²² If the Enlightenment saw a separation between reason and such faculties as taste and the sense of beauty, that separation did not imply an estrangement; and one should therefore exercise restraint in the application of a term like “romantic” to the nonrational in Enlightenment philosophy of art.

(5) The term “taste” in the language of British criticism goes back at least as far as Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie* (c. 1583) — thus to its very beginnings. With regard to certain cases of dislike (“mislike”) in poetry, Sidney argues, “the faulte is in their iudgements quit out of taste, and not in the sweet foode of sweetly vttered knowledge.”²³ The passage is puzzling. On the one hand, it seems almost to equate “taste” with judgment, not merely with liking or disliking. Or, on the other hand, it may mean that one can dislike a poem and still judge it to be good. In this case the phrase, “their iudgements quit out of taste,” would imply that one is judging correctly but not experiencing the feeling proper to the judgment; that is, “misliking,” liking what one knows to be bad or not liking what one knows to be good. Such an interpretation would allow for a sharp distinction between judgment, the faculty of understanding, and taste, the faculty which merely likes or dislikes. It would not imply that Sidney thought of the critical judgment as a species of sense perception rather than reason.

The concept of taste does not seem to have taken firm hold in Britain during the seventeenth century although the term remained in use. To some, “taste” was the taste about which there was no disputing; it implied relativism in criticism. This may be inherent, for example, in Robert Howard's preface to *The Great Favorite* (1668):

[I]n the Differences of *Tragedy* and *Comedy*, and of *Farce* itself, there can be no Determination but by taste; nor in the Manner of their Composure; and whoever would endeavour to like or dislike by the Rules of others, he will be as unsuccessful, as if he should try to be persuaded into a Power of believing; not what he must but what others direct him to believe.²⁴

The implication here seems to be that we do not merely like or dislike independently of reason (“the Rules”), but that we make aesthetic or critical distinctions on the basis of liking and disliking. This, at least, is what Dryden (Howard's brother-in-law) made of the passage, severely criticizing it for its apparent identification of liking or disliking something with its goodness or badness. “The liking or disliking of the people,” Dryden writes in the preface to the *Indian Emperor* (1668),

gives the play the denomination good or bad, but does not really make or constitute it such. To please the people ought to be the poet's aim, because plays are made for their delight; but it does not follow that they are always pleased with good plays, or that plays which please them are always good.²⁵

The notion of taste which the French promulgated and to which the British fell heir in the eighteenth century had unquestionably helped push critical judgment away from the reason and toward sense perception. “Thus taste,” Ernst Cassirer writes, “is no longer classified with the logical processes of inference and conclusion but placed on a par with the immediacy of the pure acts of perception — with seeing and hearing, tasting and smelling.”²⁶ And taste was essentially a faculty of those who look at, or listen to, or otherwise contemplate, aesthetic objects, not those who create them; it emphasized aesthetic perception rather than the creative process — an emphasis that was to characterize future speculation in eighteenth-century Britain, in marked contrast to seventeenth-century thought.

Why did the notion of taste, with its stress upon perception, take such firm root in British soil? The answer perhaps lies with the growing *audience* that was provided in Britain by the rising middle class. If the “consumer” in the arts is himself well schooled and likely to be a “creator” as well, there will be a rapport between himself and the professional (or we should say, rather, the accomplished) artist. There is no real gap between them, and therefore no real need for two separate aesthetic psychologies. Creator and perceiver are one. However, with the growth of an audience that consists not of dilettantes and dabblers,

but, rather, laymen who wish to purchase entertainment (tired businessmen, in fact), there must inevitably arise a gulf between artist and audience, between creator and perceiver. Eighteenth-century London presented, to an extent never before known, a vast audience involved in the process of aesthetic perception but far removed from the process of creation. A new aesthetic phenomenon was born, and with it a new aesthetic study.

There is a certain irony in the fact that John Locke “who was of all the great seventeenth-century philosophers the most supercilious toward poetry” inspired this “entire new esthetic movement.”²⁷ There is actually a double irony here; for although Locke “inspired” the new British aesthetics, its real founder was the Third Earl of Shaftesbury: a Neoplatonist, a philosophical reactionary, and an outspoken critic of Locke's empiricism (in spite of his being Locke's pupil and friend). So we are faced at the beginning of the eighteenth century with this peculiar state of affairs: a new aesthetic philosophy, inspired by an “unaesthetic” philosopher, founded by a conservative very much more interested in reviving an old doctrine than in promulgating a new one.

As perplexing as this situation appears on the surface it is nonetheless, from Shaftesbury's point of view at least, eminently reasonable. Empiricism alone, Shaftesbury felt, could never be delivered of a viable aesthetic theory; Locke's position had essentially “devalued” the universe. “'Twas Mr. Locke,” Shaftesbury wrote in a letter to his young protégé Michael Ainsworth, “that struck at all fundamentals, threw all order and virtue out of the world and made the very ideas of these . . . *unnatural* and without foundation in our minds.”²⁸ For Shaftesbury, the empirical view was barren of values, aesthetic and moral. What it required was fertilization from another source; and this fertilization Shaftesbury himself could provide. For if Locke's universe was a bloodless dance of particles, Shaftesbury's, on the contrary, was a veritable orgy of virtues, beauties, and designs. It was a marriage of the new way of ideas and the most venerable of ancient philosophies, Platonism, that had issue in the new British aesthetics.

(6) That this is the best of all possible worlds Shaftesbury believed wholeheartedly and for reasons not by any means original. All evil is apparent evil only. If one sees the total picture, one understands that the apparent evil serves some distant good. All the parts serve the whole; see the relation and purpose of the parts and you see the good of the whole. “Only connect . . .” is a motto that, in the metaphysics of morals, Shaftesbury would have endorsed without question. “Only connect . . .” and you will perceive “*That whatsoever the Order of the World produces, is in the main both just and good.*”²⁹ This is the faith that permeates Shaftesbury's writings — the faith of “perfect *Theism*,” as he terms his position.

The good of the universe is constituted by the orderly arrangement of its parts; and although the idea is old, it is clothed by Shaftesbury in a modern vision: the Newtonian system of the world. Around the sun

all the PLANETS, with this *our Earth*, single or with Attendants, continually move; seeking to receive the Blessing of his Light and lively warmth! towards him they seem to tend with prone descent, as to their Center; but happily controul'd still by another Impulse, they keep their heavenly Order; and in just Numbers, and exactest Measure, go the eternal Rounds.³⁰

There is excellence in this structure: God saw that it was good. And the contemplation of it is pleasant to us. As Fontenelle told the elegant ladies of France (in describing the rival Cartesian cosmology), “*the Physical Ideas are in themselves very diverting; and as they convince and satisfy reason, so at the same time they present to the Imagination a Spectacle, which looks as if it were made on purpose to please it.*”³¹ In short, the universe is not only good, but beautiful as well. It is a harmonious whole and as such is beautiful in the contemplation.

For Shaftesbury the central concept of morality and aesthetics alike is harmony; it is in the *harmony* of parts — be they parts of the cosmos, a landscape, a musical composition, a man's character — that virtue and beauty lie. And all such beauty flows ultimately from God:

*For Divinity it-self. . . is surely beauteous, and, of all Beautys the brightest; tho not a beauteous body, but that from whence the Beauty of Bodys is deriv'd: Not a beauteous Plain, but that from whence the Plain looks Beautiful. The River's Beauty, the Sea's, the Heaven's, and the Heavenly Constellations, all from hence as from a Source Eternal and Incorruptible. As Beings partake of this, they are fair, and flourishing, and happy: As they are lost to this, they are deform'd, perish'd and lost.*³²

A vision worthy of Plotinus: and like Plotinus, Shaftesbury sees a hierarchy of beauties whereby we rise from the physical to the moral realm.

There are “*Three Degrees or Orders of Beauty*,” the beauty of all resting in the harmonious relation of parts. At the lowest level are physical objects, both natural and manmade: “*the dead Forms . . . which bear, a Fashion, and are form'd, whether by Man, or Nature; but have no forming Power, no Action, no Intelligence.*”³³ Among these are to be numbered objects of art; painting, sculpture, music, and the like.

At the second level are “*the Forms which form*,” that is, which have Intelligence, Action, and Operation.”³⁴ Thus, for Shaftesbury, the beauty of inanimate objects derives from a higher beauty, from the beauty of the intelligence that forms them. And we are now in the moral realm; the beautiful and the good are one. With respect to intelligence, virtue lies in the beauty of mind, the beauty of mind in the harmony of parts, and their harmonious relation to the universe as a whole. In so far as man imbues external objects with harmony, he is an artist; and in so far as he makes himself — his inner self — harmonious, he is also an artist: the maker of his own beauty and virtue, “*the Architect of his own Life and Fortune.*”³⁵ So the highest *moral*, as well as aesthetic, compliment that can be paid to a man is that he has *good taste*.

Finally we reach the “*last Order of Supreme and Sovereign Beauty*,” the godhead from which all beauty flows. In that beauty of the “second order” derives from God, and beauty of the “first order” from the second, all can be subsumed under the highest principle. “Thus Architecture, Musick, and all which is of human Invention, resolves itself into this *last Order.*”³⁶ But

it is in the higher order that the Platonist will dwell. "What beauty could one still wish to see after having arrived at vision of Him who gives perfection to all beings . . . ?" asked Plotinus.³⁷ Shaftesbury, perhaps the most eloquent Platonist of modern times, echoes these sentiments.

For whate'er is void of Mind, is *Void* and *Darkness* to the *Mind's* EYE. This languishes and grows dim, whene'er detained on foreign Subjects; but thrives and attains its natural Vigour, when employ'd in Contemplation of what is like it-self. 'Tis this *improving* MIND, slightly surveying other Objects, and passing over Bodys, and the common Forms, (where only a Shadow of Beauty rests) ambitiously presses onward to its *Source*, and views *the Original* of Form and Order in that which is intelligent.³⁸

It is to the "Mind's EYE," then, to the sense of beauty, that harmony, at least of the higher kind, appears. But what of physical beauty? Is there a sense appropriate to it? Shaftesbury's position with regard to the sense of beauty is a complex one; it may perhaps be inconsistent, and it is certainly a position that evolved and deepened in the course of his intellectual development.

(7) Shaftesbury inaugurated his literary career with the preface to his edition of Whichcote's *Sermons* (1698). Shortly thereafter his *Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit* (1699) appeared in a pirated edition: "an imperfect thing," he later wrote, "brought into the world . . . contrary to the author's design, in his absence beyond the sea [Shaftesbury was in Holland at the time], and in a disguised, disordered style."³⁹ Between the appearance of the *Inquiry* and Shaftesbury's next published work, *A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm* (1708), lies a considerable gap⁴⁰; but after the *Letter*, the remainder of Shaftesbury's writings to be published in his lifetime followed in short order. Thus, the publication history of Shaftesbury's works suggests that the *Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit* be considered as an early work, somewhat apart from the later writings; and we shall so treat it in the ensuing examination of the sense of beauty in Shaftesbury's philosophy.

Shaftesbury's first allusion to the aesthetic and moral sense proper occurs early in the *Inquiry*. It is a historically important passage and deserves quotation at some length.

The Case is the same in the *mental* or *moral* subjects, as in the ordinary Bodys, or common Subjects of *Sense*. The Shapes, Motions, Colours, and Proportions of these latter being presented to our Eye; there necessarily results a Beauty or Deformity, according to the different Measure, Arrangement and Disposition of their several Parts. So in *Behaviour*, and *Actions*, when presented to our Understanding, there must be found, of necessity, an apparent Difference, according to the Regularity or Irregularity of the Subjects.

THE MIND, which is Spectator or Auditor of *other Minds*, cannot be without its *Eye* and *Ear*; so as to discern Proportion, distinguish Sound, and scan each Sentiment or Thought which comes before it. It can let nothing escape its Censure. It feels the Soft and Harsh, the Agreeable and Disagreeable, in the Affections; and finds a *Foul* and *Fair*, a *Harmonious* and a *Dissonant*, as really and truly here, as in any musical Numbers, or in the outward Forms or Representations of sensible Things. Nor can it with-hold its *Admiration* and *Extasy*, its *Aversion* and *Scorn*, any more in what relates to one than to the other of these Subjects. So that to deny the common and natural Sense of a SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL in Things, will appear an Affectation merely, to any-one who considers duly of this Affair.⁴¹

There are a number of points of interest here. To begin with, one wonders about the distinction between subjective and objective qualities, which was to become such a bone of contention in the aesthetic speculations of Hutcheson, his followers, and his critics. "Beauty or deformity," Shaftesbury tells us, is the result of "Shapes, Motions, Colours, and the Proportions of these latter being presented to our Eye." Is the *result* a subjective quality (like the taste of the apple), or an "emergent" tertiary quality? Is beauty the subjective result, while the "Shapes, Motions, Colours, and Proportions of these" are *out there*? Or is beauty an objective quality, composed of, or emerging from, objective qualities? I presume Shaftesbury meant the latter, although he is not explicit. But if one reads Shaftesbury with the subjective—objective distinction already formed, along

the lines of Locke, as Hutcheson undoubtedly did, then the former interpretation is likely to jump out of the page. In this case it would seem that Shaftesbury's silence was as influential as anything he ever wrote.

The parallel between value judgment and sense perception had already, as we have seen, become something of a commonplace, characteristic of various movements in seventeenth-century philosophy and criticism. Both moral and aesthetic judgment, for Shaftesbury, exhibit the immediacy of sense perception; and we also find the notion of moral and aesthetic judgment as beyond the control of the will—a further implication of the sense perception analogy. When the object appropriate to any sense is presented to it under the proper perceptual conditions, the perception “necessarily results.” So also with the “sense” of (moral) beauty. But what must be emphasized here is that, for Shaftesbury, all of this is analogy only. Shaftesbury never concludes that because value judgment is similar to sense perception in certain respects, it *is* sense perception. That step awaited Hutcheson. (Whether the inference is indeed justifiable, we will discuss when we come to Hutcheson's presentation of it.)

The exact nature of Shaftesbury's “common and natural Sense of a SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL in Things” is difficult to make out. It has been the opinion of many, from Shaftesbury's time to our own, that no coherent view emerges; and I am inclined, in the last analysis, to agree. But, nonetheless, some explication is possible before one surrenders to Shaftesbury's inherent indeterminateness.

At times Shaftesbury seems to equate sense with feeling: “SENSE or *good Affection*,” he writes on one occasion.⁴² But the term is never used in the *Inquiry*, so far as I can see, with the connotation of an autonomous faculty, atomic and unanalyzable. There is, rather, something here of that “common sense” which implies no hidden or occult faculties but merely those rational powers that all men can be supposed to possess. When Shaftesbury refers to a sense of right and wrong, or beauty and deformity, he is not necessarily appealing to some extra faculty, but rather to a sensibility—a talent for perceiving—that

all men may be assumed to have diffused through their normal faculties of reason and perception, at least to some degree. Thus there seems to be a real affinity between Shaftesbury's use of "sense" and the notion of "good sense" or "common sense" which Thomas Rymer imported from France. And for Rymer, the apostle of *reason* in seventeenth-century British criticism, the term "sense" never implied sense perception or feeling. Nor was any special faculty intended, but merely a level of understanding which might be supposed of the cultivated mind. In critical judgment, he insisted, "there is not required much learning, or that a man must be some *Aristotle*, and *Doctor of Subtilties*, to form a right judgment in this particular: common sense suffices. . . ." ⁴³

The most prominent feature of Shaftesbury's early theorizing with regard to the aesthetic and moral sense, however, is the lack of a feature: there is no theory of critical judgment at all. Nowhere in the *Inquiry* does Shaftesbury refer to a faculty of artistic judgment or a faculty of judgment whose object is natural beauty, nor is there any significant discussion of critical theory. In fact, as we have seen, the analogy on which this early theory is based ascribes the perception of visual beauty not to an aesthetic sense but to the sense of sight, the perception of beauty in sound not to an aesthetic sense but to the sense of hearing. There is no question but that the mind plays a part both in the judgment of visual beauty and auditory beauty, as well as in moral beauty. In the passage quoted above, we must interpret Shaftesbury in this way:

It [the mind] feels the Soft and Harsh, the Agreeable and Disagreeable, in the Affections; and [the mind] finds a *Foul* and *Fair*, a *Harmonious* and a *Dissonant*, as really and truly here, as in any musical Numbers, or in the outward Forms or Representations of sensible Things. Nor can it [the mind again] with-hold its *Admiration* and *Extasy*, its *Aversion* and *Scorn*, any more in what relates to the one [moral beauty] than to the other [visual and aural beauty] of these subjects.

So there is a meaning of "perceive" in which the eye perceives visual beauty, the ear perceives aural beauty, and the moral

sense perceives moral beauty. There is another meaning of “perceive,” however (or perhaps “judge” would be better here), in which the *mind* perceives (or judges) visual, aural, and moral beauty. Jerome Stolnitz, in a recent article on Shaftesbury's aesthetic theory, offers this interpretation with regard to the perception of physical beauty: “The object enters awareness through the sense-organs, but its beauty is only discerned subsequent to physical sensation. . . .”⁴⁴ And, interestingly enough, Henry More — a thorough rationalist in aesthetics, as well as a direct influence on Shaftesbury — stated his own position in very much the same way some fifty years before. Beauty, he maintained, “is convey'd indeed by the outward Senses into the Soul, but a more Intellectual Faculty is that which relishes it; as a *Geometrical Scheme* is let in by the *Eyes*, but the *Demonstration* is discover'd by *Reason*.”⁴⁵ However we interpret Shaftesbury on this point, the fact remains that there is, at least in the *Inquiry*, no faculty of aesthetic judgment apart from what is designated by the ubiquitous term *mind* itself, which has the beauty of art objects or natural beauty as its data.

(8) Shaftesbury continued, in his later writings, to expound the position which he had first stated in the *Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*. In *The Moralists* (1709), he still clung to the analogy between the perception of external beauty by the senses of sight and hearing, and the perception of moral beauty by the moral sense.⁴⁶ Shaftesbury never seems to have deviated from this basic position; but other currents began to flow, and the problems of critical judgment, ignored in the early *Inquiry*, began, more and more, to occupy his thoughts.

Evidence of Shaftesbury's increasing interest in critical problems is to be found in the *Soliloquy: or, Advice to an Author*, first published in 1710. Here Shaftesbury seems to be timidly extending his theory of the moral sense to literary criticism. For the same analogy that had, in the *Inquiry* and *The Moralists*, served as an illustration of the moral sense, is now alluded to in reference to a literary sense: “a CRITIC'S *Eye*,” as Shaftesbury calls it.⁴⁷ But there is no real independence of the moral sense: it is the ability to recognize moral beauty, wherein, for Shaftesbury,

the excellence of the author lies. The fittest subjects for the author are the beautiful actions and sentiments of men; and a beautiful action or sentiment, as we have seen, is just another name for a moral one. So Shaftesbury concludes,

[T]here can be no kind of Writing which relates to Men and Manners, where it is not necessary for the Author to understand *Poetical* and *Moral* TRUTH, *the Beauty* of Sentiments, *the Sublime* of Characters; and carry in his Eye, the Model or Exemplar of that *natural Grace*, which gives to every Action its attractive Charm. If he has naturally no Eye, or Ear, for these *interior Numbers*; 'tis not likely he shou'd be able to judge better of that *exterior Proportion* and *Symmetry* of Composition which constitutes a *legitimate Piece*.⁴⁸

If there is a “critical sense” in the *Soliloquy*, it is identical with the moral sense; it is the moral sense applied to literary occupations.

This rather tentative formulation of a critical “sense” was followed by more extensive theorizing in the *Miscellaneous Reflections* (1714), one of the last works that Shaftesbury lived to see prepared for publication (he died in 1713). Here the concept of taste gains currency; through this work, more than any other perhaps, it becomes firmly established in British aesthetics.

What Shaftesbury meant by the term “taste” is as hard to determine as his previous intentions with regard to the moral sense; and it appears, in fact, that in the realm of moral beauty, “taste” became, for Shaftesbury, another name for the sense of beauty. The man of taste in art and manners is a “gentleman”; the man of taste in the moral realm is a true philosopher and a moral being. “To *philosophize*, in a just Signification, is but to carry *Good-breeding* a step higher,” Shaftesbury writes. “For the Accomplishment of Breeding is, To learn whatever is *decent* in Company, or *beautiful* in Arts; and the Sum of Philosophy is, To learn what is *just* in Society, and *beautiful* in Nature, and the Order of the World.” The gentleman and the philosopher have but a single goal: “Both *Characters* aim at what is excellent, aspire to a *just Taste*, and carry in view the Model of what

is *beautiful* and becoming.”⁴⁹ Thus it would appear but a step from lace ruffles and a pinch of snuff to the moral law within — a convenient arrangement for a peer of England.

In his later writings, then, Shaftesbury seems to consider taste and moral sense as interchangeable. One is tempted to argue, therefore, that “taste” when used as a critical term in the arts carries with it the characteristics which were ascribed, in the early writings, to the moral sense. And if this is the case, then Shaftesbury's position with regard to critical and aesthetic judgment has altered somewhat; for, as we have seen, there was in the early *Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit* no faculty of aesthetic judgment per se. However, Shaftesbury nowhere refers to taste in art as a “sense” or “faculty.” And even if we were correct in assuming that he thought of it in the same terms as the moral sense, we are not much closer to a full-fledged aesthetic faculty; for the moral sense, as we have previously argued, is far less an autonomous faculty than a generalized ability to perceive, involving no extra talent or internal sense. Hence, it is a mistake to maintain, as a recent student of Shaftesbury has, that Shaftesbury himself advanced “the notion that there is a faculty of aesthetic judgment, a *special sense which can be identified with taste*. . . .”⁵⁰

(9) Shaftesbury is a transitional figure in the history of aesthetics: though he was the nominal founder of a new tradition, he had one foot planted firmly in the past, not only the past as represented by the Italian Renaissance, but that of classical antiquity as well. So we find that his treatment of the problem of taste is at once characteristic of the Enlightenment quest for a *subjective* critical standard and, to a greater extent, of the Renaissance tradition of objectivity and reason in art. It is only by taking into account Shaftesbury's divided allegiance that we can fathom the rather moderate and, from the Enlightenment point of view, indecisive stand that he finally takes.

Shaftesbury often compared the moral sense to an instinct; and it was in criticizing Locke's denial of innate ideas that the term “instinct” often occurred. With regard to “the Notions and Principles of *Fair, Just, and Honest*,” Shaftesbury wrote in

The Moralists, “if you dislike the word *Innate*, let us change it, if you will, for INSTINCT; and call *Instinct*, that which *Nature* teaches, exclusive of *Art*, *Culture* or *Discipline*.”⁵¹ Shaftesbury agreed with Locke that one is not born with a catalogue of precepts and principles imprinted on the *tabula*⁵²; but this, he maintained, is no argument against innate principles. (It is doubtful that Locke thought it was either.) He wrote to Michael Ainsworth,

The question is not about the *time* the ideas entered . . . but whether the constitution of man be such that, being adult and grown up, at such or such a time, sooner or later (no matter when), the idea and sense of order, administration, and a God, will not infallibly, inevitably, necessarily spring up in him.⁵³

Following this line of thought, we would naturally conclude that aesthetic standards are to be found in man's innate structure; through his innate aesthetic and moral instincts, the precepts of beauty and morality “infallibly, inevitably, necessarily spring up in him.” With regard to the aesthetic, in Kant's words, “We are suitors for agreement from everyone else, because we are fortified with a ground common to all.”⁵⁴

An important question, however, remains unanswered. If men possess innate moral and aesthetic instincts in common, why do they, nevertheless, differ in their judgments of right and wrong, beautiful and ugly? Shaftesbury's answer, an answer not uncommon in the eighteenth century, is that such instincts are liable to deflection and perversion; and they must, therefore, be guided. Thus, Shaftesbury was grossly overstating his position when he spoke of value judgments as conforming “exclusive of *Art*, *Culture* or *Discipline*.” This is particularly true of taste in art, as Shaftesbury made quite clear in the *Miscellaneous Reflections*, where he wrote:

Now TASTE or *Judgment*, 'tis suppos'd, can hardly come ready form'd with us into the World. Whatever Principles or Materials of this kind we may possibly bring with us; whatever Facultys, Senses, or anticipating Sensations, and Imaginations, may be of Nature's Growth, and arise properly, of themselves, without our Art, Promotion, or Assistance; the general *Idea* which is form'd of

all this Management, and the clear *Notion* we attain of what is preferable and principal in all these Subjects of Choice and Estimation, will not, I imagine, by any Person, be taken for *in-nate*. Use, Practice and Culture must precede *Understanding* and *Wit* of such an advanc'd Size and growth as this. A legitimate and just TASTE can neither be begotten, made, conceiv'd, or produc'd, without the antecedent *Labour* and *Pains* of CRITICISM.⁵⁵

Taste, then, does not just happen; it must be made to happen.

But we are now faced anew with the problem of aesthetic standards. For if taste must be formed in order to become a reliable organ of critical judgment, the question must arise: According to what standard is it to be formed? What is the standard by which the critic judges taste to be good or bad? If the standard is his own taste, then what is the standard on which *his* taste was formed? And the answer that Shaftesbury ultimately falls back on is the answer of tradition: reason is the judge, harmony the law.

For HARMONY is Harmony *by Nature*, let Men judge ever so ridiculously of Musick. So is *Symmetry* and *Proportion* founded still *in Nature*, let Mens Fancy prove ever so *Gothick* in their Architecture, Sculpture, or whatever other designing Art.⁵⁶

The ignorant may *feel*, but the artist and connoisseur know: "The Philosopher and virtuoso alone [are] capable to prove, demonstrate. But the idiot, the vulgar man can feel, recognize."⁵⁷ And if the vulgar recognize the beautiful, it is only by luck or because their taste has been correctly formed by the man of reason. Taste makes a big noise in Shaftesbury's later writings; but reason is the still small voice.

What function, then, does taste perform? One suspects that in the last analysis it is the function of Henry More's *Boniform Faculty*: a faculty of delectation but not of judgment. In art we may savor with our taste, "feeling only by the Effect, whilst ignorant of the cause"⁵⁸; but, ultimately, it is reason that teaches us what is beautiful. Taste is but right opinion: reason is knowledge. If we judge the beautiful by a "sense," it is a sense that reason has formed; and reason is the epistemologically prior

principle. “Art it-self is severe: the *Rules* rigid. And if I expect *the Knowledge* shou'd come to me by accident, or in play, I shall be grossly deluded. . . .”⁵⁹

For Shaftesbury, critical and aesthetic judgment still function through knowledge, not perception. Shaftesbury was a man of the past; he looked into the abyss and quickly withdrew to safe ground — rational ground. But that look was of vital import to the Enlightenment; and Hutcheson rushed in where Shaftesbury feared to tread.⁶⁰

II The Sense of “Sense”

(1) The first phase in the history of the aesthetic sense in Enlightenment thought closes with Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, the first of the two treatises which comprise his *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725). It is certainly the first systematic philosophical treatment in English of what we would now call “aesthetics.”

Hutcheson makes an end point and a synthesis of an era in aesthetics and criticism: an era in which the sense of beauty — the seventh sense — played a progressive role, turning speculation away from the art object toward the perception of that object, away from the rational judgment toward the perceptual, away from the “old” aesthetics of the Renaissance toward the “new” outlook of the Enlightenment. From Hutcheson's time, the sense of beauty came to be seen, for the most part, as a conservative influence; and it would have lived out a quiet old age in Scotland had it not received a temporary new life in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*.

Hutcheson's aesthetic theory surely owes something to Shaftesbury (with whom his contemporaries often associated him). Of far greater importance is the influence of Locke. Hutcheson himself pays ample tribute to the author of the *Characteristicks*. The title page of the first edition of the *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue* reads, in part: “IN WHICH The Principles of the late Earl of Shaftesbury are explan'd and defended

against the author of the *Fable of the Bees* [i.e., Mandeville]. . . .” In the preface Shaftesbury is again referred to: “THIS moral Sense of *Beauty in Actions and Affections* may appear strange at first view: *Some of our Moralists themselves are offended at it in my* LORD SHAFTESBURY. . . .”¹ And Hutcheson further apotheosizes Shaftesbury in the following terms: “To recommend the LORD SHAFTESBURY'S *Writings to the World* is a very needless attempt. *They will be esteem'd while any Reflection remains among Men.*”² But it is Shaftesbury the moralist whom Hutcheson is most often eulogizing: seldom is it the aesthetician. And it becomes apparent from the very outset of the preface that Locke is the guiding spirit of Hutcheson's aesthetic theory. His aesthetics, unlike Shaftesbury's, is permeated with the psychological and epistemological language of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. The first *Inquiry* speaks the language of Locke even in its criticism of him: its “field of study itself is defined in Lockean terms. The method of inquiry is therefore also Locke's — the new way of ideas, conceived as a psychological programme.”³ Thus, Hutcheson's work in aesthetics is the first fruit of a union of empiricism and English Platonism which the philosophy of Locke and his pupil made possible. Shaftesbury gave Hutcheson his subject: aesthetics as a respectable and even central concern of the philosopher. Locke gave him the method of pursuing it.

(2) Hutcheson believed that he was embarking, in his aesthetic and moral treatises, on a voyage whose course had not before been charted, namely, “*inquiring into the various Pleasures which human Nature is capable of receiving.*”

*We shall generally find in our modern philosophic Writings, nothing further on this Head, than some bare Division of them into Sensible and Rational, and some trite commonplace Arguments to prove the latter to be more valuable than the former. Our sensible Pleasures are slightly pass'd over, and explain'd only by some instances in Tastes, Smells, Sounds, or such like, which Men of any tolerable Reflection generally look upon as very trifling Satisfactions. Our rational Pleasures have had much the same kind of treatment.*⁴

There cannot be much doubt that Locke's *Essay* is the principal representative in Hutcheson's mind of the "modern philosophic Writings"; and Hutcheson's characterization of it is substantially correct. "Delight or uneasiness, one or other of them," writes Locke, "join themselves to almost all our ideas both of sensation and reflection: and there is scarce an affection of our senses from without, any retired thought of our mind within, which is not able to produce in us pleasure or pain."⁵ But he nowhere pursues the topic with any great thoroughness. That was the task Hutcheson made his own: to do for "delight" and "uneasiness," "pleasure," and "pain," what Locke had left undone, which Hutcheson (I think rightly) believed was almost everything.

Hutcheson, as we have seen, divides pleasures into two kinds: *sensible* and *rational*. The sensible pleasures are those that are felt directly by the external senses: thus, the pleasant sound of a musical instrument's timbre, the disagreeable taste of a bitter herb, the pain of looking directly at the sun, the pleasant warmth of a fireside. And these pleasures or pains, satisfactions or dissatisfactions, are, Hutcheson urges (as did Locke) unaffected by the wishes and desires of the perceiver: which is considered one indelible mark of sense perception. Hutcheson writes:

*In reflecting upon our external Senses, we plainly see, that our Perceptions of pleasure or Pain do not depend directly upon our Will. Objects do not please us, according as we incline they should: The Presence of some Objects necessarily pleases us, and the Presence of others as necessarily displeases us. . . . By the very Frame of our Nature the one is made the Occasion of Delight, and the other of Dissatisfaction.*⁶

But, Hutcheson continues, the pleasures we are capable of receiving are not confined to the immediate pleasures of sense perception: "*for there are many other sorts of Objects, which please, or displease us as necessarily as material objects do when they operate upon our Organs of sense.*"⁷ And among these are the objects which we would now call "aesthetic." They are distinguished from the former in that the pleasures we receive directly from external sense perception are pleasures taken in

simple qualities: a sound, a color, a smell, a taste, a touch. Whereas the pleasures that we call “aesthetic” are pleasures received in the contemplation of complex qualities: collections of simple qualities exhibiting some form or arrangement.

*Thus we shall find our selves pleas'd with a regular Form, a piece of Architecture, or Painting, a composition of Notes, a Theorem . . . and we are conscious that this Pleasure necessarily arises from the Contemplation of the Idea, which is then present to our Minds, with all its Circumstances, altho some of these Ideas have nothing of what we call sensible perception in them; and in those which have, the Pleasure arises from some Uniformity, Order, Arrangement, Imitation; and not from the simple Ideas of Color, or Sound, or mode of Extension separately considered.*⁸

Hutcheson concludes: “THESE Determinations to be pleas'd with any Forms or Ideas which occur to our Observation, the Author chuses to call SENSES; distinguishing them from the Powers which commonly go by that Name, by calling our Power of perceiving the Beauty of Regularity, Order, Harmony, an INTERNAL SENSE. . . .”⁹

It is important to note, in distinguishing between external and internal senses, that in the final version of the passage just quoted (the fourth edition) Hutcheson replaces the phrase “any Forms or Ideas which occur to our Observation” with “certain complex Forms.”¹⁰ The internal senses, for Hutcheson, receive pleasure from “ideas”; but so, too, do the external senses, on the Lockean model of “representative” perception, to which Hutcheson adhered. The distinction between an external and an internal sense is not that the former receives pleasure from an “external” object and the latter from an “internal” one; for both are here on the same footing. It is that the latter receives pleasure from complex ideas, the former from simple ones (and thus a uniform patch of color, or a single note cannot, for Hutcheson, give *aesthetic* pleasure). The alteration which Hutcheson made in the fourth edition of the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty* makes this clear: the internal senses do not receive pleasure from *any* forms or ideas, but only from certain *complex* forms or ideas.

(3) The first mark of sense perception for Hutcheson, as we have just seen, is its nonvolitional character. The second mark is *innateness*. Our sense of beauty is a *sense* of beauty because the pleasure it perceives, it perceives whether we will or not; but it is a sense, too, because, like the external senses, we possess it “*By the very Frame of our Nature. . . .*” “*There is,*” Hutcheson urges, “*some Sense of Beauty natural to men.*”¹¹

But the notion of an innate sense immediately raised for followers of Locke the specter of *innate ideas* which Locke was at such pains to exorcise. And so Hutcheson is adamant in his insistence “That an *internal Sense* no more presupposes an *innate Idea*, or Principle of Knowledge, than the external.”¹² What, then, does it mean for the sense of beauty to be innate? And what does it mean for it *not* to be an innate idea?

When a Cartesian claimed that certain ideas or principles are innate, there is certainly one thing he did *not* mean: he did not mean to say that infants or children have (are conscious of) these ideas or principles. Yet when Locke criticized the doctrine, this is exactly the form which it took. Thus, he argued, we can “show these propositions not to be innate, if children alone were ignorant of them.”¹³ Now there is one thing, although it is not the only thing, which Locke perhaps meant to show with such arguments: that the phrase “innate idea” is a misleading one if it does not signify “idea in consciousness since birth.”¹⁴ Locke must have been perfectly well aware that when Descartes said the idea of God is innate, he did not mean that infants are conscious of this idea, but that, under the proper conditions, such an idea will inevitably arise. We have an innate capacity of framing such an idea. But why then call the *idea* innate? This leads us away from the very thing which, for Locke, was the most crucial to a sound theory of knowledge: the *process* which, not necessarily in fact, but in rational reconstruction, brings the idea to consciousness. It is more than mere carping to insist that a thing be called by its right name, even if one is not mistaken about the nature of the thing. To call the idea of God innate is to fix attention on the idea as we have it. To call the capacity of framing the idea of God innate is to fix attention on how, under what conditions, the capacity can be

exercised. And it is in fixing on the latter, Locke believed, that the empiricist's claim can be supported.¹⁵

For Hutcheson to claim that the sense of beauty is not an innate idea, then, is to allow for the obvious and trivial fact that we are not born making aesthetic distinctions: "*It is probably some little time before Children do reflect, or at least let us know that they do reflect upon Proportion and Similitude. . . .*"¹⁶ But it is to call attention also to the manner in which our innate capacity to make aesthetic distinctions is realized. This is a topic which will occupy us more properly when we come to discuss the standard of taste and the universality of the sense of beauty. However, we must at this point establish the sense in which the sense of beauty is an *innate* capacity; and it will be best to begin by determining how many innate aesthetic senses Hutcheson is willing to countenance. This, however, will require a slight historical detour.

(4) One of the most important and most frequently remarked upon aspects of eighteenth-century British aesthetic theory is the emergence of aesthetic (as opposed to rhetorical) categories — categories of aesthetic *experience*. The dichotomy between the beautiful and the sublime, which Samuel H. Monk made the subject of his now classic study, is, of course, the most prominent division. Late in the century the picturesque emerged as another full-blown aesthetic category, making such a noise in the world that Jane Austen was moved to some lovely satire in reaction. Other critical terms such as "novelty" and "ridicule" also reared their heads, but never quite achieved individual identity to the extent that the sublime and picturesque had.

In examining the proliferation of inner senses, which the emergence of aesthetic categories inevitably brought about, we must return to the opening years of the eighteenth century and, specifically, to the work which really inaugurated the new way of ideas in aesthetics, Addison's *Pleasures of the Imagination*. Addison was one of the first Enlightenment authors to write of taste as an autonomous faculty. He was also one of the first to attempt a clear distinction between such aesthetic categories as the beautiful and the sublime on a subjective level. What the

relation between taste as a faculty and the categorization of aesthetic experience undertaken in the *Pleasures of the Imagination* is, Addison never reveals. But that he was, in part, responsible for their merging, there can be no doubt.

Addison defines the “pleasures of the imagination” in this way:

I mean only such pleasures as arise originally from sight, and . . . I divide these pleasures into two kinds: my design being, first of all, to discourse of those primary pleasures of the imagination which entirely proceed from such objects as are before our eyes; and, in the next place, to speak of those secondary pleasures of imagination which flow from the ideas of visible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories, or formed into agreeable visions of things that are either absent or fictitious.¹⁷

The “primary pleasures” take in the realm of natural beauty. The “secondary pleasures” include, for the most part, imitative beauty and, therefore, the beauty of the fine arts (except music, which owes its power to imitation proper in only a small degree). But the secondary pleasures include also the pleasures of *imagining*. Thus, if I view some natural beauty, I experience a primary pleasure of the imagination; and if that beauty is called to mind by a work of art which imitates it, or merely by an act of imagination in some moment of reverie, I experience a secondary pleasure.

The primary pleasures of the imagination are divided by Addison into three categories which “all proceed from the sight of what is great, uncommon, or beautiful.”¹⁸ These are, in the more familiar terminology of the later Enlightenment, the ideas of *sublimity*, *novelty*, and *beauty*, respectively. (Sublimity, of course, as well as the tripartite division of categories, Addison and his age appropriated from the celebrated pseudo-Longinian treatise *On the Sublime*.¹⁹) A psychological explanation accompanies each of the first two categories to account for its pleasing character. The object of great magnitude pleases through the mind’s innate disdain to be bounded. “The mind of man naturally hates to fancy itself under a sort of confinement, when the

sight is pent up in a narrow compass. . . .”²⁰ The pleasure of uncommon, novel objects is owed, essentially, to the relief of mental tedium: “We are indeed so often conversant with one set of objects, and tired out with so many repeated shows of the same thing, that whatever is new or uncommon contributes a little to vary human life, and to divert our minds for a while with the strangeness of its appearance.” Such explanations, or variations of them, survived in Britain throughout the century.

With regard to the pleasure of beauty, Addison gives us no explanation, but, rather, a description of its effect, which immediately suggests the French school of taste, as well as Hutcheson's aesthetic sense.

But there is nothing that makes its way more directly to the soul than beauty, which immediately diffuses a secret satisfaction and complacency through the imagination, and gives a finishing to any thing that is great or uncommon. [Thus, for Addison, the aesthetic categories are not exclusive of each other; for the “great” or “uncommon” can at the same time be “beautiful.”] The very first discovery of it strikes the mind with an inward joy, and spreads a cheerfulness and delight through all its faculties. There is not perhaps any real beauty or deformity more in one piece of matter than another, because we might have been so made, that whatsoever now appears loathsome to us might have shown itself agreeable; but we find, by experience, that there are several modifications of matter which the mind, without any previous consideration, pronounces at first sight beautiful or deformed.²¹

The pleasure of beauty is a “secret satisfaction”—essentially a *je ne sais quoi*. Its effect is immediate, without “previous consideration”; thus it operates in the manner of Hutcheson's internal senses in this regard. And like Hutcheson (as we shall see), Addison maintains that for the beautiful, in a certain sense, to be is to be perceived, although beauty is correlated by a benevolent Deity to “several modifications of matter” for our utility and amusement, as are the pleasures of novelty and sublimity.

Addison concludes that the primary pleasures of the imagination are ultimate mysteries “because we know neither the nature of an idea, nor the substance of a human soul, which might help us to discover the conformity or disagreeableness of the

one to the other. . . .” What remains for the aesthetician is a job of cataloguing and, at last, the way of final causes, which, Addison writes, “though they are not altogether so satisfactory, are generally more useful than the other [i.e., “necessary and efficient causes”], as they give us greater occasion of admiring the goodness and wisdom of the first Contriver.”²² We need not bother ourselves with the Spectator's theology except perhaps to observe that Hutcheson seems to have incorporated some of it into his own aesthetic theory.

But we should take time to notice how striking the influence of Locke is on Addison here. Simple ideas, for Locke, are the irreducible elements, the brute facts, of experience. Complex ideas can be explained in terms of their simple constituents; we cannot go beyond simple ideas. Definition means the breaking down of complex into simple. Once ultimate simplicity is reached, definition must end: “The names of simple ideas are not capable of any definition; the names of all complex ideas are.”²³ Thus we cannot know “the nature of an idea” (we must understand Addison to mean simple idea here) because our explanation could but consist in some kind of reduction to more simple constituents which, *ex hypothesi*, is impossible since the most simple constituents are what we are attempting to explain. The “substance of a human soul,” too, is inexplicable, Locke believes: we are “in the dark concerning these matters,” ignorant “of the nature of that thinking thing that is in us, and which we look on as ourselves.”²⁴ Addison has, clearly, learned the language of Locke and his *Essay*.

With regard to the secondary pleasures of the imagination, the pleasure in imitation (its most populous species) is, of course, a major aesthetic category in the Enlightenment, embracing, as it does, almost the whole corpus of eighteenth-century art. It is a completely autonomous category since its effect relies neither upon the sublimity nor novelty nor beauty of its objects, although it can involve them all. Imitation is, as we have seen, perceived by the intellect, according to Addison, since this perception involves a comparison of an object (or remembered image of an object) with its imitation. The pleasure which such perception arouses “may be more properly called

the pleasure of the understanding than of the fancy [or imagination],” writes Addison, “because we are not so much delighted with the image that is contained in the description [Addison is discussing poetic imitation here], as with the aptness of the description to excite the image.”²⁵ But whether a pleasure of the intellect or imagination, imitation emerges as an aesthetic category of major importance.

Addison never referred to the pleasures of the imagination as “senses” although they certainly bear characteristics which Hutcheson attributed to his sense of beauty. Both Addison and Hutcheson couched their aesthetic principles in Lockean terms; and both recognized essentially the same aesthetic categories, Hutcheson, in fact, admittedly following Addison in this regard. Thus, Addison himself was but a step away from the proliferation of aesthetic senses, as was Hutcheson at the time of the first *Inquiry*; and Hutcheson eventually took that step.

(5) In 1725, the year which saw publication of the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, Hutcheson also published a series of papers in the *Dublin Journal*, the first three of which were later collected under the title *Reflections Upon Laughter*. He there wrote: “The implanting then of a sense of the ridiculous, in our nature, was giving us an avenue to pleasure and an easy remedy for discontent and sorrow.”²⁶ This “sense of the ridiculous” is obviously cast in the same mold as Hutcheson's other inner senses, being an “avenue of pleasure” implanted “in our nature.” And if a sense of humor can be considered an *aesthetic* sense, we can begin our list with it.²⁷

In the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty* Hutcheson seems to recognize five basic aesthetic categories: *original beauty*, *relative (imitative) beauty*, *harmony (beauty of sound)*, *novelty*, and *grandeur (sublimity)*. At this time Hutcheson never speaks of more than one aesthetic sense (called, alternately, the *sense of beauty* and the *sense of harmony*), and it would appear that he thinks of all his aesthetic principles as subsumed under this single sense. It is fairly certain this is true of the first three; whether it is true of *novelty* and *grandeur* as well is more difficult to say, for Hutcheson refers to them only in an offhand manner, as if

they were second thoughts, and refers his readers to Addison for further explication.²⁸

In his next published work, the *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (1728), Hutcheson's epistemology has virtually exploded into "senses" of every description, although it is still not certain that he acknowledges more than one aesthetic sense. Hutcheson states:

If we may call *every Determination of our Minds to receive Ideas independently on our Will and to have Perceptions of Pleasure and Pain*, A SENSE, we shall find many other *Senses* beside those commonly explained. Tho it is not easy to assign accurate Divisions on such Subjects, yet we may reduce them to the following Classes. . . . In the 1st Class are the *External Senses*, universally known. In the 2d, the *Pleasant Perceptions* arising from *regular, harmonious, uniform* Objects; as also from *Grandeur* and *Novelty*. These we may call, after Mr. ADDISON, the Pleasures of the Imagination; or we may call the Power of receiving them, an *Internal Sense*. Whoever dislikes this Name may substitute another. 3. The next Class of Perceptions we may call a *Publick Sense*, *viz* 'our Determination to be pleased with the *Happiness* of others, and to be uneasy at their *Misery*'. . . . 4. The fourth Class we may call the *Moral Sense*, by which 'we perceive *Virtue*, or *Vice* in our selves, or others'. . . . 5. The fifth Class is a *Sense of Honour*, 'which makes the *Approbation*, or *Gratitude* of others, for any good actions we have done, the necessary occasion of Pleasure'. . . .²⁹

I have quoted here at some length to indicate the freedom with which Hutcheson was now applying the term "sense" in his value theory, both moral and aesthetic.

The list of aesthetic categories is approximately the same as that in the *Inquiry*, and the kinship with Addison's pleasures of the imagination is made quite explicit. It is particularly worthy of note that Hutcheson considered "pleasure of the imagination" as equivalent to "sense" — a clear indication of Addison's role in the proliferation of aesthetic senses and, in general, the development of the internal sense doctrine in aesthetics. But whether Hutcheson at this time thought of each aesthetic category as having a sense appropriate to it, or thought of them all as arising from a single sense, is not clear. The crucial passage is this: "we may call the Power of receiving them an *Internal*

Sense.” Does Hutcheson mean that one “*Internal Sense*” perceives all of “them,” or that each of “them” is perceived by a different “*Internal Sense*”? Perhaps at this juncture we are merely splitting grammatical hairs. For if Hutcheson is not now committed to the proliferation of aesthetic senses in letter, he is already committed in spirit.

But Hutcheson's advance along the multiplication table of aesthetic senses does not seem to have been a steady one: for in the *Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (1747), a halt has been called. We now have eight aesthetic categories and (unequivocally) but one “sense” appropriate to them.

The external senses of Sight and Hearing we have in common with the Brutes: but there's superadded to the Human Eye and Ear a wonderful and ingenious Relish or Sense, by which we receive subtiler pleasures; in material forms *gracefulness, beauty and proportion*; in sounds *concord and harmony*; and are highly delighted with observing exact *imitation* in the works of the more ingenious arts, Painting, Statuary and Sculpture, and in motion and Action; all which afford us far more manly pleasures than the external senses. . . . And the very *grandeur* and *novelty* of objects excite some grateful perceptions not unlike the former, which are naturally connected with and subservient to our desires of knowledge.³⁰

Hutcheson's last work, the posthumously published *System of Moral Philosophy* (1755), finally reveals the proliferation of aesthetic senses that had been lurking near the surface since 1728. The categories are still basically those of the earlier works: *beauty, imitation, harmony, design* (fitness of means to ends), *grandeur*, and *novelty*. But now Hutcheson is willing to call each category a sense;

To the senses of seeing and hearing, are superadded in most men, tho' in very different degrees, certain powers of perception of a finer kind than what we have reason to imagine are in most lower animals, who yet perceive the several colours and figures, and hear the several sounds. These we may call the senses of beauty and harmony, or, with Mr. Addison, the *imagination*. Whatever name we give them, 'tis manifest that, the several following qualities

[i.e., beauty, imitation, harmony, design, grandeur, novelty] in objects, are sources of pleasures constituted by nature; or, men have natural powers or determinations to perceive pleasure from them.³¹

Hutcheson has at last made explicit what was obvious from the start: if one is to remain entirely within the Lockean camp, every simple aesthetic perception which merits the name of a distinctive aesthetic category must imply a corresponding “sense,” or “power,” “determination to be pleased,” or something of the kind. One must be satisfied with a single aesthetic category, or not balk at the multiplication of internal senses — or, break away from the strict tutelage of Locke. To accept the first alternative would have been to turn one's back on the most interesting aesthetic and critical development of Hutcheson's age; to accept the last would have been to reject the most powerful philosophical movement of Hutcheson's age. It was not until later in the century, when the power of Locke had been somewhat blunted by philosophical criticism, that Locke's tutelage was thrown off by British aesthetics.

(6) Now if the term “sense” is so basically innocuous that six or seven aesthetic senses are not to be boggled at; that “sense” is to be considered roughly equivalent to “pleasure of the imagination” in its aesthetic setting; that even a sense of humor is to be included in the list of inner senses; we are led inevitably to the conclusion, it seems to me, that the notion of innate aesthetic senses must be understandable in terms more familiar to the modern reader, and less suggestive of a rather crude faculty psychology. What, then, are we committing ourselves to when we speak of a sense of humor, a sense of beauty, and departing now from ordinary linguistic usage, senses of grandeur, imitation, novelty, fitness, and so on? More particularly, what are we committing ourselves to when we call these senses “innate”?

To say that there is in man an innate sense of humor, or of beauty, or of grandeur, or of imitation is merely to say that sometimes we enjoy humor, or beauty, or grandeur, or imitation for its own sake. Many beautiful things may indeed be

useful, as many actions which are beneficial to others may also be beneficial to the agent who performs them; and we may sometimes admire beautiful things for their utility, as we may sometimes pursue courses which are beneficial to others out of interest to ourselves. But if we sometimes admire things merely for their beauty, then it is appropriate to say that we have an innate sense of beauty; and *this* is merely to say that sometimes we must answer the question *Why do you admire x?* not with *Because it can do y*, but merely with *Because I enjoy it* (in some special way). To be an innate aesthetic sense of x simply means that enjoyment (of some special kind) of perceiving x is sometimes the terminus of our interest in x . Hutcheson writes: "Hence it plainly appears, that some Objects are immediately the Occasions of this Pleasure of Beauty, and that we have senses fitted for perceiving it; and that it is distinct from that Joy which arises from Self-love upon prospect of Advantage. . . ." ³²

If we now cast our eye back over the list of aesthetic senses which Hutcheson is willing to countenance, we will perhaps feel less that we are being saddled with some bizarre and archaic faculty psychology. We have an *innate, internal, implanted sense* of beauty; but all this means is that sometimes we enjoy things (in a special way) with nothing else in view, just as we sometimes want to do something for others with no other end in view. We have an *innate, internal, implanted sense* of grandeur; but all this means is that sometimes we enjoy things (in another special way) with nothing else in view: likewise the *innate, internal, implanted senses* of humor, or imitation, or fitness, or novelty. They are innate because they are the endpoints of arguments. We do no essential injustice to Hutcheson if we think of the various aesthetic senses as names for various kinds of enjoyment; and, furthermore, the innateness of these senses amounts simply to saying that we sometimes treat these enjoyments as *final* answers to the question *Why?*

(7) We have so far discussed two of the four marks which Hutcheson, like many of his predecessors, took to be infallible signs of sense perception; namely, independence of will and

innateness. We come now to the third: independence of knowledge. Thus, Hutcheson writes of the sense of beauty: “This superior Power of Perception is justly called *a Sense*, because of its Affinity to the other Senses in this, that the Pleasure does not arise from any Knowledge of Principles, Proportions, Causes, or of the Usefulness of the Object; but strikes us at first with the Idea of Beauty. . . .”³³ The perception of beauty, like the perception of color, and unlike, say, the perception that 2 plus 2 equals 4, requires no knowledge of meanings, operations, first principles, purposes, or anything else of the kind.³⁴

And, finally, the sense of beauty, as a consequence, apparently, of its independence of knowledge, is immediate. So “the Ideas of Beauty and Harmony, like other sensible Ideas, are necessarily pleasant to us, as well as immediately so. . . .”³⁵ The contrast here is to discursive reason, working step-by-step from premise to conclusion. Reason plods — sense perception leaps.

(8) In sum, then, Hutcheson conceives of sense perception as: (i) independent of the will; (ii) innate; (iii) independent of knowledge; (iv) immediate. These four marks distinguish it from reason; and the perception of beauty (and other aesthetic qualities) being independent of will, innate, independent of knowledge, and immediate, must in consequence be sense perception, not rational perception.

Apart from whether aesthetic perception really is all of these things, the question arises as to whether, even if it is, it must by consequence be sense perception. Indeed, it is very questionable whether the four “exclusive” marks of sense perception are exclusive at all.

The contrast between nonvolitional sense perception and volitional reason is suspect to begin with because it is not as obvious as it might at first appear that sense perception is independent of the will. I can, of course, refuse to look at something; and in that sense what I see is subject to my will. This is dismissed by Hutcheson as a trivial case; for what he means to say is that *under certain conditions* — eyes open, facing toward object, unobstructed view, sufficient lighting, eyes healthy — my will can have no effect upon what I see. Yet Hutcheson, like

Locke, acknowledges that *attention* plays a crucial role in perception (and by attention is meant, here, not merely a physical, but a “mental” stance): one can look at something without seeing it. Indeed, we do say things like “He doesn't see because he doesn't want to.” To what extent is this a metaphorical expression? And to what extent can it be taken literally? I am not suggesting that there are no unequivocal cases in which we would want to say categorically that what we see (or hear, or touch, or taste) is not subject to our wills or desires. But the conditions governing these cases are not perhaps as trivially easy to state as Hutcheson apparently thought. We are much more aware today of the *activity* of perception than was Hutcheson, who on more than one occasion speaks of sense perception as entirely passive. And if all possible counterexamples to the nonvolitional character of sense perception are to be ruled out, not merely the admittedly trivial ones of “not looking,” we will want a very careful statement as to what the conditions *are* under which sense perception is not subject to the will. These conditions may not be very easy to state; and in lieu of such a statement, there will remain a suspicion that the counter-examples are being ruled out by fiat to protect a favored hypothesis.

But let us grant, as I think we must, that there are paradigm cases of perception which occur regardless of whether we will them or no. Does this distinguish them from “reason”? Are rational “perceptions” any more subject to the will than sensible ones? I hardly think so. In this respect, sense perception and reason are on all fours, the one with the other. I can choose not to consider an argument, or look at the evidence, just as I can close my eyes or avert my head. I cannot, however, choose not to “see” that a conclusion follows from premises if I apprehend the argument.³⁶ That “Socrates is mortal” follows from “All men are mortal and Socrates is a man” is something I cannot choose to see or not see at will, any more than I can choose to see or not see a color under the proper conditions. If being independent of will were a mark of sense perception, we would have to conclude apprehending the validity of arguments or mathematical proofs is sense perception as well. Rational “perceptions”

are no more subject to the will than sensible ones — but they are no less. For just as it makes sense to say “He doesn't see because he doesn't want to”, it makes sense as well to say “He doesn't believe because he doesn't want to.” In short, being or not being subject to the will provides no basis on which to found a distinction between sense and reason. Thus, Hutcheson's first mark of sense perception fails completely to partition off what we ordinarily call “sensation” from what we ordinarily call “reason.”

Whether sense perception is independent of knowledge is tricky. The weight of opinion today certainly rejects the view (seemingly suggested at times by eighteenth-century British empiricists) that sense perception is raw and conceptless data. On the contrary, it is seen to be concept laden. And whether we can describe a concept-laden process like sense perception as independent of knowledge seems to me very doubtful, although full of hidden complications. Perhaps we are not conscious of the knowledge relevant, say, to our color perception. But are we any more conscious of what knowledge comes into play when we perceive that $2 + 2 = 4$? Frege, and Humpty Dumpty, for reasons of their own, might like to work that out on paper. For the rest of us, it is perceived as effortlessly and as apparently untroubled by reflection as is the color of a lemon. However, you will say, the *way* knowledge participates in our perception that $2 + 2 = 4$ is very different from the way it participates in our perception of the yellowness of lemons or the shapes of coins, unconscious though they both may be. Doubtless you are right. Yet it will not help Hutcheson out. For the game he is playing has by that admission already been lost. We cannot help distinguish sense perception from reason merely by the absence of knowledge from the former; and that is just what Hutcheson seems to be claiming we can do.

Nor is the fourth mark of sense perception, *immediacy*, any more successful in distinguishing sense from reason. Immediacy, I take it, can be understood here in two senses, although Hutcheson does not make this clear. We might call the “perceiving” that $A + B = B + A$ immediate in the temporal sense, if only a negligible period of time elapses between our

attending to the equation and our acquiescing to it. Or we might call the “perceiving” immediate in an epistemological or methodological sense if what we are saying is that no logical step intervenes; if, that is, there is no proof. In Hutcheson's day, I suppose, this would be called intuitive or axiomatic. Thus, it might take some time for me to see that A plus B equals B plus A , yet I would nevertheless want to call my apprehension immediate in the methodological sense. Conversely, a Gallois or a Gauss might see instantly that some very complicated equation follows from some other, whereas it might cost a lesser man considerable time and effort; and yet we would not want to call the apprehension immediate in the methodological sense even in the case of the temporally immediate apprehension of Gallois or Gauss if there were a proof — a discursive series of steps — from one to the other. But in whichever sense we take “immediate,” the immediacy of apprehension fails to be an exclusive mark of sense perception. If we take Hutcheson to be saying that no steps can intervene between the perception of an object and the perception of its beauty, this would not rule out the possibility that the perception of beauty is a rational intuition. And if we take him, on the other hand, to be saying that the perception of beauty is always instantaneous, it would, again, not rule out the possibility of the perception being rational as there are instantaneous rational perceptions even of the methodologically non-immediate kind.

Perhaps, however, Hutcheson is saying that sense perception in general, and aesthetic perception in particular, are *always* immediate whereas rational perception is sometimes immediate and sometimes not; and for this reason aesthetic perception cannot be rational but must be sensate. It is obvious, I think, that this ploy must fail as well. For in neither sense of immediate does it appear that aesthetic perception is *always* immediate, or that sense perception in general is *always* immediate.

To begin with, it is clear that the perception of beauty is not always immediate in the temporal sense. I may perceive the beauty of a rose instantaneously, but not the beauty of a three-volume novel or an opera in four acts. It does, after all, take time to read *Middlemarch* or listen to *The Marriage of Figaro*.

But surely it is clear as well that perceiving the beauty of *Middlemarch* or *The Marriage of Figaro* consists in steps involving, among other things, the perception of the beauties of various parts. Thus, to perceive that *Middlemarch* or *The Marriage of Figaro* is beautiful, other perceptions of beauty must intervene, just as to perceive that one theorem follows from another, intervening rational perceptions may be necessary. Again, there does not seem to be any ground here for distinguishing sense perception from reason and identifying aesthetic perception with the former.

With regard to *innateness*, the picture is not so clear because the concept is a difficult one to pin down. However, we argued previously that for Hutcheson the sense of beauty is innate in as much as we cannot resolve our aesthetic interest into any *other* kind of interest. And what this means is that there is a natural terminus to our aesthetic reasoning. I may point out to you the features that an object possesses, to try to get you to see its beauty. But a point comes when, if you do not acquiesce, I simply conclude that you lack “taste,” aesthetic sensibility, an “ear for music,” or something of the kind. In other words, I treat you as I would a color-blind person: someone with a “sense” lacking or impaired.

But if this is what we mean by a faculty being innate, innateness, like Hutcheson's other three marks, fails to distinguish sense perception from reason. For it is clear that rational argument, too, has its terminus: the point at which we appeal to self-evidence or intuition. And if someone fails ultimately to grasp a rational argument, we conclude that he lacks rational insight (or what have you). What else can we do but treat someone who cannot be gotten to “see” a proof as a rationally “blind” man?

Hutcheson, to be sure, saw the innateness of the aesthetic senses as a psychological or physiological innateness and conceived of the possibility of creatures having aesthetic perceptions vastly different from our own. “Other *Minds*,” he writes, “may possibly be so framed as to receive no [aesthetic] Pleasure from *Uniformity* [as we do], and we actually find that the same regular Forms do not seem equally to please all the Animals

known to us. . . .”³⁷ Here, it might be claimed, the symmetry between reason and sense perception breaks down; for reason is not “innate” in this psychological or physiological sense. A creature who did not share our rational “perceptions” would not be said to have different rational perceptions from our own. Rather, he would be said to be “irrational” — to not have rational perceptions at all.

This may be true enough; but it will not help Hutcheson's argument. For what Hutcheson is trying to do is to show aesthetic distinctions are sensation-like rather than reason-like by showing that they are, among other things, innate. However, innateness alone will not do the job. He must assume further that they are innate in the way in which sense perception is innate and not the way in which reason is innate. And that would be begging the question at issue.

III The Sense of “Beauty”

(1) It was established in Chapter II that Hutcheson acknowledges the existence of (at least) six “internal senses” which might fairly be described as “aesthetic senses”: they are the senses of *beauty*, *grandeur*, *imitation*, *novelty*, *fitness*, and *humor*. What I want to establish now are the “objects” of these “senses,” or, what Hutcheson takes to be equivalent, the references of the terms “beauty,” “grandeur,” and so on. I will concern myself in this chapter exclusively with the object of the sense of beauty, or, the reference of the term “beauty,” as the sense of beauty and its object are discussed at length by Hutcheson. If we find out anything about the objects of the other senses, it will have to be mostly by inference from what we find out about the sense of beauty and its object.

It might be thought that we already have in our hands what we are seeking. For we already know that the sense of beauty is a disposition to receive pleasure. Surely, then, *pleasure* (of some special kind) must be the object of the sense of beauty.

This may indeed be what we ultimately conclude about the matter. But a moment's reflection will reveal that the road is not by any means so direct. The sense of hearing, after all, is (among other things) a disposition to receive pleasure; but the object of the sense of hearing is sound as well as pleasure. So we cannot conclude merely from the fact that the sense of beauty is a disposition to receive pleasure, that pleasure is its sole object, or that the term *beauty* refers to a pleasure (of some special kind). The passage which holds the key to our puzzle is the following:

Let it be observ'd that in the following Papers, the word Beauty is taken for the Idea rais'd in us, and a Sense of Beauty for our Power of receiving this Idea. Harmony also denotes our pleasant Ideas arising from compositions of Sounds, and a good Ear (as it is generally taken) a Power of perceiving this Pleasure.¹

Our difficulty here involves the term “idea” as it is used by Hutcheson and Locke. For on the Lockean model of perception, which Hutcheson adopts, the term “idea” refers (at least) to the following kinds of sensations: pleasures (and pains), sensations of secondary qualities (for example, “sweet” or “red”), sensations of primary qualities (for example, “square”) — all of which are at least *prima facie* candidates for the referent of the term “beauty.” Beauty is said, in the passage quoted, to refer to an idea; and harmony — the beauty of sound — is called, more specifically, a pleasant idea. But an idea need not be a pleasure; and a pleasant idea need not be a pleasure either; witness the fact that the idea of my girlfriend is a pleasant idea though it is not a pleasure.

These difficulties can be resolved only by examining closely what Hutcheson has to say further about the idea of beauty. And before we do this we must have at least a rough outline before us of Locke's perceptual model *as it was understood by Hutcheson*. (I add this proviso as Hutcheson's interpretation of Locke on these points may not be the one that a careful contemporary reading of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* would support.)²

(2) I do not intend to present anything like a systematic account of Locke's theory of perception. This would lead us too far afield. What I wish to do, rather, is to present some crucial passages from Locke which very obviously provided Hutcheson with his philosophical foundations. With these passages before us, we will then be able to carry forward our interpretation of Hutcheson. And to assure ourselves that these passages do indeed express views of Locke which Hutcheson shared, I will, whenever possible, set them alongside Hutcheson's own words.

Locke's primary philosophical goal, as he states it, is to “inquire

into the *original* of those *ideas*, notions, or whatever else you please to call them, which a man observes, and is conscious to himself he has in his mind; and the ways whereby the understanding comes to be furnished with them.”³ That Hutcheson shared this goal is perfectly clear; in fact, this passage seems to have given him the title for his first book, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*. And this kind of title continued, throughout the eighteenth century, to be used by those who shared the empiricist approach to aesthetics; witness, for example, Edmund Burke's later *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*.

What, then, is the “original” of our ideas? Locke's answer, as every student of philosophy knows, is *experience*, and experience is *perception*: either “external” or “internal,” that is, by the five senses, or “introspection.” “Our observation employed either about external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understandings with all the materials of thinking.”⁴

What kinds of ideas does perception deliver? Locke is not altogether clear.⁵ Ultimately, the mind becomes furnished with two kinds of ideas, “simple” and “complex” (or “uncompounded” and “compounded”). Simple ideas are always the direct result of perception: either the “outer” perception of the five external senses, or the “inner” perceptions of introspection. Thus, “These simple ideas, the materials of all our knowledge, are suggested and furnished to the mind only by those two ways above mentioned, vis. sensation and reflection.”⁶ And *one* meaning that “simple” seems to have for Locke is the *given*. The opposite of the given — that is, *given in perception* — is that which is constructed (or otherwise arrived at) by the mind subsequent to perception. “When the understanding is once stored with these simple ideas, it has the power to repeat, compare, and unite them, even to an almost infinite variety, and so can make at pleasure new complex ideas.”⁷ Hutcheson, following Locke, recognizes this power (or powers) of the mind, and hence this version of the distinction between simple and complex ideas: “The Mind has a Power of compounding Ideas that

were received separately. . . .”⁸ So, for Locke and Hutcheson, there are simple ideas and complex ideas; and sometimes they seem to mean by this ideas given in perception and ideas “constructed” out of the given (or otherwise arrived at from the given), but not themselves given.

However, there are times when Locke seems to mean by “simple” idea something like irreducible or atomic, and by “complex” idea, the idea analyzable into simple ideas, thus suggesting that the complex idea *can* be given in perception, and *is* complex in the sense that it can, subsequent to perception, be broken down into its constituent parts. Hutcheson shares this confusion, speaking not only of the mind's power of constructing complex ideas out of simple ones, but of analyzing *given* complex ideas into simples, by “considering separately each of the simple Ideas, which might perhaps have been impress'd jointly in the Sensations.”⁹

Ideas can further be distinguished as either of primary or of secondary qualities. As Hutcheson interpreted Locke, the distinction is one between ideas which resemble qualities in the external world and ideas which do not. Locke's most unequivocal statement of the distinction in these terms reads:

[T]he ideas of the primary qualities of bodies are resemblances of them, and their patterns do really exist in the bodies themselves, but the ideas produced in us by these secondary qualities have no resemblance of them at all. There is nothing like our ideas, existing in the bodies themselves. They are, in the bodies we denominate from them, only a power to produce these sensations in us: and what is sweet, blue, or warm in idea, is but the certain bulk, figure, and motion of the insensible parts, in the bodies themselves, which we call so.¹⁰

Finally, we must add to the ideas of primary and secondary qualities the ideas of pleasure and pain. “Amongst the simple ideas which we receive both from sensation and reflection *pain* and *pleasure* are two very considerable ones.”¹¹

Our course now is clear. Hutcheson accepts these distinctions of Locke's down the line. Like Locke, he distinguishes among simple and complex ideas, ideas of primary and ideas of secondary

qualities, and ideas of pleasure and of pain. The word “beauty,” he tells us, “is taken for an Idea rais'd in us. . . .” Our task, then, is to determine whether that idea is, for Hutcheson, simple or complex, the idea of a primary or secondary quality, or a pleasure.

(3) The first question before us is whether the idea of beauty was a complex idea for Hutcheson. It was for Locke in fact one of his paradigm cases: “Ideas thus made up of several simple ones put together, I call *complex*;—such as are beauty, gratitude, a man, an army, the universe; which, though complicated of various simple ideas, or complex ideas made of simple ones, yet are, when the mind pleases, considered each of itself, as one entire thing, and signified by one name.”¹² Complex ideas can be divided into three kinds, according to Locke: those of *substances*, *modes*, and *relations*; the term “mode” signifying some attribute of substance. Modes can further be subdivided into *simple* and *mixed*, the idea of beauty falling into the latter category.

Of these *modes* there are two sorts which deserve distinct consideration: First, there are some which are only variations, or different combinations, of the same simple idea, without the mixture of any others. . . . Secondly, there are others compounded of simple ideas of several kinds, put together to make one complex one: v.g. beauty, consisting of a certain composition of colour and figure, causing delight in the beholder. . . .¹³

It is here that Hutcheson parts company with his mentor and strikes out on his own. He does not seem to follow Locke in making beauty a complex idea; had he done so, indeed, there would have been no need to postulate a *sense* of beauty. That there is a sense of beauty implies that the idea of beauty is a simple idea. Locke himself allowed the possibility of there being more than the generally acknowledge five senses: “I have here followed the common opinion of man's having but five senses; though, perhaps, there may be justly counted more. . . .”¹⁴ And it is this suggestion of Locke's, perhaps, which put Shaftesbury and Hutcheson on their way. It is Locke's precept

that for every distinct kind of simple idea there must be an appropriate sense. Hutcheson cleaved to it: "When two Perceptions are entirely different from each other, or agree in nothing but the general Idea of Sensation, we call the powers of receiving those different Perceptions, *different* Senses."¹⁵ Thus, that Hutcheson believed it necessary to postulate a sense of beauty, together with his acceptance of the above precept, leads us to the conclusion that beauty, for Hutcheson, was a simple idea.

It is worthy of some mention, however, that we must discover the simplicity of the idea of beauty in Hutcheson inferentially; it is nowhere stated explicitly in the first *Inquiry* (or elsewhere, so far as I know). Hutcheson, in fact, seems to reserve the name *simple idea* exclusively for the sensations of the external senses. And the hypothesis of a sense of beauty is treated in one place, quite cavalierly, as rather a matter of choice and convenience than of necessity. Thus, he writes:

It is of no consequence whether we call these Ideas of Beauty and Harmony, Perceptions of the External Senses of Seeing and Hearing, or not. I should rather choose to call our Power of perceiving these Ideas, an *Internal Sense*, were it only for the Convenience of distinguishing them from other Sensations of Seeing and Hearing which men may have without Perception of Beauty and Harmony.¹⁶

That Hutcheson never explicitly stated the simplicity of the idea of beauty leaves open the bare possibility that, like Locke, he thought of it as a complex idea and invoked a sense of beauty because the *pleasure* which *accompanies* the idea of beauty requires it, aesthetic pleasure presumably being itself a simple idea and thus requiring a sense to perceive it. But this is, at best, an awkward and left-footed reading of Hutcheson; nor will it produce, in the long run, a coherent interpretation. I shall assume, therefore, with every commentator on Hutcheson known to me, that, unlike Locke, Hutcheson believed the idea of beauty to be a simple idea; and that because the postulating of a sense of beauty would make this palpable to any student of Locke, he never felt it necessary to make the premise explicit. Beauty, then, is a simple idea; and this conclusion brings us to

our next task: deciding whether Hutcheson thought of beauty as the idea of a primary quality, the idea of a secondary quality, or a pleasure.

(4) The question now before us is: Does the term *beauty* refer to the idea of a primary quality, the idea of a secondary quality, or a pleasure (of some special kind)? The passage in which Hutcheson provides most of the materials for such a determination is full of difficulties, and must be quoted at some length.

Beauty is either Original, or Comparative; or if any like the Terms better, Absolute or Relative: Only let it be noted, that by Absolute or Original Beauty, is not understood any Quality suppos'd to be in the Object, that should of itself be beautiful, without relation to any Mind which perceives it: For Beauty, like other Names of sensible Ideas, properly denotes the Perception of some Mind; so Cold, Heat, Sweet, Bitter, denote the Sensations in our Minds, to which perhaps there is no resemblance in the Objects that excite these ideas in us, however we generally imagine that there is something in the Object just like our Perceptions. The Ideas of Beauty and Harmony being excited upon our Perception of some primary Quality, and having relation to Figure and Time, may indeed have a nearer resemblance to Objects, than these Sensations that seem not so much any Pictures of Objects, as Modifications of the perceiving Mind; and yet were there no Mind with a Sense of Beauty to contemplate Objects, I see not how they could be call'd beautiful. We therefore by Absolute Beauty understand only that Beauty which we perceive in Objects without comparison to any thing external, of which the Object is suppos'd an Imitation, or Picture; such as that Beauty perceiv'd from the Works of Nature, artificial Forms, Figures, Theorems. Comparative or Relative Beauty is that which we perceive in Objects, commonly considered as Imitations or Resemblances of something else.¹⁷

Let us begin by listing the claims made here which we must somehow absorb into a coherent interpretation.

- i. "Beauty" is not the name of a quality in objects.
- ii. No object would be called "beautiful" if there were no mind (with a sense of beauty) to perceive it.
- iii. "Beauty" is the name of a "perception" or "sensible idea"

in the mind of a perceiver, *like* “cold,” “heat,” “sweet,” “bitter.”

- iv. Ideas like “cold,” “heat,” “sweet,” “bitter” do not resemble any qualities in objects which excite these ideas.
- v. The ideas of beauty and harmony can be aroused in the mind by some *primary* quality (or qualities).
- vi. The ideas of beauty and harmony, because they can be aroused by (the primary qualities of) figure and time, may resemble objective qualities somewhat more than ideas such as “cold,” “heat,” “sweet,” “bitter,” which do not resemble any objective qualities at all. (I interpret Hutcheson as holding here that arrangements both of primary and secondary qualities, as well as combinations of the two, can give rise to the idea of beauty. The quoted passage perhaps suggests, out of context, that *only* arrangements of primary qualities can. But this is not consistent with what Hutcheson says elsewhere.)

Now Locke, and Hutcheson, following Locke, held to a causal and representational theory of perception: *causal* in that what we are directly aware of in perception are “ideas in the mind” caused to be there by qualities of objects of which we are not directly aware; *representational* in that some of the ideas are said to resemble or represent some of the qualities which cause them. And this being the case, we may rule out any “naively realistic” interpretation of Hutcheson: that is, any interpretation in which beauty is a quality of objects which we perceive directly.¹⁸

We may also rule out the possibility that the idea of beauty is the idea of a primary quality, for two reasons. First, beauty is said to be relative to some perceiving mind; but primary qualities are not — they exist independently of any perceiving mind. To be sure, secondary qualities exist objectively in a certain sense: as “powers” of certain arrangements of primary qualities capable of causing certain ideas (e.g., “cold,” “heat,” “sweet,” “bitter”) in our minds, but they have no objective existence apart from that. Second, the idea of beauty may be more like the quality in objects which arouses it than the ideas of secondary qualities are, but this relation is not considered to be the strong relation of resemblance which holds between the ideas of

primary qualities and the corresponding qualities themselves. (I discuss this point at greater length toward the end of this chapter.) Hence, beauty is the idea of something very like a secondary quality, or it is a pleasure: these two possibilities alone remain.

(5) What case can we make for beauty as the idea of a secondary quality? To begin with, the crucial passage which we quoted at length above leaves the distinct impression that beauty is the idea of something very like a secondary quality: it does so by likening beauty *only* to the ideas of secondary qualities (“cold,” “heat,” “sweet,” “bitter”) when spelling out its subjective, mind-dependent status. If beauty were a pleasure, why not use the concept of pleasure in explicating this point? Pleasure, after all, is subjective and mind-dependent, too.

But we need not rely on the above passage alone to support a construal of beauty as the idea of a secondary quality. For passages abound in which the idea of beauty is sharply distinguished from the pleasure to which it is said to give rise. Thus, Hutcheson writes in one place: “the Ideas of Beauty and Harmony, like other sensible Ideas, are necessarily pleasant to us, as well as immediately so . . . ,”¹⁹ clearly suggesting that the idea of beauty gives rise to a pleasure, and thus that it is not itself a pleasure (although it is a pleasurable idea). Again, in discussing the beauty of scientific and mathematical theorems, Hutcheson writes that “we discern a sort of Beauty, very like, in many respects, to that observ'd in sensible Objects, and accompany'd with like pleasure . . . ”²⁰ Here, too, the idea of beauty is said to give rise to or accompany a pleasure and cannot, therefore, be identical to it.

We have already eliminated the possibility that beauty is the idea of a primary quality. If, then, the idea of beauty is not identical with a pleasure, but as the two passages quoted above seem to suggest gives rise to, or is accompanied by, a pleasure, two possibilities alone remain: either it is a complex idea, or it is the idea of something like a secondary quality. There is strong reason to believe that Hutcheson did not take beauty to be a complex idea because there would, in this case, have been no

reason to postulate a *sense* of beauty. By elimination, then, we seem to be left with but one remaining possibility: the idea of beauty is the idea of a secondary quality like “red” or “warm” or “bitter.”

(6) There seem, then, to be passages which can be interpreted only as sharply distinguishing between the idea of beauty and pleasure. Yet, there are passages, too, which seem unequivocally to identify beauty with pleasure. Hutcheson often expresses the distinction between a man who can and a man who cannot perceive beauty as the distinction between a man who can and a man who cannot experience pleasure (of some special kind). Thus, he writes:

[M]any Men have, in the common meaning, the Senses of Seeing and Hearing perfect enough; they perceive all the simple ideas separately, and have their pleasures. . . . And yet perhaps they shall relish no pleasure in Musical Compositions, in Painting, Architecture, natural Landskip; or but a very weak one in comparison of what others enjoy from the same Objects. This greater Capacity of receiving such pleasant Ideas we commonly call a fine Genius or Taste . . .²¹

Here, it appears to me, the distinction between aesthetic and nonaesthetic rests squarely on the concept of pleasure or enjoyment. The difference between a man who does and a man who does not have the sense of beauty is the difference between a man who does and a man who does not enjoy, take pleasure in, “Musical Compositions, . . . Painting, Architecture, natural Landskip.” Surely the implications of this are that the idea of beauty is identical with a pleasure (of some special kind); the experience of a certain kind of pleasure is said to be identical with the having of the capacity to perceive beauty.

Another passage which points unequivocally to an identification of beauty with pleasure is the following, added by Hutcheson to the fourth edition of the *Inquiry*, perhaps indicating that he was aware of the ambiguity of his text and was inclining more in his later years toward the identification of beauty with pleasure. It reads, in part: “The bare Idea of the Form is something

separable from Pleasure, as may appear from the different *Tastes* of men about the Beauty of Forms, where we don't imagine that they differ in any Ideas, either of Primary or Secondary Qualities.”²²

Hutcheson, I believe, is here contrasting individuals with and individuals without the sense of beauty. Let us say that two such people, one with and one without the sense of beauty, are looking at *X*. Now the fact that their disagreement about the beauty of *X* is not a disagreement about primary or secondary qualities does not rule out the possibility that beauty is *like* a secondary quality; and that is really what our alternative to the beauty-as-pleasure interpretation maintains. What Hutcheson is saying here is that when an individual with and an individual without the sense of beauty disagree about the beauty of *X*, they are not disagreeing about the normal, acknowledged, garden-variety qualities of objects — those that are perceived by the universally recognized five senses. What rules out the beauty-as-secondary quality interpretation in this passage is the further claim that when we disagree about the beauty of *X*, we are revealing differences in our perceptions of pleasure. We can all perceive the same primary and secondary qualities of *X*, says Hutcheson, and yet not all perceive the beauty of *X*, because we can all perceive the primary and secondary qualities of *X* and yet not all experience pleasure (of a certain kind) in perceiving *X*. Thus, perceiving pleasure (of some special kind) is identical with perceiving beauty; and the idea of beauty, then, must be identical with pleasure since the perception of beauty is the having of the idea of beauty.

(7) We have examined some passages which seem amenable only to the interpretation of beauty as the idea of something very like a secondary quality, as well as passages amenable only to the interpretation of beauty as a pleasure. There are, in addition, passages which seem amenable to either interpretation; and it would be well to look at some of these in the bargain.

The passages I have in mind are all of the same kind and are best described as phrases; for example: “this Pleasure of Beauty:”²³; “the Pleasures of Beauty”²⁴; and so on.

The phrase “pleasure (or pleasures) of beauty” is clearly susceptible of being interpreted in the same way as a phrase like “the pleasure of his company.” His company is not identical with pleasure (or a pleasure), but gives pleasure, is enjoyed. His company, and the pleasure of his company, are two different things. Likewise, it might be argued, beauty is no more identical with pleasure in the phrase “the pleasure of beauty” than is his company identical with pleasure in the phrase “the pleasure of his company.” Thus, both phrases quoted above are compatible with the view that the idea of beauty is pleasant, gives rise to pleasure, but is not identical with pleasure: they are both compatible, in other words, with the interpretation of beauty as something like the idea of a secondary quality.

But the phrase “the p of q ” often means something like “the p that is called q ” (as in “the state of Washington”) or “the p (genus) that is q (species)” (as in “a state of inebriation”). So we may also construe the phrase “the pleasure of beauty” as “the pleasure that is called ‘beauty’ ” or “the pleasure (genus) that is beauty (species).” And this, of course, makes the phrase (and others like it) perfectly compatible with the notion of beauty as pleasure (or a pleasure).

(8) We have before us now three classes of statements about the idea of beauty: (i) the class of statements to the effect that it is very like the idea of a secondary quality; (ii) the class of statements to the effect that it is pleasure (or a pleasure); (iii) the class of statements that are compatible with both (i) and (ii). We have five choices: we can conclude that Hutcheson is simply too vague to be interpreted one way or the other; we can conclude that he is self-contradictory; we can plump for (i) and sweep (ii) under the carpet as lapses in language; we can plump for (ii) and carpet (i); we can, finally, take the heroic line and try to find a position that is compatible with both (i) and (ii).

With regard to the first alternative, it is certainly the case that Hutcheson has not made his position clear. If he had, we would not face five alternatives. But whatever he was vague about (and he was vague about something), it was not the distinction between the idea of a secondary quality and a pleasure. I think he

knew that distinction perfectly well; and if he treated the idea of beauty sometimes as the one and sometimes as the other, it was not because he was unaware of the difference. Locke was clear enough on this point to make it beyond belief that his disciple should be confused.

Nor does it seem any more credible to me that Hutcheson should contradict himself in so obvious a way on so obvious a point. There may be contradictions in his position; but they are not as blatant as that.

The third and fourth alternatives are at least plausible. If I were to choose one, I would choose the fourth, plump for beauty as a pleasure, and consider any statement to the effect that beauty is like a secondary quality a *lapsus calami*. For Hutcheson's book, as he states in the preface, is committed to the examination of pleasure; and the sense of beauty is proposed to account for our experiences of a particular kind of pleasure. It is much easier to read "pleasure" for "beauty" than to describe the idea of beauty as an idea which gives rise to a pleasure. The text will support the former interpretation with fewer wrenches and groans. But this alternative does not produce anything like real conviction. It may be better than the third, yet the best that can be said for it is that it is the lesser evil. There are just too many strong and detailed passages in which beauty is likened to a secondary quality. It requires more averting of the eyes than I can manage to dismiss them as loose talk. The heroic line seems the only palatable one.

What stands in the way of a consistent interpretation is our easy acceptance of the disjunction: either a secondary quality or a pleasure. Can we not say *both*? There is an eighteenth-century precedent, with which there is no reason to think Hutcheson was not familiar, for making this move. For although Locke, as we have seen, sharply distinguished between the ideas of secondary qualities and pleasures or pains, this distinction is blurred by Berkeley in the *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous* (1713). Whereas Locke would say, for example, that when I put my hand close to a fire, I am affected with the simple idea of a secondary quality, *intense heat*, which gives rise to *another* simple idea, pain, Berkeley wants to say that there is

but *one* simple idea which can be understood under two descriptions, “intense heat,” and “pain.” Thus, Philonous, Berkeley's mouthpiece in the dialogue, maintains that “the fire affects you only with one simple, uncompounded idea . . . this same simple idea is both the intense heat immediately perceived, and the pain; and, consequently . . . the intense heat immediately perceived, is nothing distinct from a particular sort of pain.”²⁵ Notice, we are not attributing to Locke the view that there is any perceptible time interval between the perception of intense heat and the perception of pain: only the view that we are affected with a complex idea which can be analyzed into simple ideas of intense heat and pain. Where Locke and Berkeley differ is that whereas for Locke we are affected with a complex idea of “intense heat” plus “pain,” for Berkeley we are affected with a simple idea which can be described either as “intense heat” or “pain.”

Now what I want to argue is that for Hutcheson the idea of beauty as something like a secondary quality, and the idea of beauty as a pleasure are one and the same idea, just as Berkeley's idea of intense heat and his idea of pain are one and the same idea. The reason, then, why Hutcheson sometimes describes beauty as the idea of something like a secondary quality and sometimes as a pleasure is that he thinks of them as two descriptions of the *same* simple idea. That he was not altogether clear about the point is beyond dispute; for he was, I suspect, not altogether committed to the position, and vestiges of the old distinction between ideas of qualities and pleasures (or pains) still remained. Nevertheless, the recognition that Hutcheson may at least have been gravitating toward Berkeley's notion that the idea of a secondary quality and its associate pain (or pleasure, as the case may be) are not two sensations, but one, makes his seeming carelessness much more understandable: much less like carelessness, in fact, and much more like the adumbration of a novel and not yet clearly worked out position.

Furthermore, it seems to me that in making this move, Hutcheson has recognized the kind of double-aspect phenomenology of beauty which has made it seem to some both a “subjective

feeling” and an “objective quality” — as the fusion theory puts it, a feeling objectified. Thus, beauty described as a pleasure emphasizes the subjective; beauty described as the idea of something like a secondary quality, even on the Lockean model of secondary qualities, emphasizes the objective “feel” of aesthetic qualities.

In any event, we can now accommodate all three classes of statements about the idea of beauty: those that take it to be the idea of a secondary quality, those that identify it with pleasure (of some special kind), and (of course) those that can be interpreted either way. We look in vain for a clear statement to the effect that the idea of beauty is one or the other because it is both: the same idea under different descriptions.

(9) One task yet remains before we can conclude that we have accommodated all of Hutcheson's statements about the idea of beauty in one consistent interpretation. For we have one crucial passage outstanding — the most puzzling of all; and at first blush it seems quite intractable. It is the statement that “The Ideas of Beauty and Harmony being excited upon our Perception of some primary Quality, and having relation to Figure and Time, may indeed have a nearer resemblance to Objects, than these Sensations [i.e., “cold, heat, sweet, bitter”] that seem not so much any Pictures of Objects, as Modifications of the perceiving Mind . . .” How are we to reconcile Hutcheson's descriptions of beauty as the idea of something like a secondary quality, and his descriptions of beauty as a pleasure, with this unique description of beauty as the idea of a quality apparently somewhere betwixt and between the idea of a primary quality and the idea of a secondary quality?

We can approach our problem by resolving it into two questions. To begin with, Hutcheson is not saying that the idea of beauty is the idea of a secondary quality: only that it is *very like* our ideas of secondary qualities. Our first question, then, is: What is the *crucial* difference between the idea of beauty and the ideas of secondary qualities? Our second question: Can this difference be what Hutcheson is trying to get at when he describes the idea of beauty as bearing more resemblance to external

qualities than do the ideas of secondary qualities (which bear none at all)? I believe we can answer “Yes” to the second question; and this will wrap up our interpretation of Hutcheson on the idea of beauty.

Hutcheson claimed that beauty is “an idea rais'd in us”; but he claimed, too, that there is an identifiable objective quality — or, rather, a complex of identifiable objective qualities — which is always the cause of this idea being raised in us.

The Figures that excite in us the Ideas of Beauty, seem to be those in which there is *Uniformity amidst Variety*. . . . what we call Beautiful in Objects, to speak in the Mathematical Style, seems to be in a compound Ratio of Uniformity and Variety; so that where the Uniformity of Bodys is equal, the Beauty is as the Variety; and where the Variety is equal, the Beauty is as the Uniformity.²⁶

This formula is, of course, nothing new, encapsulating, as it does, the aesthetic taste of Neoclassicism.

It is worth noting that Hutcheson is referring here to *uniformity amidst variety* as an arrangement of primary qualities; and the sort of beauty occasioned by it is the beauty of “corporeal form”: in music, the formal arrangement of physical vibrations in air, and in visual beauty, the formal arrangement of shapes and contours. But there are other arrangements that can also be said to possess *uniformity amidst variety* and which cannot be construed as arrangements of primary qualities. Thus, mathematical, scientific, and philosophical “theorems” all can possess *uniformity amidst variety*, and give rise to the idea of beauty; yet they can hardly be described as arrangements of primary qualities. Nor is there any reason why Hutcheson could not allow that an arrangement of secondary qualities (colors, say) may possess *unity amidst variety*.²⁷ We will confine ourselves here, however, to a consideration of *unity amidst variety* as an arrangement always of primary qualities because it is in this context alone that the passage we are trying to explicate occurs.

We are now in a position to see what the idea of beauty has in common with the ideas of secondary qualities. On the Lockean model of perception, the word “red,” for example, refers,

when we speak with the philosophically learned, to a simple sensation which is caused by an arrangement of primary qualities; and for Hutcheson, the word “beautiful” refers, when we are speaking with the philosophically learned, to a simple sensation which is caused by an arrangement of primary qualities. In this respect they are on all fours.

But we can now see, too, in what way the idea of beauty is very different from the ideas of secondary qualities. For the ideas of secondary qualities, according to Locke, are “produced in us . . . by the operation of *insensible* particles on our senses.”²⁸ So although the sensation of redness is produced in us by an arrangement of primary qualities, it is not an arrangement that can be perceived by us, independent of our sensation of redness, for it is an arrangement of *insensible* particles. The primary qualities that produce the idea of beauty are gross: we can perceive them independently and conclude such-and-such an arrangement of primary qualities causes the idea of beauty. A person who is beauty-blind (that is, who lacks the sense of beauty) can nevertheless be said to perceive the cause of the sensations which he cannot ever have. But a person who is color-blind can in no sense be said to perceive the cause of the sensation he cannot have. A person who is having the idea of beauty may indeed be in the same position as the person who is having the sensation of redness; for one can have the idea of beauty and be ignorant of the causal law that “The idea of beauty is caused by *uniformity amidst variety*” and, even if not ignorant of it, may not in this particular instance be aware of what particular *uniformity amidst variety* is causing one's idea of beauty. But there is also the case of the person who is having the idea of beauty and knows the causal law as well as the particular fact that his idea of beauty is being caused by such-and-such an arrangement of primary qualities which possesses *uniformity amidst variety*. (Hutcheson envisions both kinds of cases.) And the latter case can never arise in the perception of a secondary quality, on the Lockean model of perception. We can never both have the sensation of redness and perceive independently the arrangement of primary qualities causing it; for the arrangement is, by hypothesis, insensible.

Now an arrangement of primary qualities which has *unity amidst variety* can give rise in the perceiver to the simple idea called “beauty.” But it can also give rise to the complex idea of the particular *unity amidst variety* which is causing the simple idea of beauty. If we could not have this complex idea of *unity amidst variety*, *unity amidst variety* would be as imperceptible to us as the arrangements of insensible primary qualities which cause our sensations of redness. And this complex idea of some particular instance of *unity amidst variety* resembles it: that is, resembles the complex arrangement of primary qualities which occasions the idea. If we speak with the learned, neither our idea of this particular *unity amidst variety* nor the *unity amidst variety* in objects which occasions it can properly be called “beautiful — only the simple idea of beauty can be called that. But if we speak with the vulgar, we may call the quality in objects which causes the idea of beauty, namely, *unity amidst variety*, “beauty,” and call the objects which possess it “beautiful.”

Locke has no compunction about speaking with the vulgar in calling objects “red,” although strictly speaking, only the sensation is “red”, the objects merely having the power to cause the sensation in us. Likewise, Hutcheson sometimes speaks with the vulgar in calling the quality of *unity amidst variety* “beauty,” and the objects which possess it “beautiful,” although strictly speaking only the simple idea of beauty is “beautiful,” objects merely having the power to cause the sensation in us. When we speak with the learned, our idea of beauty, like our idea of redness, bears no resemblance to any objective quality. But when we speak with the vulgar, it can be said that our idea of beauty resembles the quality in objects which causes the idea, meaning our idea of *unity amidst variety* resembles the objective quality *unity amidst variety*. For although our simple idea of beauty does not resemble *unity amidst variety*, our complex idea of *unity amidst variety* does. But even when we speak with the vulgar we cannot say that our sensation of redness resembles the quality in objects which causes the idea. For there is no counterpart of our complex idea of *unity amidst variety* when we perceive redness. (And, thus, when Hutcheson *seems* to suggest

that the idea of beauty can be aroused by arrangements of primary qualities and the ideas of secondary qualities cannot, what we must understand him to be saying is simply that the idea of beauty can be aroused by *perceptible* arrangements of primary qualities and the ideas of secondary qualities cannot, their cause being the *imperceptible* atomic structure of matter.)

When Hutcheson, then, claims that the idea of beauty bears more of a resemblance to an objective quality than do the ideas of secondary qualities, he is referring to the fact that we can have an idea of the quality which causes our simple idea of beauty, and *this* idea resembles that quality, whereas we cannot have an idea of the quality which causes, say, our simple idea of redness. In this sense, the simple idea of beauty is something like the idea of a primary quality; and so it is really a third kind of quality, somewhere betwixt and between the Lockean primary and the Lockean secondary qualities.

It is certainly difficult to know why Hutcheson chose such an obscure way of saying what he had to say on this point. Perhaps the easiest answer is that Locke's terminology forced him to frame his position in this needlessly opaque way. For he was, in a way, breaking new ground for the theory of beauty while working within a perceptual theory framed by a philosopher almost without parallel for his lack of interest in, and sensitivity for, aesthetic questions. The Lockean model of perception must have severely hamstrung Hutcheson. It is a minor miracle that he was able to achieve even the clarity he did. Shaftesbury, in his attempt to make aesthetics a respectable philosophical discipline, made even more sacrifices to the gods of unintelligibility.

IV The Sense of “Beautiful”

(1) We have established the referent of the word *beauty*: an idea which is *both* a pleasure and the idea of something like a secondary quality – not two simple ideas, but one simple idea under two different descriptions. This being the case, what do I assert when I say an object is “beautiful”? Whatever *else* I am doing, according to Hutcheson, when I say “X is beautiful,” I am either *describing* or *expressing* some feeling; namely, the feeling which Hutcheson calls “the idea of beauty.” Thus, the statement “X is beautiful” possesses what I shall call a “feeling moment” as part of its analysis; and it is the feeling moment which we must first determine. So when I talk about the meaning or analysis of “X is beautiful” in the next four sections, I will be referring throughout to the analysis of its feeling moment and to that alone.

Now I might, when I say “X is beautiful,” be referring to my own feeling; or I might be referring to someone else's (either an individual's or a group's). I shall call the former the first-person analysis of the feeling moment of “X is beautiful” and the latter, the third-person analysis. We can further divide the first-person analysis into the cognitive and the noncognitive. According to the cognitive first-person analysis, “X is beautiful” can be understood to describe my state of mind upon perceiving X. It can be true or false, depending upon whether the description is accurate or not. But according to the noncognitive analysis, “X is beautiful” can be understood to express or evince (but not to describe) my state of mind upon perceiving X. As A. J. Ayer

put the view, in one of its classical formulations, “Such words as ‘beautiful’ and ‘hideous’ are employed . . . not to make statements of fact, but simply to express [and not describe] certain feelings. . . .”¹ On the noncognitivist analysis, “X is beautiful” cannot be true or false, any more than “Ouch” or “Oh boy” can be.

In recent years, three commentators on Hutcheson have tried to interpret him as a noncognitivist in his ethical theory.² Can a case be made for a noncognitivist interpretation of Hutcheson's aesthetics? I shall argue that such a case cannot be established because Hutcheson's theory of language will not permit it. And, although I will not press the point here, I think it obviously follows that a noncognitivist interpretation of Hutcheson's ethics must founder on the same reef. Hutcheson's linguistic commitments simply will not allow of a noncognitivist analysis either of the feeling moment of “X is beautiful” or “X is good.”

(2) What is the case for Hutcheson as an aesthetic noncognitivist? It seems to me quite clear that whenever Hutcheson talks about beauty as a pleasure, his view is compatible with a noncognitivist interpretation. For his language is vague; and we always have a choice of reading “express,” rather than “describe,” in the appropriate places.

But in addition there *are* passages which positively lend themselves to a noncognitivist reading. Thus, Hutcheson writes in one place of “our Approbation of any Form whatsoever as *Beautiful*,”³ and in another of “the Constitution of our Sense [of beauty] so as to approve *Uniformity*. . . .”⁴ Surely these passages suggest that I should understand “X is beautiful” not as a description of a particular kind of feeling I am having, but rather as the expression of a certain kind of approval. When I say “X is beautiful,” I am saying, on this interpretation, “I aesthetically approve of X.” Nor am I describing a state of my mind; namely, the state of aesthetically approving of X, when I say “X is beautiful.” For to say “I aesthetically approving of X” is not to describe my approval at all, but to do something else; namely, to approve aesthetically of X.

It should be kept in mind, however, that expressing an emotion

and describing it are not mutually exclusive. A groan expresses my agony; and the statement “I am in agony” (said in an anguished voice) not only describes my state; it expresses my agony into the bargain. Thus, if we establish that for Hutcheson “X is beautiful” *expresses* my feeling of beauty, it does not by any means follow that the same statement cannot *describe* my feeling of beauty as well. What I argue, in the following sections, is simply that Hutcheson did not recognize the nondescriptive use of language which Ayer and others have called “expressing” or “evincing” emotion. Hence, although Hutcheson might very well have agreed that “X is beautiful” expresses my aesthetic approval of X, he would not consider expressing approval a nondescriptive use of language. And, therefore, the possibility that “X is beautiful” *both* describes the state of feeling I am in *and* expresses it does not exist for Hutcheson. Expressing is describing — and that is the end of it.

(3) Having now considered briefly the case for a noncognitivist interpretation of Hutcheson, what is the case against? Primarily, it is, as I have already said, that Hutcheson's philosophy of language will not allow for a nondescriptive interpretation of what we do when we express or evince emotion, or approval, or any other attitude or state of mind. I shall argue that case in a moment. But even if we could not dismiss a noncognitive approach as being inconsistent with Hutcheson's deep-seated linguistic commitments, we would still find impediments. For apart from the question of how Hutcheson would construe the notion of expressing or evincing an emotion (as opposed to describing it), there are difficulties, to begin with, in even the first step of a noncognitivist interpretation: it is not by any means clear that we can always substitute “express” or “evince” for “describe” where a noncognitivist interpretation demands it.

When Hutcheson describes the idea of beauty as a pleasure of some special kind, it does indeed seem just as plausible to analyze “X is beautiful” in terms of expressing or evincing pleasure as it does to analyze it as describing a state of mind of the speaker. But when Hutcheson represents the idea of beauty as

something like the idea of a secondary quality, this plausibility vanishes; and, if our previous analysis is correct, it is *always* appropriate to describe beauty as the idea of something like a secondary quality. Our paradigm here was Berkeley's treatment of intense heat and pain: both are names of the same simple idea. And although it makes perfect sense to talk about expressing a feeling of pain, it makes no sense at all to talk about expressing a feeling of intense heat. The simple idea of beauty can always be understood under the description "pleasure (of some special kind)." But it can also be understood always under the description which construes it as the idea of something like a secondary quality.

This being the case, we cannot understand "X is beautiful" always as "I aesthetically approve of X," any more than we can understand "X is intensely hot" always as "Ouch" although "X is intensely hot" *may* both express pain and describe my idea of intense heat. "X is beautiful" may (when said in a certain tone of voice) be saying something like "Oh boy," just as "X is intensely hot" may (when said in a certain tone of voice) be saying something like "Ouch." But "X is beautiful" must also be a description of the speaker's state of mind on Hutcheson's model of perception, just as is "X is intensely hot" on Berkeley's. "X is beautiful," then, can no more be construed solely as "Oh boy" than "I am in pain" can be construed solely as "Ouch." Both may be expressing or evincing a pleasure or pain; but they are describing a state of mind as well. Therefore, even if evincing or expressing a state of mind were considered by Hutcheson a nondescriptive use of language, it still would not follow that his theory of aesthetic judgment is noncognitivist. For "X is beautiful," on Hutcheson's view, even *if* it expresses or evinces an emotion, *also* describes the emotion it is said to evince or express, just as "I am in pain," if it expresses or evinces an emotion, always also describes the emotional state of the speaker.

Nor is any of this inconsistent with Hutcheson's use of the term "approval" referred to above. Recall the question which Socrates put to Euthyphro: "Do the gods love piety because it is pious, or is it pious because the gods love it?"⁵ If Hutcheson

were a noncognitivist, he would be maintaining that *X* is beautiful (at least in part) because it is approved, not approved because it is beautiful; for to say “*X* is beautiful” would mean in a noncognitivist interpretation (in part) “I aesthetically approve of *X*.” But when Hutcheson speaks (for example) of “our Approbation of any Form whatsoever as *Beautiful*,” he gives no evidence of believing that our approval of forms (even in part) *makes* them beautiful. He can just as well be interpreted as believing that they are approved because they are beautiful — because, that is, they give us the idea of beauty, which under one of its descriptions is a pleasure of some special kind. And, indeed, that something should give us pleasure is a perfectly good reason to approve it (although there are also perfectly good reasons to disapprove of something even though it gives pleasure). In short, even if Hutcheson did allow that “I approve of *X*” is a noncognitive linguistic utterance, it would not follow that the phrase “our Approbation of any Form whatsoever as *Beautiful*” supports a noncognitivist interpretation of “*X* is beautiful”; for the possibility is not ruled out by Hutcheson's text of our approval of *X* being subsequent to, rather than constitutive of, our determination that *X* is beautiful.

(4) But suppose that we *could* always interpret “*X* is beautiful” in Hutcheson's text as “I aesthetically approve of *X*.” Could we then conclude that Hutcheson was a noncognitivist? We could only if Hutcheson allowed that “I aesthetically approve of *X*” is a noncognitive utterance: that it does not express a judgment at all; that it cannot be true or false. And that he would allow this seems at first blush highly improbable. C. D. Broad's sentiments, when considering the possibility of Richard Price's being an ethical noncognitivist, coincide exactly with my intuitions about Hutcheson's being an aesthetic noncognitivist:

If it had been put to him, he would probably have regarded it as too fantastically absurd to be taken seriously. It is, indeed, the kind of theory which can be swallowed only after one has undergone a long and elaborate process of ‘conditioning’ which was not available in the eighteenth century.⁶

Perhaps Hutcheson would have found aesthetic noncognitivism less mind-boggling than Broad believed Price would have found the ethical variety. For Price was, after all, a rationalist in ethics, and Hutcheson was in the opposite camp. Nevertheless, one gets a feel for a historical period — and noncognitive value theory just does not feel right in a pre-Humean context. But we must have something more to go on here than intuitions, especially since three reputable philosophers apparently do not share my intuitions about Hutcheson and noncognitivism. To this something more we must now turn our attention.

The deepest commitments of any philosopher, those that are most immune from his doubt, are apt to remain unexpressed. Such is almost entirely true of Hutcheson's theory of language. But it is only by knowing Hutcheson's linguistic presuppositions that we can absolutely rule out a noncognitivist reading of his aesthetics. So we must again turn to Locke for insight into Hutcheson's philosophical first principles.

It would certainly not be true to say that for Locke's theory of language, in the beginning was the word; for in the beginning was the idea; but the single word, for Locke, is the beginning of language. The theory is presented in a nutshell in Book III, Chapter ii, paragraph 1 of the *Essay*, which I shall quote in full.

Man, though he have great variety of thoughts and such from which others as well as himself might receive profit and delight; yet they are all within his own breast, invisible and hidden from others, nor can of themselves be made to appear. The comfort and advantage of society not being to be had without communication of thoughts, it was necessary that man should find out some external sensible signs, whereof those invisible ideas, which his thoughts are made up of, might be made known to others. For this purpose nothing was so fit, either for plenty or quickness, as those articulate sounds, which with so much ease and variety he found himself able to make. Thus we may conceive how *words*, which were by nature so well adapted for that purpose, came to be made use of by men as the signs of their ideas; not by any natural connexion that there is between particular articulate sounds and certain ideas, for then there would be but one language amongst all men; but by a voluntary imposition, whereby such a word is made arbitrarily the mark of such an idea. The use, then, of words, is to be sensible

marks of ideas; and the ideas they stand for are their proper immediate signification.⁷

Locke maintains, then, a kind of social contract theory of language, very like Hobbes's, in which the atomic bearer of meaning is the word. Most words — although this passage seems to suggest *all* — are said to be marks of, or signs of, or the names of ideas; or they are said to signify or refer to ideas. The purpose of language, Locke goes on to say, is in the main to arouse in someone else the ideas of the speaker (or writer); and this is accomplished by each word of an utterance arousing in the hearer (or reader) the idea which that word stands for in the mind of the speaker (or writer). “When a man speaks to another, it is that he may be understood; and the end of speech is that those sounds, or marks, may make known his ideas to the hearer.”⁸ This power of language to arouse in, or convey to, the hearer (or reader) the ideas of the speaker (or writer) arises through the unvarying conjunction, by convention, of particular sounds (or marks) and particular ideas: “there comes, by constant use, to be such a connexion between certain sounds and the ideas they stand for, that the names heard, almost as readily excite certain ideas as if the objects themselves, which are apt to produce them, did actually affect the senses.”⁹

But there must be more to language than individual words: we speak and write not in single, unconnected words but in words forming larger complexes, beginning with the sentence. And Locke was well aware that we cannot form words into sentences if the only words we use are the names of ideas. Thus, Locke is forced to conclude that “Besides words which are names of ideas in the mind, there are a great many others that are made use of to signify the *connexion* that the mind gives to the ideas, or to propositions, one with another.”¹⁰ These, like “is,” “is not,” “but,” and so on, do, however, also *refer*, though not to ideas: rather, to *operations* of the mind. “The mind, in communicating its thoughts to others, does not only need signs of the ideas it has then before it, but others also, to show or intimate some particular action of its own, at that time, relating to those ideas.”

The difficulties of Locke's position are legion. To mention but two: How do we ever come to agree upon the significations of words if the objects they signify are ideas and operations of the mind, both, according to Locke, private to the individual language users? And how came Locke to conclude that single words are the minimal bearers of meanings, when it seems obvious that sentences are? For single words can seldom, if ever, constitute meaningful utterances. But it is not our purpose here to evaluate Locke's theory of language or construct a better one. Our intention is to discover whether Locke's theory, as he construed it, can accommodate nondescriptive uses of language required by noncognitive value theory. And this question, unfortunately, causes trouble enough.

Locke nowhere in Book III of the *Essay* discusses any linguistic unit beyond the word in any detail at all. And we can get nothing from his discussion of words that rules out the notion of expressing or evincing emotions. Locke claims that words refer to ideas and operations of the mind; and there is, so far as I can see, no objection to saying that when I express or evince my feelings I (among other things) refer to them. Locke claims that the main purpose of language is to make the listener (or reader) conscious of the speaker's (or writer's) ideas; and this is certainly sometimes my intent when I express or evince my emotions. What we want to know, however, is how, in the Lockean linguistic model, we are to construe *sentences* like "X is beautiful"; and Locke nowhere seems to discuss sentences with any thoroughness.

We do, indeed, get some few hints in Chapter ix of Book III which are worth considering, although they are maddeningly brief and desultory. Locke distinguishes between two uses to which language as communication can be put: the civil and the philosophical. Of the philosophical use Locke writes: "By the *philosophical* use of words, I mean such a use of them as may serve to convey the precise notions of things, and to express in general propositions certain and undoubted truths, which the mind may rest upon and be satisfied with in its search after true knowledge."¹¹ The civil use is "such a communication of thoughts and ideas by words, as may serve for the upholding

common conversation and commerce, about the ordinary affairs and conveniences of civil life, in the societies of men, one amongst another.” The only difference between the civil and philosophical uses of language, besides their subject matter, is the rigor which we require of them: “a great deal less exactness will serve in the one than in the other . . .” (an echo of Aristotle's admonition against expecting mathematical exactitude in disciplines that will not allow of it).

From these few bits and pieces we can form some kind of a vague outline. The philosophical use of language consists in the attempt to “express in general propositions certain and undoubted truths. . . .” The philosophical use of language, therefore, leaves no room for noncognitive linguistic usage: since noncognitive expressions are not propositions at all, being neither true nor false. But the only *other* use of language that Locke recognizes is the civil use. And this differs from the philosophical use only in two respects: it treats of different subject matter and demands less exactitude. If these are the only two respects in which it differs from the philosophical use, it must agree with the philosophical use in expressing propositions. But if the only two uses of language which Locke acknowledges both express propositions and that alone, there is no way for Locke's theory of language to accommodate nondescriptive, noncognitive expressions. If Hutcheson shares these linguistic presuppositions, he cannot be read as an aesthetic noncognitivist. The presumptive evidence in favor of his sharing them is considerable, given his general Lockean position in theory of knowledge. And what other theory of language was there available to him?

This is not to say the descriptive theory of language was monolithic. Berkeley, for one, railed against Locke's linguistic views, to the extent of suggesting that “the communicating of ideas marked by words is not the chief and only end of language, as is commonly supposed,” and went on to propose some nondescriptive, exhortatory uses, “the raising of some passion, the exciting to or deterring from an action, the putting the mind in some particular disposition. . . .”¹² But Berkeley himself never went on to make any real philosophical use of these

insights. And in ethics and aesthetics, where the contemporary philosopher, weaned on Ayer and Stevenson, would naturally tend to look, Berkeley seems to have been, in fact, a rationalist, even further from noncognitive value theory than Hutcheson.

If, indeed, Hutcheson had adopted the noncognitive use of language, which Berkeley describes as “the raising of some passion,” and applied it to the analysis of “*X* is beautiful,” he would have been halfway to the kind of analysis Stevenson has suggested for “*X* is good”; namely, “I approve of this; do so as well.”¹³ But he would have had only the second half of the analysis, the imperative part. To say “*X* is good,” according to Stevenson, is to express a positive attitude toward *X* and to urge others to adopt this attitude toward *X*. If Hutcheson had made use of Berkeley's suggestion, he would have had the “do so as well” but not the “I approve.” “*X* is beautiful” would have been analyzed as “Approve of *X*,” but not “I approve of *X*.” There would be no expression of emotion, only the attempt to arouse emotion. There would be no feeling moment. And since we are already committed to the view that “*X* is beautiful” has, for Hutcheson, what we have called a feeling moment, that is, either an expression or description of someone's emotion, we cannot accept the hypothesis that Hutcheson was making use, in his aesthetic analysis, of Berkeley's exhortatory use of language. The most we can say is that it might have given Hutcheson the idea for *another* nondescriptive use: the evincing of emotion.

It *might have* given him the idea — but it didn't. For, as a matter of fact, Hutcheson has left us at least one fairly conclusive passage which seems to rule out any noncognitive use of language on his part: a passage which is clearly Lockean in outlook, and more clear than Locke as to the role of sentences or propositions. The passage which I have in mind occurs in an exchange of letters between Hutcheson and Gilbert Burnet in the *London Journal*, later published in book form as *Letters Between the Late Mr. Gilbert Burnet and Mr. Hutcheson Concerning the True Foundation of Virtue or Moral Goodness* (1735). Hutcheson writes in the second letter:

[We] know that by custom words or sounds are made signs of ideas and combinations of words signs of judgments. We know that men generally by words express their sentiments and profess to speak, as far as they know, according to what is matter of fact, so that their profession is to speak truth.¹⁴

It should first be noted that when Hutcheson says “men generally by words express their sentiments,” he does not in this context mean by “sentiment” either “feeling,” “emotion,” or anything else of the kind, but merely “opinion.” The word *sentiment* seems to have had the same double meaning in the eighteenth century that it has today, sometimes meaning “feeling” and sometimes “opinion.” (Indeed the word “feeling” has the same double meaning.) When I send flowers I am expressing my sentiments in the former sense; and when I give a lecture on Hutcheson I am, for the most part, expressing my sentiments in the latter sense. And when Hutcheson says that “men generally by words express their sentiments,” he must be understood to mean that men express their opinions with words, a perfectly innocent sentiment.

With this trivial misinterpretation guarded against, we can very quickly summarize what Hutcheson is saying about language in the correspondence with Burnet:

- i. Words are the signs of ideas.
- ii. Combinations of words, that is, sentences, are the signs of judgments.
- iii. Judgments are expressed by men to state matters of fact, and are either true or false.

With this summary before us, we see that there is neither a chink nor a cranny in Hutcheson's theory of language to accommodate a noncognitive linguistic use. What men express in language is only what is susceptible of truth or falsity. A linguistic emotive expression cannot be a nonstatement, but must be a genuine statement, either true or false, about an emotion. In the light of this we can conclude with some assurance, I think, that a noncognitive interpretation of Hutcheson is out of order:

Locke's theory of language, which was Hutcheson's also, will not allow it.

But how, if this is the case, would Hutcheson interpret the phrase "I approve of *X*," a phrase which, as we have seen, Hutcheson himself uses in an aesthetic context? For we are told that we approve the things we find beautiful. The answer — unpalatable though it must be to the contemporary philosopher — is that "I approve" is seen by Hutcheson as a description of the speaker's state of mind, which is no *more* unacceptable, no more mind-boggling for someone to have held, than to say "I believe" is a description of the speaker's state of mind; and a better philosopher than Hutcheson, as we know, held that view in Hutcheson's time. If this is not the way it *was*, then Austin and the emotivists have taught us nothing new about language. Hutcheson, in 1725, was not writing early Austin or Ayer: he was writing early Hutcheson.

(5) We have now ruled out any noncognitive interpretation of the feeling moment of "*X* is beautiful." We are left with a choice between a first-person or a third-person description of a state of mind: a choice between "I have the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*" or "*P* has the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*" where *P* is some person or group of persons other than the speaker. This choice is further widened by the fact that the feeling of beauty may be (to use C. D. Broad's terms) either "occurrent" or "dispositional." When I say "I have the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*" I may mean either "I am having (here and now) the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*" (the occurrent interpretation), or "I have the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating *X*" (dispositional interpretation). And when I say "*P* has the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*" I may mean "*P* is having (here and now) the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*" (occurrent interpretation) or "*P* has the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating *X*" (dispositional interpretation). I adopt the first-person dispositional interpretation of Hutcheson for the following two reasons: first-person because Hutcheson, unlike Hume, does not, it would seem, analyze "*X* is beautiful" in terms of any kind of consensus of feelings;

dispositional because it allows for saying correctly “*X* is beautiful” when *X* is not perceived, which we would surely want on occasion to say.

We conclude, then, that the feeling moment of “*X* is beautiful” is to be rendered “I have the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating *X*.” But what else is there to “*X* is beautiful” besides the feeling moment? What else am I asserting? And what characterizes this feeling of beauty? What makes it distinguishable from other feelings of pleasure we might get contemplating *X*?

(6) Let us take the second question first. What distinguishes the feeling of beauty? We have all along been referring to the feeling of beauty as some *special* feeling of pleasure. What is special about it? How do I know when I am having it? Three possible answers immediately suggest themselves: that the feeling of beauty is distinguished by its cause; that it is distinguished by its particular subjective “feel”; that it is distinguished by its being felt when the perceiver is taking a particular attitude or perceptual stance.

First, then, the feeling of beauty is caused by a particular quality: *uniformity amidst variety*. So it might be that I know I am experiencing the feeling of beauty by knowing that the pleasurable feeling I am having is being caused by *uniformity amidst variety*. But this does not appear to be a plausible answer. For according to Hutcheson, we can know that *X* is beautiful without knowing that *uniformity amidst variety* is the cause of the feeling of beauty: “We may have the Sensation [of beauty] without knowing what is the Occasion of it; as a Man's Taste may suggest Ideas of Sweets, Acids, Bitters, tho he be ignorant of the Forms of the small Bodys, or their Motions, which excite these Perceptions in him”¹⁵; and to know that “*X* is beautiful” is true we must know that we are experiencing, or have experienced, the feeling of beauty. Anyway, presumably the cause of the feeling of beauty is discovered by induction: “I am having the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*, and *X* has *uniformity amidst variety*, I am having the feeling of beauty contemplating *Y*, and *Y* has *uniformity amidst variety*. . . .

the disinterested attitude. But we should not be led by this to the conclusion that when I assert “*X* is beautiful” I am asserting “I experience the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating *X* and *X* has *uniformity amidst variety* . . .” or anything else of the kind. For *uniformity amidst variety* is contingently connected with the feeling of beauty. I can know *X* is beautiful without knowing that *X* has *uniformity amidst variety*, just as I can know that a canary is yellow without knowing about wave-lengths and spectra. Nor am I *incorrect* if I say “*X* is beautiful” even though *X* does not possess *uniformity amidst variety*; I am merely *surprising*. Although the causal law “*Uniformity amidst variety* causes the feeling of beauty in the disinterested perceiver” *might* serve as the basis for standards of correct and incorrect aesthetic judgments, it does not, and Hutcheson does not assert that it does. He indeed spends a good deal of time trying to explain *why* there is aesthetic disagreement. However, he does not treat deviation from what would be expected as deviation from the *correct*, but rather as deviation from the expected, given the fact that the hypothesis “*Uniformity amidst variety* causes the feeling of beauty in the disinterested observer” is empirically wellfounded. There are, in fact, only two possible ways in which I can be mistaken when I say “*X* is beautiful,” and they are (i) if I mistake some other feeling for the feeling of beauty, or (ii) if I do not have the feeling of beauty *whenever* I (disinterestedly) contemplate *X*, for “I have the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating *X*” entails “*X* is beautiful.”

What, then, accounts for the deviations (not from correctness, remember, but from the expected)? This is a question that gives Hutcheson no small amount of trouble. For if there is a sense of beauty common to men, and if there is a firmly established empirical generalization to the effect that this sense of beauty gives rise to the feeling of beauty under certain storable conditions, should we not expect universal aesthetic agreement in the family of man when these conditions obtain? Yet even an eighteenth-century Scottish divine, whose acquaintance with the exotic and bizarre could hardly be called extensive, observed the far from universal nature of aesthetic agreement; and

templating an object disinterestedly. In this case it becomes self-contradictory to assert that the feeling of beauty arose and the attitude of disinterestedness did not obtain; and it is the attitude, then, not the quality of the feeling, which is the distinguishing mark.

Our choice is clear: between a feeling causally connected with the attitude of the perceiver and a feeling noncontingently connected with this attitude. And the choice, for once, is very easy to make. The latter alternative points toward an analysis of emotions, not as inner states caused by external states which in turn cause responses of appropriate kinds, but rather as related noncontingently to circumstance, symptom, and action, such that if all three are absent, the emotion (logically) must be absent, too.¹⁹ The former alternative, however, is clearly the one which Hutcheson's historical context forces upon us. For it is the ubiquitous Cartesian model of emotions that we must assume Hutcheson to be working with; and that model unequivocally construes the relationship between emotions and their external circumstances and manifestations as a causal (contingent) one. Our conclusion, then, must be that for Hutcheson, the feeling of beauty is distinguished by a particular "inner" felt quality, *caused* in part by the attitude which the perceiver takes toward the object of his aesthetic contemplation: that attitude being one of indifference to the practical advantages of the object.

(7) We now recur to the question of what (if anything) is asserted in "X is beautiful" beyond the feeling moment ("I have the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating X"). The answer is nothing; but this answer requires some explanation.

Hutcheson tells us that the objects which cause the feeling of beauty upon contemplation are consistently those which possess *uniformity amidst variety*; this we know presumably by induction and can state in terms of a causal law: *A* causes *B* under conditions *C*, where *A* is *unity amidst variety*, *B* the feeling of beauty, and *C* a complex of conditions including the stipulations that the perceiver has the sense of beauty and takes

the disinterested attitude. But we should not be led by this to the conclusion that when I assert “*X* is beautiful” I am asserting “I experience the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating *X* and *X* has *uniformity amidst variety* . . .” or anything else of the kind. For *uniformity amidst variety* is contingently connected with the feeling of beauty. I can know *X* is beautiful without knowing that *X* has *uniformity amidst variety*, just as I can know that a canary is yellow without knowing about wavelengths and spectra. Nor am I *incorrect* if I say “*X* is beautiful” even though *X* does not possess *uniformity amidst variety*; I am merely *surprising*. Although the causal law “*Uniformity amidst variety* causes the feeling of beauty in the disinterested perceiver” *might* serve as the basis for standards of correct and incorrect aesthetic judgments, it does not, and Hutcheson does not assert that it does. He indeed spends a good deal of time trying to explain *why* there is aesthetic disagreement. However, he does not treat deviation from what would be expected as deviation from the *correct*, but rather as deviation from the expected, given the fact that the hypothesis “*Uniformity amidst variety* causes the feeling of beauty in the disinterested observer” is empirically wellfounded. There are, in fact, only two possible ways in which I can be mistaken when I say “*X* is beautiful,” and they are (i) if I mistake some other feeling for the feeling of beauty, or (ii) if I do not have the feeling of beauty *whenever* I (disinterestedly) contemplate *X*, for “I have the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating *X*” entails “*X* is beautiful.”

What, then, accounts for the deviations (not from correctness, remember, but from the expected)? This is a question that gives Hutcheson no small amount of trouble. For if there is a sense of beauty common to men, and if there is a firmly established empirical generalization to the effect that this sense of beauty gives rise to the feeling of beauty under certain storable conditions, should we not expect universal aesthetic agreement in the family of man when these conditions obtain? Yet even an eighteenth-century Scottish divine, whose acquaintance with the exotic and bizarre could hardly be called extensive, observed the far from universal nature of aesthetic agreement; and

it indeed gave him pause, so much so that he said of the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty* in the preface, “*the Author perhaps in some Instances has gone too far, in supposing a greater Agreement of Mankind in this Sense of Beauty, than Experience will confirm. . . .*”²⁰

There are two kinds of aesthetic “disagreement” envisioned by Hutcheson: (i) disagreement about whether or not *X* is beautiful; and (ii) disagreement about the relative beauty of *X* in comparison to *Y*.

Suppose, then, that Mr. A experiences the feeling of beauty contemplating *X* and Mr. B does not; and suppose further that both are disinterested observers and *X* possesses *uniformity amidst variety*. It is, of course, always open to Hutcheson to claim that Mr. B lacks a sense of beauty; and, indeed, that “Many men” lack the sense of beauty is, Hutcheson tells us, “plain from Experience.”²¹ Just such situations of deep-seated disagreement in aesthetic or moral perception, after all, are what drive us, if we are of such a mind, to sense or intuition as the court of last appeal. That *many* men do really lack the ability to make aesthetic distinctions seems doubtful; but that some men do may very well be “plain from Experience.”

Suppose, however, that both parties are known to possess the sense of beauty (by whatever means such a thing can be known), and yet Mr. B nevertheless still fails under the proper conditions to experience the feeling of beauty contemplating *X*, whereas Mr. A does experience it. We can treat this case at the same time as the case in which Mr. A and Mr. B disagree in the comparative aesthetic merits of *X* and *Y* — for example, Mr. A claiming that *X* is more beautiful than *Y* and Mr. B claiming that *Y* is more beautiful than *X*. We are supposing, then, the following two cases:

- i. *X* has *uniformity amidst variety*. Mr. A gets the feeling of beauty contemplating *X* and Mr. B does not. Both possess the sense of beauty. The proper conditions for aesthetic perception obtain.
- ii. *X* and *Y* have *uniformity amidst variety*. Both have equal *uniformity* but *X* has greater *variety*. Mr. A thinks *X* is more beautiful than *Y* and Mr. B thinks *Y* is more beautiful than *X*.

Both possess the sense of beauty. The proper conditions for aesthetic perception obtain.

According to Hutcheson's theory we should expect that in the first case both Mr. A and Mr. B will experience the feeling of beauty contemplating *X* and (therefore) agree that *X* is beautiful. And we should expect that in the second case Mr. A and Mr. B will both think *X* is more beautiful than *Y*, for “. . . The Variety increases the Beauty of equal Uniformity” and “The greater *Uniformity* increases the *Beauty* amidst equal *Variety*. . . .”²² Hutcheson's explanation is the same in both cases. Mr. A and Mr. B are not perceiving the *same* objects at all, and hence they are not *really* having a disagreement at all. This needs spelling out. Hutcheson writes:

The [simple] Ideas rais'd in different Persons by the same Object, are probably [some way] different, when they disagree in their Approbation or Dislike. . . .

. . . there does not seem to be any Ground to believe such a Diversity in human Minds, as that the same Idea or Perception should give pleasure to one and pain to another . . . not to say that it seems a Contradiction that the same Idea should do so.²³

Now, on the Lockean model of perception there are two things we might mean if we said that Mr. A and Mr. B are perceiving the “same” object. We might mean that they are both receiving sense impressions from the same group of primary qualities (that is, the same external object), or we might mean that they are both experiencing the same group of sense impressions (that is, the same internal object — “in the mind”). Thus, it might at times be the case that two people were perceiving the same object in the former sense and not in the latter. In more contemporary terms this would be a situation in which they were perceiving the same “ontological” or “stimulus” object, but different “phenomenological” objects.

What Hutcheson means by “simple ideas” in the above paragraphs are the sense impressions (other than pleasure and pain) of the five garden-variety senses. And what he is claiming is that when Mr. A and Mr. B, under proper conditions, disagree about whether *X* is beautiful or not (in spite of the fact that *X* possesses

uniformity amidst variety), they may be perceiving the same primary qualities, the same ontological or stimulus object, but they are not perceiving the same ideas, the same phenomenological object; and when Mr. A and Mr. B disagree whether *X* is more beautiful than *Y*, under proper conditions (in spite of the fact that *X* and *Y* have equal *uniformity* and *Y* has less *variety*), they may be perceiving the same primary qualities, the same ontological or stimulus objects, but they are not perceiving the same ideas, the same phenomenological objects. They are each perceiving a different group of sense impressions, each attributing or denying beauty to a different phenomenological object.

There is, hence, no real disagreement at all. What Mr. A calls *X* possesses or lacks at least one simple idea not possessed or lacked by what Mr. B calls *X*; and what Mr. A calls *Y* possesses or lacks at least one simple idea not possessed or lacked by what Mr. B calls *Y*. The sentences “*X* is beautiful” and “*X* is more beautiful than *Y*” refer to groups of simple ideas; and if the group of simple ideas which Mr. A takes to be *X* or *Y* differs from the group Mr. B takes to be *X* or *Y*, even in respect of one simple idea, then Mr. A and Mr. B are not disagreeing when Mr. A says “*X* is beautiful” and Mr. B says “*X* is not beautiful,” or when Mr. A says “*X* is more beautiful than *Y*” and Mr. B says “*Y* is more beautiful than *X*.”

Those familiar with some recent discussions of whether we can properly say that music is “sad” or “happy” (and the like) may find an echo in Hutcheson's position. It has often enough been pointed out that if emotive words really do characterize music in the same way that color words, say, characterize the objects to which they apply, there should be substantial agreement among language users, in any given case, as to what emotive word is the appropriate one; and such agreement, it is argued, is manifestly absent from discussions of music. To which objection it has been replied: “The assumption that persons whose sense of the [emotive] meaning of a piece of music differs can yet have the very same sense perception of the sounds is, so far as I know, devoid of all evidence.”²⁴ In other words, if Mr. A thinks a piece of music is “happy,” and Mr. B

thinks that it is “sad,” we may assume that they are disagreeing about the “same” piece of music, and use this disagreement as evidence against the notion that words like “sad” and “happy” have any objective criteria of application in a musical context. But there is no evidence for this assumption; and if we wish to defend the view that emotive words do have objective criteria of application in musical contexts, we may claim that in some sense or other those who disagree about the emotive character of a piece of music are not talking about the “same” piece of music, do not “have the very same sense perceptions of the sounds,” although they are in the presence of the “same” physical vibrations.

But Hutcheson goes even further than this. He does not merely *suggest* that Mr. A and Mr. B *may* be perceiving different phenomenal objects. He does not claim that there is no evidence that they *are* perceiving the same phenomenal objects. Rather, he claims that their disagreements about *X* and *Y* *imply* that they are not perceiving the same phenomenal objects: “it seems a contradiction . . . that the same Idea or Perception should give pleasure to one and pain to another.” We have adequate evidence for the claim that Mr. A and Mr. B do not mean the same things by *X* and *Y* if they do not agree about the beauty or deformity of *X* and *Y*; *X* and *Y* are as described above; and the conditions for aesthetic perception obtain. In short, Hutcheson has made it true by definition that there can be no real aesthetic disagreement. His theory is immune from falsification, but at the price of analyticity.

(8) Why should two normal observers not perceive the same phenomenal object in the presence of the same ontological object; or, in Lockean terms, why should two normal observers be aware of different groups of ideas in the presence of the same primary qualities? Hutcheson offers two explanations. We will conclude this chapter with a consideration of them. Both stem from the diversity of human experience, not innate human differences, and both were readily available to Hutcheson in Locke's *Essay*.

First, it is manifest even to philosophers like Locke and

Hutcheson, who speak of the *passivity* of perception, that *attention* is an activity necessary for perception and that increased attention can increase the ideas derived from the external object. Locke recognized that the presence of an object to the normal observer, even under optimal viewing conditions, does not guarantee perception of all there is to perceive: “that which uses to produce the idea, though conveyed in by the usual organ, not being taken notice of in the understanding, and so imprinting no idea in the mind, there follows no sensation.”²⁵

Along similar lines, Hutcheson emphasized the tendency of education and habit to increase one's power of perception by increasing the length and breadth of attention. “*Custom*,” he wrote, “may make us capable of extending our Views further, and of receiving more complex Ideas of *Beauty* in Bodys, or *Harmony* in Sounds, by increasing our Attention and quickness of Perception.”²⁶ And again: “This *Education* and *Custom* may influence our *internal Senses*, where they are antecedently, by enlarging the Capacity of our Minds to retain and compare the Parts of complex Compositions. . . .”²⁷ By these means Mr. A, for example, in the presence of the same ontological object as Mr. B, may nevertheless perceive a very different phenomenological object; or, in Lockean terms, in the presence of the same primary qualities, be aware of a very much larger group of ideas. This being the case, what arouses the idea of beauty in Mr. A's mind is not the “same” object that fails to arouse it in Mr. B's (or whatever). It is not, notice, the sense of beauty itself that is sharpened by custom and education: it is the attention capacity of the five garden-variety senses that gives the sense of beauty more complex phenomenal objects to perceive. Where Mr. A and Mr. B differ is not in sensitivity (or lack of it) of their respective senses of beauty, which are by nature equal. But it is the acquired capacities of their five bodily senses which make Mr. A's phenomenal objects different from Mr. B's, and his aesthetic judgments *seemingly* different because they are, in fact, judgments about different objects.

Second, and more important, is the influence of the association of ideas, which was to play an even more prominent part in later British philosophy. Custom and education, Hutcheson

claims, can increase our capacity for attending to the stimulus present before our senses and therefore increase the sense impressions one can gain from the stimulus object. More of the stimuli present end up affecting Mr. A than Mr. B; hence, Mr. A's phenomenal object is different from Mr. B's. But there is another stage at which the phenomenal object is being formed: the stage at which all of the physical stimuli present have had (or have failed to have) their effects, and what we would now perhaps call the psychological makeup takes over. At this point the psychological machinery of the association of ideas comes into play, adding to the phenomenal object ideas which have been in the past associated with the ideas aroused by the physical stimuli, but which are not directly aroused by the now present physical stimuli. Examples here will be instructive; and it would be historically appropriate to get them from Locke.

In the fourth edition of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1700) Locke added to Book II a chapter which he called "Of the Association of Ideas." The topic had already been treated by Hobbes and was to gain more momentum as the Enlightenment waned. The following examples are taken from Locke's *Essay*:²⁸

- [i] A grown person surfeiting with honey no sooner hears the name of it, but his fancy immediately carries the sickness and qualms to his stomach, and he cannot bear the very idea of it. . . .
- [ii] The ideas of goblins and sprites have really no more to do with darkness than light: yet let but a foolish maid inculcate these often on the mind of a child, and raise them there together, possibly he shall never be able to separate them again so long as he lives, but darkness shall ever afterwards bring with it these frightful ideas, and they shall be so joined, that he can no more bear the one than the other.
- [iii] Many children, imputing the pain they endured at school to their books they were corrected for, so join these ideas together, that a book becomes their aversion, and they are never reconciled to the study and use of them all their lives after; and thus reading becomes a torment to them, which otherwise possibly they might have made the great pleasure of their lives.

All of these examples follow the same general pattern: A is experienced with B at time t , and at the time $t+1$ A is experienced

by itself and, because of the past association with *B*, *B* is called to mind as well. *A* may be a simple or complex idea which then brings with it another simple or complex idea which in turn brings with it a third idea, “pleasure” (or “pain”): *B*, that is, is either a “pleasant” or “painful” idea. (*B* may, of course, be neither pleasant nor painful, but indifferent. However, the ideas which we are interested in here are pleasant or painful ones, and we shall restrict ourselves to them.)

Sometimes, Locke's examples, as we can see, omit the intermediary idea: that is, as in example [iii], we are told that *A* (reading books) has been associated with pain, so that when *A* is now experienced, pain is experienced along with it. But on Hutcheson's view, and I suspect on Locke's, too, this would be a kind of associational enthymeme; for each simple idea, according to Hutcheson, is naturally either pleasant or unpleasant (or indifferent). No simple idea can ever *itself* become pleasurable, if it is originally unpleasant or indifferent; and no simple idea can ever *itself* become painful, if it is originally pleasant or indifferent. No complex idea can, either, since it is merely a sum of simple ideas. Thus, when we say that the complex idea of “reading,” which is pleasant, became painful by being associated with pain, we are speaking loosely. What we mean, for Hutcheson, would be this: those that find reading unpleasant may find it so because reading was associated in the past with beatings and scoldings; and beatings and scoldings are painful. Those who find reading pleasant lack this association with painful ideas. Thus, those who find reading unpleasant perceive a complex idea when they contemplate reading different from that perceived by those who find it pleasant. And because this complex idea contains some unpleasant ideas, they find reading unpleasant. But two people who are perceiving the *same* complex idea, or the *same* simple idea, must both experience pleasure, or both experience pain. As Hutcheson puts the view, when some simple or complex idea ceases to be pleasant, for example, “we shall generally find that there is some accidental Conjunction of a disagreeable Idea, which always recurs with the Object. . . .”²⁹

Let us return, now, to the matter of aesthetic disagreements.

Mr. A finds *X* beautiful and Mr. B does not. Both have the sense of beauty and both are disinterested observers. Both have equal powers of attention and are both, hence, getting an equal share of ideas from the stimulus object. Yet they may still not be perceiving the same phenomenal object because one may have different associations from the other. So Mr. A's *X* may, because of the nature of his associations, indeed lack *uniformity amidst variety* and Mr. B's *X* may, because of the nature of his associations, indeed possess it. And the same argument will apply, *pari passu*, to a disagreement about the relative aesthetic merits of *X* vis-à-vis *Y*.

A further effect of the association of ideas is to make it easier to mistake some other pleasurable idea for the idea of beauty. "The *Association* of Ideas . . . often makes men have an aversion to Objects of beauty, and a liking to others void of it, but under different Conceptions than those of *Beauty* and *Deformity*."³⁰ Thus, Mr. A may mistake his pleasant feeling of security which, through the association of ideas, he has come to connect with a particular house, for the feeling of beauty and think the house beautiful when it is not; whereas Mr. B, free of this association, sees immediately that the house is totally lacking in beauty. The house lacks *uniformity amidst variety* and causes the idea of beauty neither in Mr. A nor in Mr. B. But it causes *another* pleasant idea in Mr. A which he mistakes for the idea of beauty. In this case, too, the association of ideas is responsible for Mr. A's and Mr. B's perceiving different phenomenal objects in response to the same primary qualities. There is, however, no idea of beauty involved in the case at all. The various permutations and combinations of this case also can, of course, apply *pari passu* to a disagreement about the relative aesthetic merits of two or more aesthetic objects.

(9) If, then, Mr. A and Mr. B disagree about the beauty of *X*, or about the relative beauty of *X* vis-à-vis *Y*, we are to assume, when all else fails, that they are perceiving different phenomenal objects even though they both say *X* and *Y* in the presence of the same stimulus objects; and all else fails when we determine that Mr. A and Mr. B both have the sense of beauty, both

are disinterested observers, and neither is mistaking some other feeling for the feeling of beauty. Now we should expect to find, if we examine such cases closely, that either Mr. A or Mr. B, due to varied experiences, has more or less power of attention or different trains of associations connected with the same stimulus object (or both) — for these are the factors which determine that different phenomenal objects will be perceived in the presence of the same stimulus object.

But suppose we do examine the cases closely, and suppose we do not turn up anything of the kind. Suppose that we find no appreciable difference in perceptual training, no appreciable difference in power of attention, no appreciable difference in trains of association. Suppose, indeed, that Mr. A and Mr. B are identical twins. Are we then to conclude that they are not, as previously thought, perceiving different phenomenal objects? Clearly not: for, as we have seen, that hypothesis is above empirical refutation. Any unexpected aesthetic judgment that is not the result of mistaking some other feeling for the feeling of beauty is, by stipulative definition, a judgment about some other aesthetic object than the one it seems to be about. Thus, no aesthetic judgment can ever cause embarrassment to Hutcheson. What *should* have caused him embarrassment was his means of achieving this result; namely, defining aesthetic disagreement in such a way as to make nothing answer to the description. To which the obstinate will doubtless reply: “But nevertheless there *is* aesthetic disagreement, for all of that; and if we must give up the name, we will invent another.”

V Varieties of Aesthetic Experience

(1) In Chapters II-IV we have been examining what might be called Hutcheson's aesthetic "first philosophy," the basic tenets of his position regarding the epistemological status of aesthetic perceptions and judgments. In this chapter, and the next, we shall be concerned with first, fleshing out some of the more important details of the position, including what we would call Hutcheson's philosophy of art (as something at least logically distinct from his aesthetics); and, second, the uncovering of the theological underpinnings. The first task, that of limning in the details, itself divides naturally into two parts: the distinguishing of the varieties of feelings that we might call "aesthetic," and Hutcheson's age tended to call the "pleasures of the imagination"; and the distinguishing of the varieties of objects that, according to Hutcheson, normally produce such feelings or ideas in us. (It is in the latter inquiry that we shall come to grips with Hutcheson's somewhat sketchy reflections on art.)

We can begin by listing once again the senses which Hutcheson acknowledged as falling under the general head of "pleasures of the imagination," and which I shall not scruple to call at times "aesthetic." They are, in Hutcheson's most generous mood, the senses of *absolute beauty*, *relative beauty* (or *imitation*), *harmony*, *design* (or *fitness* of means to ends), *grandeur* (or *sublimity*), and *novelty*, to which we must add the sense of *humor*, which Hutcheson wrote of in his *Reflections Upon Laughter*, but which appeared only once in his other works when he was enumerating the internal senses.

These senses must be examined one by one and brought into the framework of Hutcheson's general aesthetic theory. In so doing, we will make clear perhaps why Hutcheson seems rather ambivalent as to whether he is talking about different distinct senses or merely different manifestations of the same sense; and why he says next to nothing about *novelty* or *grandeur* in the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, except to throw a rather terse remark in their direction and refer the reader to Addison for further enlightenment.

(2) The aestheticians of the eighteenth century spent a great deal of effort on the problem of distinguishing among the various pleasures of the imagination by trying to describe their "feel." It is worthy of some note that Hutcheson never did this sort of thing. The reason, I suspect, is that he saw the difference, at least vaguely, between philosophy and psychology. Having made the logical point that aesthetic judgments are judgments about feelings, he considered his work as a philosopher finished.

The judgment "X is beautiful," we have seen, is a judgment about a *particular* feeling, identifiable of itself, without reference to the objects that occasion it. But by induction we can conclude that the objects which do occasion it possess *unity amidst variety*; hence, we have good inductive grounds for believing that *unity amidst variety* causes the idea of beauty. There are, then, two ways of telling whether a feeling is *the* feeling of beauty: first by its "quality"; and second by whether or not the object which occasions it possesses *unity amidst variety*. But there is this important difference between them: the subjective "quality" is noncontingently connected with the feeling, whereas the cause, of course, is contingently connected. Therefore, it is logically impossible for any feeling to have the subjective "quality" of the feeling of beauty and yet fail to be the feeling of beauty, whereas it is logically possible for the feeling of beauty to be aroused in the absence of *unity amidst variety*.

"*Grandeur* and *Novelty*," Hutcheson tells us, "are two Ideas different from *Beauty*, which often recommend Objects to us."¹

The reason is to be found, he adds, in *Spectator* No. 412, part of the series which Addison called *The Pleasures of the Imagination*.

Addison, unlike Hutcheson, was very much concerned with describing the subjective experiences of beauty, grandeur, and novelty. And it seems clear that Hutcheson was reasonably content with Addison's descriptions. Of the feeling of grandeur (or sublimity), Addison wrote: "We are flung into a pleasing astonishment . . . and feel a delightful stillness and amazement in the soul. . . ." ² The novel, on the other hand, "fills the soul with an agreeable surprise, gratifies its curiosity, and gives it an idea of which it was not before possessed." ³ And beauty, in contrast to both, "diffuses a secret satisfaction and complacency through the imagination . . ."; it "strikes the mind with an inward joy, and spreads a cheerfulness and delight through all its faculties." ⁴ Now whatever the adequacy (or inadequacy) of these descriptions (and, as I have said, Hutcheson was not particularly interested in this aspect of aesthetics), it is clear that Addison was attempting to characterize what he believed to be widely different subjective states. Thus, the ideas of novelty and grandeur do not fulfill the first criterion: they do not have the same subjective "quality" as the idea of beauty. This being the case, they did not appear to Addison or Hutcheson as merely species of the same genus as the idea of beauty.

Nor is the second criterion fulfilled, for the qualities of objects which occasion the ideas of grandeur and novelty are neither of them *unity amidst variety*, the former being "the largeness of a whole view, considered as one entire piece," the latter "Every thing that is new or uncommon. . . ." ⁵ (And, clearly, an object can be large or new or uncommon without possessing *unity amidst variety*.)

The ideas of grandeur and novelty, then, are different from the idea of beauty in the two crucial respects enumerated above: they are different in felt quality, and they are not occasioned by the same objective quality. Why, then, does Hutcheson place them, along with the idea of beauty, under the same rubric, i.e., "The Pleasures of the Imagination"? Hutcheson insists that the "*grandeur* and *novelty* of objects excite

some grateful perceptions not unlike the former [i.e., beauty, harmony, and imitation]. . . .”⁶ But if they are not unlike, in what way are they like? For, as we have seen, they *are* unlike in two important ways. Hutcheson's answer is that they, like the idea of beauty, are appreciated not for their possible consequences but for their own sake alone. Grandeur and novelty qualify to be numbered among the pleasures of the imagination because “Whatever is grateful to any of these perceptive powers is for itself desirable, and may on some occasions be to us an ultimate end.”⁷

What, then, of the sense of humor? Is the feeling of amusement a variety of the feeling of beauty? Or is it, like the feelings of grandeur and novelty, a separate feeling in its own right? And is its cause *unity amidst variety* or some other quality? Finally, does it even qualify as a pleasure of the imagination? Hutcheson, after all, never specifically refers to it as such. To answer these questions, we will have to give the subject of humor a separate and more extensive hearing; for unlike grandeur and novelty, humor is a subject on which Hutcheson has something to say.

(3) Hutcheson's account of comedy, in the three papers that were later to be published as *Reflections Upon Laughter*, begins as do most of his writings, with his *bête noire*, Hobbesian egoism. Hobbes, steady to his usual text, had presented a selfish interpretation of laughter. It was, he maintained, the expression of “sudden glory,” an immediate feeling of superiority. “*Sudden Glory*, is the passion which maketh those *Grimaces* called LAUGHTER; and is caused either by some sudden act of their own, that pleaseth them; or by the appreciation of some deformed thing in another, by comparison whereof they suddenly applaud themselves.”⁸

Hutcheson's task, in the first of his three papers on laughter, is to refute Hobbes. He does so by adducing counterexamples to show that the feeling of sudden glory is neither the necessary nor the sufficient condition of laughter; that laughter sometimes arises in the absence of sudden glory, and sometimes does not in its presence. For, he argues,

If Mr. Hobbes's notion be just, then, first, there can be no Laughter on any occasion where we make no comparison of ourselves to others, or of our present state to a worse state, or where we do not observe some superiority of ourselves to others, or of our present state to a worse state, or where we do not observe some superiority of ourselves above some other thing; and again, it must follow, that every sudden appearance of superiority over another must excite laughter, when we attend to it.⁹

In the second and third papers, Hutcheson presents his own views on laughter, based upon his own familiar strategy: identification of the “quality” in objects which arouses the mental state in question; denial that the mental state is always desired for the sake of something else — namely, self-interest; the related assumption that the mental state is at least sometimes desired for its own sake; and, finally, the assumption which must for Hutcheson follow from this, that there is a “sense” appropriate to that mental state.

The cause of laughter — the quality in “objects” that arouses it — is very like *unity amidst variety*, although Hutcheson never mentions the similarity. If we think of *unity amidst variety* as a harmonious composition of parts, then laughter is aroused when this harmony is gently disturbed by an overemphasis of the *variety*. The *slightly* inappropriate metaphor; the *slightly outre* simile; this, for Hutcheson, is the essence of comedy.

That then which seems generally the cause of laughter is the bringing together of images which have contrary additional ideas, as well as some resemblance in the principal idea: this contrast between ideas of grandeur, dignity, sanctity, perfection, and ideas of meanness, baseness, profanity, seems to be the very spirit of burlesque; and the greatest part of our railery and jest is founded upon it.¹⁰

Thus, for example, if I call an airplane a “silver eagle,” my metaphor is entirely appropriate (if not very original) and arouses no laughter; and if I call it a “silver sloth,” my metaphor is entirely inappropriate and therefore perhaps silly — but not humorous. If, however, I call it a “tin goose,” my metaphor is not altogether inappropriate, since aluminum looks like tin, and

geese fly. Yet what we associate with tin are homey and trivial items of daily use, not sleek modern machines; and geese, unlike eagles, are served for Sunday dinner. This *variety* of extraneous and slightly inappropriate associations upsets the *unity* of the metaphor without totally destroying it. Herein lies the comic. That humor results in a pleasurable state is obvious; and being a special kind of pleasurable state, distinct from all others and desired at times for its own sake, Hutcheson's epistemology requires a "sense" of humor for it. But Hutcheson observes, too, that laughter is a peculiarly social phenomenon; and if at times humor is desired merely for the special kind of pleasure it gives rise to, it more often serves a further useful purpose in society: the puncturing of overinflated intellectual balloons. When we stand in worshipful awe of some molehill which we ourselves have made into a mountain, or when we even cower before it, comedy is the antidote. "Nothing is so properly applied to the false grandeur, either of good or evil, as ridicule. . . ." ¹¹

We are now in a position to place the "sense" of humor in Hutcheson's overall scheme. It bears the following affinities to the sense of beauty. It gives rise to a special kind of pleasure. This pleasure is aroused by a quality in "objects" somewhat (but not entirely) like *unity amidst variety*; and it is sometimes desired for its own sake. The last characteristic marks out humor as one of the pleasures of the imagination. Why Hutcheson did not specifically classify it as such in his systematic works is not clear. Perhaps he did not because the practical, moral purpose of comedy predominates, in Hutcheson's view, which would have made it unwelcome in the company of pleasures that were supposed to owe their worth to no purpose at all, and were, in fact, achieved by putting one's self out of gear with purposes altogether. In any case, comedy seems to straddle the fence between the aesthetic and the nonaesthetic in Hutcheson's thought.

(4) Working our way up the list of aesthetic senses, we come to the sense of *design*, or *fitness* of means to ends. It made only one appearance in Hutcheson's writings: in the posthumous

System of Moral Philosophy (1755). Hutcheson stated there: “As we are endued with reason to discern the fitness of means for an end, and the several relations and connexions of things; so, there is an immediate pleasure in [the] knowledge, distinct from the Judgment itself, tho naturally joined with it.”¹²

But although fitness was not named in the first *Inquiry*, it was not ignored either. For in discussing the various objects that arouse the idea of beauty, Hutcheson there described the very same thing that he later called “fitness of means for an end,” ascribing the beauty of fitness to *unity amidst variety*. Thus, he wrote with regard to the beauty of animals:

And how amazing is the *Unity* of Mechanism, when we shall find that almost infinite diversity of Motions, all their Actions in *walking, running, flying, swimming*; all their serious Efforts for *Self-preservation*, all their freakish *Contortions* when they are gay and sportful, in all their various Limbs, perform'd by one simple Contrivance of a contracting *Muscle*, apply'd with inconceivable Diversities to answer all these Ends! Various Engines might have obtain'd the same Ends; but then there had been less *Uniformity*, and the *Beauty* of our Animal Systems, and of particular Animals, had been much less, when their surprising *Unity* of Mechanism had been remov'd from them.”¹³

Hutcheson's progress here is interesting: from fitness as simply another variety of beauty, to fitness as a separate “aesthetic” feeling with a separate sense appropriate to it. The reason for this progress lies, I think, in the observations of Edmund Burke and others, that fitness is certainly not a sufficient condition for beauty. The connection between fitness and beauty is indeed reflected in our language; as Hogarth remarked, “When a vessel sails well, the sailors always call her a beauty; the two ideas have such a connexion.”¹⁴ But (going from the shipyard to the barnyard) Burke argued, “on that principle the wedgelike snout of a swine, with its tough cartilage at the end, the little sunk eyes, and the whole make of the head, so well adapted to its offices of digging, and rooting, would be extremely beautiful.”¹⁵ Clearly, though, we do praise fitness in a way very like the way we praise beauty; and if the snout of the pig is not

beautiful, it is, nevertheless, “beautifully adapted” to its end. How, then, to reconcile our use of “beautiful” to express our approval of fitness with the fact that fitness is not sufficient condition for beauty? Hutcheson's way, I suggest, was finally to reject fitness as a species of the beautiful, but to allow it “aesthetic” status as one of the pleasures of the imagination. In so doing, he blunted Burke's counterexample and yet could provide (although he never did so explicitly) a plausible explanation of why we praise fitness as beautiful; it may not, strictly speaking, be beautiful, he could argue, but it is, like beauty, a pleasure of the imagination.

(5) With the senses of *absolute beauty*, *relative beauty*, and *harmony*, we come to the sense of beauty proper. For all are excited by *unity amidst variety*, and Hutcheson gives no evidence of believing that they give rise to three separate ideas rather than one. Hence, there is no compelling reason to call them three senses, rather than one, which seems to be why Hutcheson never did so in the *Inquiry* and why, even when he started to in his subsequent works, he tended to treat the distinction merely as a *façon de parler*.

What mainly distinguishes these three species of beauty is the diversity of objects which excite them. The sense of harmony, of course, involves a completely distinct external sense, the sense of hearing, as it is the sense appropriate to beauty of sound. The sense of relative beauty, or imitation, is not distinguished by being proper to any one particular external sense, although a large portion of imitations will, of course, be conveyed through the sense of sight in the form of paintings, drawings, statues, plays, and dances. But theater is a mixed art: we hear as well as see the actors — and both literature and music are thought of by Hutcheson as having representational aspects.

The sense of absolute beauty encompasses, for Hutcheson, any perception of *unity amidst variety* that is not aural and does not involve perceiving something as a representation of something else. In the *Inquiry*, as we have seen, this included the perceiving of fitness; and it included, too, the perceiving of the “beauty” of scientific and other systems of thought.

To these objects of the aesthetic senses we must now turn our attention. They can conveniently be distributed among three classes: (i) natural objects; (ii) intellectual “objects” (by which is meant theories, or parts of theories, such as laws or theorems); (iii) art “objects.”

(6) Hutcheson writes far more extensively on the beauties of nature than would be fashionable today; and this is true of most eighteenth-century authors. “Aesthetics” to the contemporary mind is philosophy of art almost exclusively; but in Hutcheson's time the priorities were, if anything, reversed. Thus, Hutcheson draws almost all of his examples of absolute beauty from nature; works of art provide nearly none. Absolute beauty, it will be recalled, is the beauty resulting from the perception of *unity amidst variety*, where there is no relation between the object perceived and any other object aesthetically relevant. *Comparative*, or *relative*, *beauty* is the beauty which results from the perception of some *unity amidst variety* existing in virtue of a correspondence between two objects, or between an object and an idea. The most common form which relative beauty takes is the beauty of imitation. Thus, Hutcheson writes:

[W]hat we call *relative* [beauty] is that which is apprehended in any *Object*, commonly consider'd as an *Imitation* of some Original: And this *Beauty* is founded on a *Conformity*, or a kind of *Unity* between the Original and the Copy. The Original may be either some Object in *Nature*, or some *establish'd Idea*; for if there be any known *Idea* as a Standard, and Rules to fix this Image or *Idea* by, we may make a *beautiful Imitation*.¹⁶

One would expect that natural objects provide examples only of absolute beauty. For comparative beauty presupposes the intervention of a maker who contrives to fashion an object in imitation of another, or in correspondence with some preconceived idea. But being an unabashed Deist, Hutcheson sees nature as the work of art *par excellence*; and where we can read God's intentions, we can perceive the admirable way in which He has fashioned nature after His plan. So:

This Beauty arising from Correspondence to *Intention*, would open to curious Observers a new Scene of Beauty in the Works of NATURE, by considering how the Mechanism of the various Parts known to us seems adapted to the Perfection of the Part, and yet in Subordination to the Good of the Greatest Whole, or of all Beings, to have been the Intention of the AUTHOR of Nature; and cannot avoid being pleas'd when we see any part of this Design executed in the Systems we are acquainted with.¹⁷

It might be thought that perhaps all such aesthetic perceptions of nature are closed to the non-Christian. Such, however, need not be the case on Hutcheson's view. For just as we can admire a statue of Hercules if it “retains that *Grandeur*, and those marks of *Strength* and *Courage*, which we imagine in that Hero,”¹⁸ without being Greek polytheists, so, Hutcheson might argue, an atheist can admire the natural world *as if* it were an embodiment of the Christian “myth,” without for a moment believing it to be anything but a myth. Indeed, it may very well be that many a nonbeliever's tastes in natural beauty are unconsciously formed by a Christian view of nature.

But although comparative beauty does, according to Hutcheson, have a place in the sun of natural beauty, it is a small place: absolute beauty is the major factor here.

Hutcheson begins his discussion of absolute beauty in nature with a discussion of the simplest geometrical forms: squares, rectangles, triangles, and so on. As we have seen, he maintains that “. . . The *Variety* increases the Beauty in equal Uniformity” and “The greater *Uniformity* increases the *Beauty* amidst equal *Variety*. . . .”¹⁹ Before we go on to examine how the natural world is seen by Hutcheson to embody this principle, it would be well to contemplate for a moment its logical absurdity. Hutcheson clearly is treating uniformity and variety as two logically independent characteristics. We might, for example, say that we admire a chair both for its comfort and for its durability. And, since comfort and durability are logically independent, we can say that if two chairs were equally comfortable, we would (all other things being equal) prefer the more durable one; and if they were equally durable (all other things being equal) we would prefer the more comfortable one.

Hutcheson treats unity and variety in just this way; but this seems to be a logical error. Two objects cannot (logically) have equal uniformity *and* unequal variety, or equal variety *and* unequal unity. If A has more variety than B , then it follows that A is less unified than B ; and if A is more unified than B , then it follows that A has less variety than B . So at least it appears to me.

As to the application of this rather suspect principle to nature, Hutcheson tends to emphasize the aspect of unity, which certainly reveals something about his taste in natural beauty, as well as the taste of his contemporaries. But as there is a good deal of excellent work in this area of the history of ideas, there is no need to pursue the subject here; nor would it be within the purview of the present study to do so. We can, however, at least glance at some examples of Hutcheson's treatment of natural beauty, for the purpose of further limning in his aesthetic theory.

For Hutcheson, nature provides an inexhaustible resource of variety in which unity presents the unexpected (but nevertheless frequent) foil. It is for this reason — because variety is expected and unity surprising — that unity is the major operator in the aesthetic enjoyment of the natural world. A second point worth noting in Hutcheson's treatment of natural beauty is his emphasis upon the universal, rather than the particular: upon the relation of individual objects to nature as a whole, rather than the beauty of these objects in themselves. Both of these points will emerge in the following illustrations. Hutcheson writes:

[I]n every part of the World of NATURE which we call *Beautiful*, there is vast *Uniformity*, amidst almost infinite *Variety*. . . . Every particular Object in *Nature* does not indeed appear *beautiful* to us; but there is a vast Profusion of *Beauty* over most of the Objects which occur either to our Senses, or Reasonings upon Observation. . . . the Forms of all the great Bodys in the Universe are nearly spherical; the Orbits of their Revolutions generally Eliptick, and without great Eccentricity in those which continually occur to our Observation: and these are Figures of great *Uniformity*, and therefore, pleasing to us. . . .

If we descend to the minuter Works of NATURE, what vast *Uniformity* among all the Species of *Plants* and *Vegetables* in the manner of their Growth and Propagation! what exact Resemblance among all the Plants of the same Species whose Numbers surpass our Imagination! . . .

AGAIN, as to the *Beauty* of *Animals*, either in their inward Structure, which we come to the Knowledge of by Experiment and long Observation, or their outward Form, we shall find vast *Uniformity* among all the Species which are known to us, in the Structure of those Parts, upon which Life depends more immediately.²⁰

It can be seen clearly in all of the above examples — the beauty of celestial bodies, of plants, and of animals — that it is the surprising uniformity among vast numbers of individuals that, for Hutcheson, provides our aesthetic pleasure in these objects. But it is hardly ever the individual object that is admired: it is nearly always the individual object as part of a system. Hutcheson's admiration of natural beauty, therefore, is for the most part concept laden. Of course, no natural object can be perceived at all without being automatically placed in some conceptual frame. We cannot see an *object* without seeing it *as* some *kind* of thing or other. We cannot admire the beauty of a green pepper without seeing it as *something*, if not as a green pepper. But it is a long way from this admiration of a green pepper to Hutcheson's, which would involve the realization that *this* green pepper is one of many green peppers, all of which resemble each other to a remarkable degree. In short, Hutcheson looked at nature, even when looking for absolute beauty, as a philosopher and scientist. If he looked at it as a poet, it was as a Lucretius or a Dante, not a Keats or a Shelley.

(7) In the chapter of the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty* which he calls “Of the Beauty of Theorems,” Hutcheson breaks ground in a place where no one seems ever to have taken up the task after him. Scientists, mathematicians particularly, speak of the beauty or elegance of their theories and demonstrations; yet little serious work, so far as I know, has ever been done by philosophers to investigate these linguistic uses. Few, I think,

share Collingwood's view that the word "beautiful" has no particular aesthetic significance at all and can simply be thought of as synonymous with "good" or "praiseworthy" or something of the kind.²¹ But many, I suspect, think this of the scientist's use. Perhaps they are right, but the topic might well repay further inquiry. And Hutcheson deserves some credit for broaching it, although what he comes up with is not very satisfactory.

Quite predictably, Hutcheson finds the beauty of theorems to be in their subsumption of variety under a unifying principle. "For in one *Theorem*," he states,

we may find included, with the most exact Agreement, an infinite Multitude of particular Truths; nay, often an Infinity of Infinities. . . . Thus for instance, the 47th Proposition of the first Book of EUCLID'S Elements contains an infinite Multitude of Truths, concerning the infinite possible Sizes of right-angled *Triangles*, as you make the Areas greater or less; and in each of these Sizes you may find an infinite Multitude of dissimilar *Triangles*, as you vary the Proportion of the Base to the *Perpendicular*: all which Infinities of Infinities agree in the general *Theorem*.²²

Thus, the *variety* of Euclid's forty-seventh proposition lies in its universality: for it is a proposition about *all* right triangles; and there is an infinite number of them. Its *unity* of course lies in the fact that *all* of these triangles fall under one proposition.

But generality, as I think Hutcheson correctly observes, is not the only determiner of beauty. For if the particulars brought under the generalization are too diffuse — that is, if there is an excess of variety — the general proposition will not be as beautiful. So, for example, in the proposition *every whole is greater than its part*, "we shall find no *Beauty* in the Contemplation: Because howsoever this proposition does contain many Infinities of particular Truths; yet the *Unity* is inconsiderable, since they all agree only in a vague, undetermin'd Conception of Whole and Part, and in an indefinite Excess of the former above the latter, which is sometimes great and sometimes small."²³ Furthermore, Hutcheson observes in later editions of the *Inquiry* that trivial propositions are not admirable, "even where the *Unity* is sufficiently distinct and determinate," for they give us

no “*Surprise* in the Discovery.”²⁴ This latter is not a lack of beauty, however, but a lack of novelty.

Hutcheson recognized, at least vaguely, too, although not as fully as he ought to have done, that the beauty or elegance of a proposition must somehow lie not just in itself, but in its relation to a system of other propositions. “There is,” Hutcheson said, “another Beauty in Propositions, which cannot be omitted; which is this, When one *Theorem* shall contain a vast Multitude of Corollarys easily deducible from it.”²⁵

Hutcheson was certainly on the right track here; but what he failed to see was that it must be a double track. For the richness of a logical system, the number of theorems provable within it, is just one mark of its elegance. The economy with which this richness is achieved is the other. As a recent author has remarked in this regard:

[A] system is more elegant the simpler is its list of primitive terms and the simpler is its list of axioms. On the other hand, neither our list of primitive terms nor our list of axioms can just be cut arbitrarily short, for if the axioms selected are too few and too weak or contain too meager an array of primitive terms, then the theorems deducible will be insufficient to make the system interesting.²⁶

We are correct, I think, in seeing an *aesthetic* argument here. For the richness and economy of an uninterpreted logical system (where the values of truth or utility cannot yet cloud the issue) seem to me directly analogous to the richness of thematic development with economy of thematic material that a Beethoven, say, achieves in his best symphonic structures. Nor do I see why this should not be thought of as a genuine aesthetic experience. There are times when the mathematician and logician are just as unequivocally enjoying their creations aesthetically as the composer. And it may be that the scientist, too, sometimes must fall back on a basically aesthetic judgment, when all else fails, as, for instance, in the decision to interpret the Michelson-Morley experiment relativistically. Einstein often expressed his own theoretical intuitions in distinctly aesthetic terms. It would be well worth the effort of aestheticians to determine how far such expressions are metaphorical and how far literal.

(8) Hutcheson's reflections on art are in one major respect a disappointment. His position is one that would have lent itself to a formalist philosophy of art; and any movement in that direction in the eighteenth century would have been a healthy antidote to the ubiquitous theory of art as imitation. But in this Hutcheson was of his time and his place; and the principle of *unity amidst variety* is bent, as we have already seen, out of its formalist orbit to accommodate the mimetic paradigm. This is not to say that Hutcheson was so blind as to ignore completely the formal element in the arts, in spite of what we feel was a missed opportunity to redress the balance in its favor. And it is to the absolute beauty, the purely formal, in art that we must first turn our attention.

Hutcheson's remarks concerning the nonimitative, that is, absolute, beauty of the arts are distressingly few. The most extended of them, not surprisingly, concern music and architecture, the arts which have always been most recalcitrant to imitation theories. What Hutcheson thought about the formal properties of the other arts will have to be extrapolated, for the most part, from these.

The passage in which Hutcheson outlines his musical speculations is worth quoting at some length; it is revealing of the two ways in which the principle of *unity amidst variety* is treated; namely, as cause of the idea of beauty after the manner of the secondary qualities, and as cause of the idea of beauty, where the observer actually perceives, is aware of, the cause — which borders on quite another notion of aesthetic quality. Hutcheson writes:

Harmony often raises Pleasure in those who know not what is the Occasion of it: And yet the Foundation of this Pleasure is known to be a sort of *Uniformity*. When the several Vibrations of one Note regularly coincide with the Vibrations of another, they make an agreeable Composition; and such Notes are called *Chords*. Thus the Vibrations of any one Note coincide in Time with every second Vibration of its *Octave*, and two Vibrations of any Note coincide with three of its *Fifth*; and so on in the rest of the *Chords*. Now good Compositions, beside the Frequency of these *Chords*, must retain a general *Unity* of Key, an *Uniformity* among the Parts in *Bars*, *Risings*, *Fallings*, *Closes*.²⁷

Music, of all the arts, presented to a thinker of Hutcheson's stripe the most promising data. For here, surely, one might argue, is an exact aesthetic analogue of the secondary-quality model: a correlation between perceptions and mathematically measurable minute properties of matter. Just as certain arrangements of the “insensible atoms” produce the sensation of redness, certain arrangements of sound waves produce the pleasurable sensations of the third, fifth, and octave. Indeed, in the musical case we can go even further — express with mathematical exactitude the musical intervals and correlate them with a preference ranking of the resultant musical sensations. When we do this we find that the most consonant intervals have the simplest arithmetical ratios, or, in Hutcheson's view, the most *unity*.

That the relationship between the work of art and the aesthetic experience is not a cause-and-effect relationship, at least of the simple kind Hutcheson has in mind, we will leave until a future chapter. Suffice it to say here, even the modest claim of a correlation between the arithmetical simplicity of the musical intervals and their preference ranking will not wash: certainly not now, and not even in Hutcheson's day. It is true that there was a time when the fifth, octave, and unison were considered the only consonant intervals, and the third, a dissonance. But that time was long past when Hutcheson was writing. Indeed, the third was basic to the music of Hutcheson's era, and (to look ahead a few years), if Mozart's sister is to be trusted, the infant prodigy's first signs of talent were attempts to pick out the thirds on the harpsichord, clearly preferring them to the other, more arithmetically simple intervals. If Hutcheson had ever heard music based on the pure intervals of unison, octave, and fifth (for example, the organum of the Notre Dame school) he would have found it crude and “dissonant” in comparison with the music of 1725, rich in passages of parallel thirds. His own preference ranking would have favored music with an abundance of thirds; yet his own theory would predict a preference for music with an abundance of unisons, octaves, and fifths, the more “unified” intervals.

But Hutcheson saw that there must be more to the absolute

beauty of music than this. We do, after all, hear many patterns in sound; and we never *hear* the arithmetic ratios of unison, octave, and fifth at all. We can hear, for example, as Hutcheson points out, “a general *Unity* of Key, an *Uniformity* among the Parts in *Bars, Risings, Fallings, Closes*,” in other words, what we would call the formal aesthetic features of music. It is Hutcheson's view, as we have seen, that the idea of beauty is caused in us by *unity amidst variety*, either unperceived (as, for example, in the arithmetical proportions of sound waves), or perceived (as, for example, in the audible patterns of sound, like “*Unity* of Key”). Music, then, provides a paradigm case of this dualism. It also brings into focus what is so unsatisfactory about construing the relationship between the idea of beauty and the work of art as a causal one. Perhaps it *is* plausible to say that certain unperceived properties cause us to have aesthetic perceptions. But we surely would not want to say that the audible “large” formal features of music, like key or rhythm, cause us to have aesthetic perceptions. Rather, the perceiving of these *constitutes* our aesthetic perceptions.

The absolute beauty of architecture provides, for Hutcheson, further evidence that the basis of beauty is in *unity amidst variety*. And Hutcheson makes it clear that architecture serves here merely to exemplify what is universal to all of the fine arts. “As to the Works of Art, were we to run thro the various artificial Contrivances or Structures, we should find the Foundation of the [absolute] Beauty which appears in them, to be constantly some kind of *Uniformity*, or *Unity* of Proportion among the Parts and of each Part to the Whole.”²⁸ Nor is the principle of *unity* merely characteristic of British, even Continental, taste in art. Thus, Hutcheson writes of architecture:

In that kind of Architecture which the EUROPEANS call *Regular*, the *Uniformity* of Parts is very obvious, the several Parts are *regular Figures*, and either *equal* or *similar* at least in the same Range. . . . And tho other Countrys do not follow the *Grecian* or *Roman* Proportions; yet there is even among them a Proportion retained, a *Uniformity*, and Resemblance of corresponding Figures; and every Deviation in one part from that Proportion which is observ'd in

the rest of the Building, is displeasing to every Eye, and destroys or diminishes at least the *Beauty* of the Whole.²⁹

Architecture, and the other visual arts, as well as literature, do not provide the ready analogy with secondary qualities which music does. Yet if Hutcheson had been familiar with some of the Renaissance writers on architecture, he might have attempted, as they had done, to relate the architectural forms with the proportions of the consonant musical intervals.³⁰ But in his discussion of the absolute beauty of Architecture, and, we must assume, in his thinking about all of the other arts (with, of course, the exception of music), Hutcheson dealt with *unity amidst variety* as a relation holding only between macroscopic proportions. Nevertheless, we cannot, even here, think of these properties as constituting our aesthetic perceptions. Rather, we must treat them, as we have seen before, as the *causes* of our aesthetic perceptions, if we are to be faithful to Hutcheson's teaching. As such, however, they can be either conscious or unconscious. That is, the man whose idea of beauty is being caused by *unity amidst variety* may or may not be aware of the *unity amidst variety*; and may or may not be aware that it is the cause of his idea. Unfortunately, Hutcheson never made explicit the distinction between *unity amidst variety* as a cause and as a constitutive feature of our aesthetic perceptions. As we shall see, this chicken came home to roost when the rationalists criticized his theory, although they scarcely were more clear about it.

(9) We can conveniently subdivide Hutcheson's treatment of the nonformal in art into those nonformal elements that are appropriate to the "aesthetic" senses and those that are appropriate to the "nonaesthetic" ones. And for all practical purposes this comes down to a subdivision between those elements appropriate to the sense of relative beauty (or imitation) and those appropriate to the moral sense.

In discussing relative beauty, Hutcheson mentions but two of the fine arts: painting and poetry. Of painting he has little to say, perhaps because in his eyes painting is so obviously the

paradigm case of imitative art that it requires no lengthy argument to establish the fact. In spite of his formalistic bent, he is as far from Clive Bell as Hogarth from Cezanne.

In regard to poetry, Hutcheson is somewhat more lavish with his comments. But the thrust is basically the same; art imitates nature: "The same Observation holds true in the Descriptions of the Poets either of *natural* Objects or Persons; and this *relative Beauty* is what they shou'd principally endeavour to obtain, as the peculiar *Beauty* of their Works."³¹

Two points are worth making with regard to Hutcheson's treatment of imitation (i.e., relative beauty) in the arts. The first has been made before, but is worth especially emphasizing. For Hutcheson, the content of art is, in a certain sense, purely formal. We do not find Dürer's portrait of his aged mother beautiful because of any significance that we attach to the subject matter: motherhood, age, humanity, or anything else of the kind. It is beautiful because of a formal relationship that holds between the painting and Dürer's mother, or our idea of what such a person as Dürer's mother might look like. Because there is a unity, an isomorphism between Dürer's mother, or our idea of her, and Dürer's picture, our sense of beauty responds, just as it would to the formal unity of any nonobjective pattern or design. From the purely aesthetic point of view, then, there is nothing to choose between Dürer's picture of his mother and Harnett's pheasants and fruits. For both fulfill — the latter perhaps even more satisfactorily — the formal requirement of unity which must hold between the object of imitation and the object imitated. And so, for all of his talk of imitation in art, Hutcheson in a peculiar sense remains a formalist in principle; and content, as we understand it, is for him peculiarly irrelevant.

The second point that deserves notice concerns the role of morality in art. It is an odd thing to find a moralist encouraging the representation of the immoral in art. But this is exactly what we find Hutcheson doing in the name of greater realism. For, after all, we live in what even a Leibnizian must admit *appears* to be an immoral world, or, at least, a world in which the immoral appears to have more than just a supporting role. And were the artist to make his world too morally perfect, it

would be a poor representation of the real one. Therefore

[A] Poet should not out of choice draw the *Finest Characters* possible for *Virtue*; these Characters indeed abstractly consider'd might give more Pleasure [to the moral sense], and have more *Beauty* than the *imperfect* ones which occur in Life with a mixture of Good and Evil: But it may suffice at present to suggest against this Choice, that we have more lively Ideas of *imperfect Men* with all their Passions, than of *morally perfect Heroes*, such as really never occur to our own Observation; and of which consequently we cannot judge exactly as to their Agreement with the Copy. And further, thro Consciousness of our own State, we are more nearly touch'd and affected by the *imperfect Characters*; since in them we see represented, in the Persons of others, the *Contrasts* of Inclinations, and the *Struggles* between the Passions of *Self-Love* and those of *Honour* and *Virtue*, which we often feel in our own Breasts.³²

Hutcheson seems to portray here a kind of dilemma which the artist must juggle in his representations. If he chooses to gratify the moral sense, and does so by presenting an excess of virtue, then the sense of beauty will be offended by the lack of realism. If, on the other hand, he panders to the sense of beauty wholly, the result may well be so offensive to the moral sense as to make for an equally unpalatable extreme. Nor can this dilemma be represented wholly as one with the aesthetic on one horn and the nonaesthetic on the other, for Hutcheson is not altogether free of Shaftesbury's tendency to blur the distinction between the aesthetic and the moral. Notice that a *virtuous* character is described by Hutcheson interchangeably as a *beautiful* one. Is the artist not, then, on Hutcheson's view, making an *aesthetic* judgment when he considers the effects his characters will have on the *moral* sense of his audience?

It should be remarked, too, in reference to the passage just quoted, that Hutcheson's notion of realism might better be described as a notion of *credibility*; in art the realistic is the believable, and the believable is the verifiable. The artist must depict what his audience has experienced. Otherwise, the audience cannot make a judgment of its realism, for it cannot make a comparison of the object imitated with the object of imitation.

Artistic realism for Hutcheson, then, must be relative to the experience of the perceiver: a position which is quite in line with the most recent writings on the subject of representation by such as E. H. Gombrich and Nelson Goodman.

(10) It is appropriate that we terminate our discussion of Hutcheson's reflections on art by returning again to his musical views; appropriate at least in the way a Beethoven coda is: introducing new and slightly discordant material, not altogether integrated with what has gone before. For Hutcheson introduces into his observations on music what to him, and his age, was a commonplace, but what, if not inconsistent with his general aesthetic theory, is certainly not provided for by it.

Hutcheson's major aesthetic category, the beautiful, is subdivided, as we have seen, into two major divisions: *absolute* and *relative*. Consistency demands that each of the fine arts reflect this dichotomy. With regard to absolute beauty, this demand is readily satisfied. For each of the fine arts is realized in some perceptual medium or other. And every such medium is susceptible of being organized in a pattern that exhibits to the perceiver *unity amidst variety* — the prerequisite for absolute beauty. In respect to relative beauty, however, the situation is problematical. For music resists any obvious treatment in imitative or representational terms. How can music be brought into line with the rest of the fine arts? This must be a problem for any representative interpretation of art.

Three alternatives were current in the literature when Hutcheson wrote the first *Inquiry*. I shall call them the *imitative* theory, the *representational* theory, and the *arousal* theory.

If we take painting as our paradigm case of an *imitative* art, we can express the relation between art and its object as one of *resemblance*. The portrait of Dürer's mother resembles, looks like, Dürer's mother. If music is imitative in this sense, it must resemble, *sound* like, its object.³³ For example, the flute obligatto in Handel's aria "Sweet bird that shuns't the noise of folly" quite literally sounds like a bird's song.

By *representation* is meant something more general of which *resemblance* is a special case. A symbol need not, and indeed in

some cases cannot, resemble its object of *representation*. Music can *resemble* only what is heard. It may, however, *represent* what is perceived by some sense other than the sense of hearing. Thus, for example, Bach *represents* the Christian “following” Jesus (in the *St. John Passion*) with a canonic phrase in which the flute “follows” the singer. And, I have argued elsewhere, it was the view of a contemporary of Hutcheson's and Bach's, Johann Mattheson, that music *represents* the passions of the soul, that is, the emotions, by presenting an isomorphic structure — a view that anticipates, in certain crucial respects, the more recent theories of Carrol Pratt and Susanne Langer.³⁴

But, finally, the connection between music and the emotions was more often expressed, in Hutcheson's day, as a causal one. Music was thought of as able not merely to represent the emotions, but thereby to *arouse* the emotions represented in the listener. “What passion cannot Music raise and quell?” Dryden asked in the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*. His answer, and the answer of many others in Hutcheson's day, was “None.”

There were three options with regard to musical “content” that his age left open to him, and Hutcheson might easily have absorbed either of the first two into his general theory. Music-as-imitation would, of course, have received the same treatment as was given the visual arts. And music-as-representation would surely have been close to Hutcheson's treatment of literature, which after all is imitative only in a very loose sense. What Hutcheson was really maintaining was not that literature is imitation, but that it is representation. A description in a poem does not literally resemble what it describes. Hutcheson might have maintained the same for music. But he did not.

Oddly enough, Hutcheson plumped for the one theory of musical content that his position was not prepared to accommodate — the *arousal* theory. He wrote, on this regard,

There is also another Charm in *Musick* to various Persons, which is distinct from the *Harmony*, and is occasion'd by its raising agreeable Passions. The *human Voice* is obviously vary'd by all the stronger Passions; now when our *Ear* discerns any resemblance between the *Air* of a *Tune*, whether sung or play'd upon an Instrument, either in its *Time* or *Key*, or any other Circumstance, to the

sound of the *human Voice* in any Passion, we shall be touch'd by it in a very sensible manner, and have *Melancholy, Joy, Gravity, Thoughtfulness* excited in us by a sort of *Sympathy* or *Contagion*.³⁵

During the eighteenth century the arousal theory of musical expression usually comprised two basic premises: (i) music in some way either resembles or represents some entity which ordinarily arouses emotions in human beings; and (ii) therefore, music is also capable of arousing emotions in human beings. In later eighteenth-century Britain (in Daniel Webb's *Observations on the Correspondence Between Poetry and Music*, for example) music was thought of as isomorphic with something like Descartes' *esprit animaux*, the physiological cause of the emotions. Hutcheson here has adopted an earlier version of the arousal theory, dating back at least to the Florentine *Camerata*, in which the rise and fall of the melodic line is likened to the rise and fall of the human voice in impassioned speech.³⁶ Since the human voice is able to arouse emotions in human beings, so too, it is argued, can music, through this averred affinity of melody to speech.

Had Hutcheson adopted only the first premise of this theory (as Mattheson was to do with the later one), it would have resulted in a purely representational theory of musical expression, completely compatible with his representational theory of literature. But in adopting the second premise, he located the "content" of music in its ability to arouse emotions in the perceiver. And we find no hint in Hutcheson as to *why* the arousal of emotions should be of any aesthetic significance; nor does there seem to be any facet of his aesthetic theory which promises help in this direction. Among Hutcheson's contemporaries, DuBos, Hume, and Burke, most notably had evolved explanations of how the arousal of emotions can result in an aesthetic experience. There is no hint of such an explanation in Hutcheson.

VI God and Aesthetics

(1) About one-third of Hutcheson's first *Inquiry* is taken up with theological topics: the existence of God, and the theological underpinnings of aesthetic perception. If sheer bulk is any measure of intellectual interest, then we must conclude that for Hutcheson the most interesting and compelling aesthetic problems were theological ones. But for us, alas, they are the least likely to arouse curiosity of any other kind than the antiquarian. I shall not, therefore, devote anywhere near the space to Divine speculations in my book that Hutcheson devotes to them in his. For the judgment of history is that what Hutcheson had to offer to philosophy in general, and aesthetics in particular, did not that way tend.

Hutcheson raised three questions which fall under the head of aesthetic theology: (i) To what extent does the fact of aesthetic perception (as Hutcheson construes it) provide evidence for the existence of God? (ii) What *other* evidence can be adduced for the existence of God? (iii) What is the final cause of the aesthetic sense (or senses)? The first two questions are answered by appeal to what we call the argument from (or to) design, and comprise Section V of the first *Inquiry*: "Concerning our Reasonings about *Design* and *Wisdom* in the *Cause*, from the *Beauty* or *Regularity* of *Effects*." The third comprises Section VIII, the concluding one: "Of the *Importance* of the *internal Senses* in Life, and the *final Causes* of them."

(2) Hutcheson placed little stock in the a priori proofs of the existence of God available to him, either the ontological and

causal proofs of Descartes, or those of his countryman Samuel Clarke. Of the former, he wrote, "I do not use the Cartesian arguments, [which are] obviously full of manifest fallacies."¹ And of his attitude to the latter, his first biographer, the Reverend William Leechman tells us:

Tho' he most heartily approv'd of the Doctor's conclusions, and had the highest sense of his singular abilities and virtues, yet after the most serious and attentive consideration of his arguments, he did not find that conviction from them which he wished and expected After all the enquiry he could make, he still continued extremely doubtful of the justness and force of all the metaphysical arguments, by which many have endeavoured to demonstrate the existence, unity, and perfections of the Deity It was his opinion in this early part of his life, and he never saw cause to alter it, that as some subjects from their nature are capable of demonstrative evidence, so others admit only of a probable one²

Given this aversion to a priori arguments, it is not surprising that Hutcheson should turn to the most popular (or soon to be) a posteriori proof, the backbone of Natural Religion in the eighteenth century. I shall consider two versions of that argument here: one an aesthetic version, claiming that the aesthetic nature of the universe demands a rational cause (i.e., God); the other a nonaesthetic version, claiming that the regularity of the universe demands such a cause. As we shall see presently, the former is simply a special case of the latter. Let us determine first, then, why Hutcheson believes that an aesthetic universe demands a rational creator.

(3) It is, as we have seen, a purely contingent matter of fact that certain arrangements of primary and/or secondary qualities — namely, the arrangements exhibiting *uniformity amidst variety*—would be called beautiful by us. For they are called beautiful in virtue of their *causing* us to have a certain kind of pleasurable feeling; and it is a contingent matter of fact that these particular arrangements, and not some other, cause this feeling (and not some other, or no feeling at all). "There seems," Hutcheson says, "to be no necessary Connection of our

pleasing Ideas of *Beauty* with the *Uniformity* or *Regularity* of the objects, from the Nature of things, antecedently to some *Constitution* of the AUTHOR of our Nature, which has made such Forms pleasant to us.”³

Let us suppose, now, that there is no rational cause of the universe; or, as Hutcheson would put it, let us suppose that the universe is the result merely of “undirected” or “undesigning” force, “That Force with which an Agent may put Matter into Motion, without having any Design of Intention to produce any particular Form.”⁴ But that is equivalent, Hutcheson believes, to saying that the state of the universe is the result of “chance.” And if this were indeed the case, it is extremely unlikely (the chance is close to zero) that we would be so constituted, and so situated, that our aesthetic nature would match our surroundings in such a way as to enable us to get pleasure from them, considering the perhaps infinitely large number of ways we might have been constituted aesthetically, and the equally large number of possible situations we might have found ourselves in. As Hutcheson puts the case:

But then, as there are an Infinity of *Places* in which Animals may be situated, and an Infinity of *Relishes* or *Senses* is suppos'd possible; that in the immense Spaces any one Animal should by Chance be plac'd in a System agreeable to its Taste, must be improbable as *infinite* to *one* at least: And much more unreasonable is it to expect from Chance, that a multitude of Animals agreeing in their Sense of *Beauty* should obtain *agreeable Places*.⁵

In other words, the only explanation for the congruence of our taste with our environment that is probable enough to command assent is an explanation in terms of a rational agent who fashioned this congruence. Our aesthetic situation, then, is best explained by the hypothesis of a designing cause; that is, God.

Now what first must occur to any modern reader is that there is no improbability at all in supposing an organism to be suited to its environment, aesthetic or otherwise. We call this *adaptation*, and we have a scientific theory — Darwin's theory of evolution — to account for it, if not in every detail, at least in some kind of generally accepted schema. *Of course* there may be an

infinite number of environments in which we (or our ancestors) might have found themselves. And in any one of them, we (or whatever creatures, if any, evolved there) would, by the process of natural selection, have become adapted to them, if they were suited to life in the first place. We may seem to be “made” for our surroundings; but we accept that this is as illusory as the “rising” and “setting” of the sun, both illusions having been dispelled by suitable scientific theories.

The thrust of the argument here is not to hold Hutcheson responsible for the impossible. No one supposes that he, in 1725, could have foreseen Darwinism or anything like it. Even Darwin trembled at the thought of the human eye. And a far more powerful intellect than Hutcheson, closer to the event, averred, “we may confidently assert that it is absurd for men . . . to hope that maybe another Newton may some day arise, to make intelligible to us even the genesis of but a blade of grass from natural laws that no design has ordered.”⁶ But Kant drew a more modest conclusion than Hutcheson: not that no natural explanation exists, merely that we can never know what it is.

But, then, are we to think that a source of the possibility of organized beings amply sufficient to explain their origin without having recourse to a design, *could* never be found buried among the secrets even of nature, were we able to penetrate to the principle upon which it specifies its familiar laws? This, in its turn, would be a presumptuous judgement on our part. . . . On the question, therefore, whether or not any being acting designedly stands behind what we properly term physical ends, as a world cause, and consequently, as Author of the world, we can pass no objective judgement whatever, be it affirmative or negative.⁷

Hutcheson is guilty here of using the argument from design to produce what Antony Flew calls a “God of the Gaps”; that is, a theological explanation for what the theologian confidently predicts science cannot compass.⁸ But that is immediately to lay the argument open to the perfectly just reply of Kant that such a judgment is presumptuous. The argument from design must concern itself with the explanation of but one unique event: the universe, governed internally by natural laws.

It should be remarked that Hutcheson himself was not completely unaware of the God of the Gaps fallacy. For in discussing the forming of crystals out of solution, he took note of the fact that the patterns into which the crystals form are adequately explained by accepted scientific theories. Here “we frequently see *regular Forms* arising, tho there is nothing in this Affair but an *undirected Force of Attraction* suppos'd.”⁹ In other words, here is a pattern, a design in nature which can be explained without any appeal to the Deity. But this explanation itself must be in terms of more basic regularities: for “unless we suppose some preceding *Regularity* in the Figures of *attracting* Bodys, they shall never form any regular Body at all.” Ultimately we will arrive at the basic system of natural laws which we see as characterizing our universe in the large. And then we will ask the question (if we wish to generate the argument from design): What caused this regular, law-governed universe? The reply of the Butlers and Paleys is, of course: Nothing could have caused such a state of affairs but a rational agent. Here we have the argument from design in its proper and strongest form.

(4) Hutcheson's various attempts to state the argument from design in the first *Inquiry* never do, in fact, really escape the God of the Gaps. For in each case, we can now point to a possible, if not an adequate, scientific explanation for what Hutcheson claimed could be the result of divine decree only. Thus, to examine them with a view to conviction is about as sensible as inviting a dead man to play chess. But as Hutcheson did place so much confidence in them, we should at least go through the ritual of setting one up and knocking it down.

Perhaps the closest Hutcheson comes to escaping the God of the Gaps and producing the classical argument from design is the following, in which he asks us to consider this example: “*a Pair of Wheels* of our ordinary Carriages; each *Circular*, *Spokes* equal in *length, thickness, shape*; the *Wheels* set *Parallel*, the *Axle-tree* fix'd in the *Nave* of both, and secur'd from coming out at either end. . . .”¹⁰ That this mechanism, simple though it is, could have been formed by “*undirected Concourses*,” we all believe so unlikely as to be not worthy of serious consideration.

Wagon wheels, in our experience, are always the product of wheelwrights, not the winds and the tides. Hutcheson concludes: "What shall we say then of a *Plant*, a *Tree*, an *Animal*, a *Man*, with *such multitudes* of adapted Vessels, *such Articulations*, *Insertions of Muscles*, *Diffusions of Veins*, *Arterys*, *Nerves*. The *Improbability* that such Machines should be the Effect of *Chance* must be near the *infinitesimal* Power of *Infinite* to *Unity*."

Clearly, the argument will have no appeal to anyone armed with the principle of natural selection. It could have been advanced only in an age when adaptation had no satisfactory explanation in terms of natural law. But that reveals again the God of the Gaps in Hutcheson's design argument. Of course, it is highly improbable that the various adaptive features of life could have evolved in a universe governed only by the natural laws known to Hutcheson's age, in the absence, that is, of biological laws, just as it is highly unlikely that a wagon wheel could be formed by the winds and the tides. However, this makes God a substitute for biological explanations, under the tacit assumption that such explanations are in principle impossible: an assumption we now have good reason to believe is false, or at least doubtful.

But although Hutcheson again falls here into the weakest form of the design argument, he is just a step away from the less palled version, "Paley's Watch" and the argument from design as formulated by Cleanthes in the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. The beginning is there. A wagon wheel is made by a rational agent: this we know by experience. But it is not to a plant or an animal, or a part of one or another of them, that the wagon wheel must be compared: rather, to the universe as a whole. Thus Cleanthes:

Look round the world: contemplate the whole and every part of it: You will find it to be nothing but one great machine, sub-divided into an infinite number of lesser machines, which again admit of subdivision to a degree beyond what human senses and faculties can trace and explain. All these various machines, and even their most minute parts, are adjusted to each other with an accuracy, which ravishes into admiration all men who have ever

contemplated them. The curious adapting of means to ends, throughout all nature, resembles exactly, though it much exceeds, the productions of human contrivance; of human design, thought, wisdom, and intelligence. Since therefore the effects resemble each other, we are led to infer, by all the rules of analogy, that the causes also resemble; and that the Author of Nature is somewhat similar to the mind of a man; though possessed of much larger faculties, proportioned to the grandeur of the work which he has executed.¹¹

Now there is even in Cleanthes' refined argument a suggestion that the individual adaptations themselves require a theological explanation. But the general thrust of the argument is that the universe, viewed as a whole, is the object in need of a rational causal agent, by analogy with the machines which we all know were made by men and not by the unaided forces of nature: for the world is "nothing but one great machine"; and machines, as we all know from experience, are made by mechanics.

The universe, then, to the extent that it is like a watch or a wagon wheel, must have a cause similar to the watchmaker or the wheelwright. But, as Philo warns us, the argument from analogy is a dangerous one: it may indeed be true "that similar causes prove similar effects, and similar effects similar causes. . . ." But "Unless the cases be exactly similar, they repose no perfect confidence in applying their past observation to any particular phenomenon."¹² Yes, the cause of the universe is about as much like a wheelwright as the universe is like a wheel. We *all* can accept *that* with confidence, Lucretius and Marx, as well as Paley and Butler. A pre-Humean argument from design, or one that has not at least taken Hume's criticisms seriously, is very like a pre-war washing machine — quaint, but badly in need of overhauling.

(5) It is not my intention here to heap ridicule upon Hutcheson's theological views, but merely to call a spade a spade. Clearer heads than his have been knocked by Hume. Suffice it to say: Hutcheson believed in God. That he believed in God on insufficient grounds is not really to our purpose. The point is that he thought the existence of God has important consequences

for aesthetics. We must now examine what these consequences are.

Hutcheson saw the aesthetic senses as part of a teleological system, under the direction, and the work of a wise and good Governor. The wisdom and goodness of God are, along, of course, with his existence, premises necessary for a satisfactory explanation of aesthetic experience. But another seems to be necessary as well: the assumption that the Deity works in the most economical way possible (or else, that working in the most economical way possible is part of acting wisely, even in an omnipotent being). Armed with these premises, Hutcheson proposes to discover (i) “. . . Reasons worthy of the Great AUTHOR of *Nature* for making such a Connection between regular Objects, and the Pleasure which accompanies our Perceptions of them . . .”; and (ii) “what Reasons might possibly influence him to create the *World* as it at present is, as far as we can observe, every where full of *Regularity* and *Uniformity*.”¹³

We can now build up a case for God's endowing us with aesthetic senses that derive pleasure from the perception of *uniformity amidst variety*. First, for creatures of limited, finite intelligence and capabilities, universal generalizations, from which specific statements can be deduced, are the most useful form of knowledge, because, according to Hutcheson, “this prevents Distractions in their Understandings thro the Multiplicity of Propositions, and Toil and Weariness to their Powers of Action: and consequently their *Reason*, without any *Sense of Beauty*, must approve of such Methods when they reflect upon their apparent *Advantage*.”¹⁴ (Why God did not simply make us less prone to weariness and distractions, which he could certainly have done without tampering with our finitude, Hutcheson does not reveal.)

Second, objects that possess *uniformity amidst variety* “are more distinctly and easily comprehended and retain'd, than *irregular Objects*; because the accurate Observation of one or two Parts often leads to the Knowledge of the Whole. . . .”¹⁵ That the aesthetic pleasure we derive from well-proportioned objects is due somehow to their being well adapted to our perceptual faculties and, therefore, easily perceived is an old and oft-repeated

claim. Descartes thought that a happy medium between the difficult and the easy must be struck; and he wrote in the *Compendium Musicae*:

Among the sense-objects the most agreeable to the soul is neither that which is perceived most easily nor that which is perceived with the greatest difficulty; it is that which does not quite gratify the natural desire by which the senses are carried to the objects, yet is not so complicated that it tires the senses.¹⁶

And Spinoza states:

When phenomena are of such a kind that the impression they make on our senses requires little effort of imagination, and can consequently be easily remembered, we say they are *well-ordered*; if the contrary, they are *ill-ordered* or *confused*. Further, as things which are easily imagined are more pleasing to the mind, men prefer order to confusion.¹⁷

But Hutcheson is not *explaining* the pleasure we take in the aesthetic here in terms of ease of perception. He would, in fact, have considered such an explanation illegitimate. For he has, after all, been arguing throughout against reductionism in ethics and aesthetics. Aesthetic perception is *sui generis*; that is the point of appealing to aesthetic senses. Hutcheson's motto might well be: "Everything is what it is, and not another thing." The pleasure we take in easy perception or conception is one thing; and the pleasure of beauty is quite another. What Hutcheson is maintaining, then, is that it is in the interest of a finite mind to seek objects that possess *uniformity amidst variety* because "it must be a long Attention to a vast Multiplicity of Parts, which can ascertain or fix the Idea of any *irregular Form*, or give any distinct Idea of it, or make us capable of retaining it. . . ." ¹⁸ (Again, Hutcheson gives us no explanation of why God chose this method of doing things. He could, after all, have made us a little less "finite." But perhaps this is the most economical way: the way that gets the most out of a given level of finitude, assuming that that level of finitude is required for other reasons.)

We are now in a position to explain why God implanted aesthetic senses in us. It is because he saw that we would be better off if our aesthetic preferences pointed in the same direction as our utilitarian ones. God, of course, could have chosen not to give us any aesthetic pleasures at all. But “supposing the Deity so kind as to connect *sensible Pleasure* with certain Actions or Contemplations, beside the *rational Advantage* perceived in them . . . ,” it would have been a very bad arrangement indeed, Hutcheson thinks, to have our rational desires make us prefer objects and propositions that possess *uniformity amidst variety*, and to have our aesthetic desires be, say, for the completely disordered. For, in that case,

. . . *Reason* and *Interest* would lead us to simple *general Causes*, while a *contrary Sense* of *Beauty* would make us disapprove them: *Universal Theorems* would appear to our Understanding the best Means of increasing our Knowledge of what might be useful; while a *contrary Sense* would set us on the search after *singular Truths*: *Thought* and *Reflection* would recommend Objects with *Uniformity amidst Variety*, and yet this *perverse Instinct* would involve us in Labyrinths of *Confusion* and *Dissimilitude*.¹⁹

In short, two parts of our nature would be at cross-purposes. To Hutcheson, who no less than Kant, saw the human faculties as constituting a harmonious teleological system, such a situation would have been unthinkable, more unthinkable still as a product of omnipotence and goodness. (One could, I suppose, reply to this that the aesthetic sense, just because it points in the same direction as utility, works at cross-purposes by being a distracting influence. Hutcheson himself avers that we often *confuse* aesthetic with rational interest. And the former can often be distracting, rather than helpful, to the latter.)

One further aspect of our aesthetic situation remains to be given its theological foundation. And that is the aesthetic richness of our surroundings, particularly the fact that the universe is governed by natural laws, all of which give aesthetic pleasure but not all of which are particularly useful to us. The question, then, arises, Why did God see fit to fill the universe with so much order and design when far less would have sufficed for the

needs of men? As Hutcheson puts the question: "What Reason might influence the DEITY, whom no Diversitys of Operation could distract or weary, to chuse to operate by *simplest Means* and *general Laws*, and to diffuse *Uniformity*, *Proportion* and *Similitude* thro all the Parts of *Nature* which we can observe . . . ?"²⁰ He answers:

[S]ince the *divine Goodness*, for the Reasons above mention'd, has constituted our *Sense of Beauty* as it is at present, the same *Goodness* might determine the *Great ARCHITECT* to adorn this *vast Theatre* in that manner which should be agreeable to the Spectators, and that part which is expos'd to the Observation of Men, so as to be pleasant to them. . . .

In other words, in for a penny, in for a pound.

Hutcheson's theology has just about run out of gas here. We are the way we are, and our world is the way it is, because God wishes to please us. Why does he not please us more? Why did he make London slums as well as Kew Gardens? Hutcheson cannot tell us. But who can? Aesthetics has run afoul of the problem of evil; and nothing more can be said that has not been said before.

(6) Hutcheson, more than any other philosopher of his time, was responsible for setting aesthetics on its way as a philosophical discipline. There is perhaps nothing we can point to and say: "Hutcheson was the *first*." But he put it all together. There is no philosophical work of the day that treats the problems we now think of as constituting philosophical aesthetics in greater depth or at greater length than the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*. More important still, Hutcheson recognized what the new wave in philosophy was to be, in his lifetime, and clothed his aesthetics in the new and durable cloth. He was, in a way, Locke's aesthetic half; and thus he provided for the heirs of Locke's empiricism the aesthetic dimension that Locke himself so manifestly lacked. Even, then, if his ideas came to nothing (which I do not believe for a moment), Hutcheson, by wedding the poor relation of philosophy to a man of distinction, made her at least respectable, if not always the apple of philosophy's eye.

What specifically was Hutcheson's accomplishment? The concept of an aesthetic sense, which Hutcheson, more than anyone else, was responsible for forming, “gave to criticism an experiential emphasis.”²¹ But more than this, it played a vital role in the forming of aesthetic philosophy as we know it today. The sense of beauty was instrumental in the evolution of aesthetics as an autonomous discipline. What Ernst Cassirer has referred to as “the leveling and blunting process which Shaftesbury's thoughts suffer at the hands of Hutcheson,”²² is, on the contrary, a process of winnowing and purifying which transformed a philosophical miscellany into a systematic argument.

Jerome Stolnitz has argued — and rightly, I believe — that “it is the British who first conceive of the aesthetic as a unique mode of experience and carry out its systematic investigation.”²³ And it is through the concept of “aesthetic disinterestedness,” he claims, that aesthetics gained its autonomy:

[T]he crucial point is that disinterestedness is peculiar to one kind of experience. Because the experience is disinterested, it is significantly different from such other experiences as garden variety perception or moral activity or theoretical inquiry. The concepts which are adequate for the study of these activities will not do for it. It must be studied in its own right. This is what aesthetics can call its own. Ultimately the subject-matter of aesthetics is taken to be the experience of disinterested perception and the nature and value of its objects.²⁴

Aesthetics became an autonomous discipline when it had marked out for itself a unique realm of experience; and “disinterestedness” is the means by which that experience was so marked. This, I think, is a sound historical argument; but a link in the chain of explanation is missing: that link is the sense of beauty. The first step is the realization that beauty *is* an autonomous segment of experience, not reducible to any other. This realization, however vague, is expressed in the concept of an aesthetic sense: because the experience of the beautiful is a unique experience, it must have a unique sense appropriate to it. What the identifying mark of that experience is, the concept

of aesthetic disinterestedness reveals. But *that* such a separate realm of experience exists is made manifest by Hutcheson's sense of beauty.

Disinterestedness has, of course, turned out to be the more fruitful concept in our own day and in the recent past. But the historical importance of an idea cannot be measured only by its ability to survive. The sense of beauty as Hutcheson thought of it may not be a real option for twentieth-century aesthetics, whereas "aesthetic disinterestedness" has become for many, in one form or another, something like an axiom. Yet perhaps aesthetics owes as much, or more, to the former idea as to the latter.

Viewed in the light of this progressive aesthetic empiricism, Hutcheson's aesthetic theology seems like deplorable backsliding to me; and I have not been able to disguise my impatience with it. Sometimes a great theologian can make us feel, for a moment, that he was present at the creation. Hutcheson, alas, sounds, at best, like an eavesdropper.

Perhaps that is too hard a judgment, though. For there is, after all, much to admire in Hutcheson's attempt to provide an empirical grounding for ethics and aesthetics, while at the same time rejecting the example of Hobbes. He set himself, we can see by hindsight, an enormous task, and one that we still think it worthwhile to work at. It is not so surprising that he sometimes faltered, and grabbed instinctively at the Almighty for support.

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Part II Hutcheson — and Shortly Thereafter

“To multiply principles for every different appearance is useless, and unphilosophical too in a high degree.”

Edmund Burke

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VII Rationalist Aesthetics in the Age of Hutcheson

(1) In these remaining chapters I intend to trace the main theme of Hutcheson's first *Inquiry* — the sense of beauty — as it worked itself out in eighteenth-century Britain. The theme, however, is a complex one, with many variations and counter-points. And I am under no illusion that I trace them all. (Indeed, they are not all of them worth tracing.) Rather, I have been highly selective in my choice of subjects. This may reflect, to some extent at least, my own bias. But I hope (and believe) that it reflects, too, a fairly defensible judgment as to what was philosophically important in the reverberations which Hutcheson's aesthetic theory set up.

(2) In Britain, the moralists of the early eighteenth century were both united and divided: united against a common enemy and divided as to the conduct of the war. The enemy, of course, was Hobbes: “Throughout the seventeenth and the first years of the eighteenth century he represented the evil principle to moralists as well as to theologians.”¹ But with what weapon was the Hobbesian egoism to be dispatched? Here the lines were sharply drawn. *Sentiment*, answered Hutcheson and his followers: we approve benevolence as we savor the sweet. *Reason*, countered Clarke, Balguy, and Price: the understanding tells us what is right and what wrong as surely as it tells us what is true and what false.

The dialogue between reason and feeling in Enlightenment aesthetics did not, at least during the first half of the eighteenth

century, possess the incisiveness of the analogous moral dispute. Not as much, after all, was at stake, and there was, therefore, more inclination toward compromise. The upholders of reason in morality were not by any means completely averse to a “sentimental” aesthetics. And the “rational” side of the dispute was not as well represented on the philosophical level. For although the “sentimentalist” philosophers, notably Hutcheson and Hume, took a good deal of interest in aesthetics and criticism, the rationalists did not. Nevertheless, aesthetic questions did creep into the rationalists' writings on morality if only because of their opponents' concern with them; and these questions are important ones: they were to influence in no small degree the future course of aesthetic theory in eighteenth-century Britain, and on the Continent as well.

I am going to consider here three rationalist critics of the moral sense school who also had something to say of a critical nature about Hutcheson's (or Hutcheson-like) aesthetics. They are John Balguy, Bishop Berkeley, and Richard Price. I use the term “rationalist,” however, with some caution; for although Balguy and Price are clearly in the rationalist camp, Berkeley did not write extensively enough on ethical questions for us to know in any great detail what his views were.² But Berkeley was a rationalist at least to the extent that he believed both the Hobbists (notably Mandeville) and the moral sense theorists (notably Shaftesbury) had undervalued the role of reason in morality.

The position of Hutcheson and his followers has always been acknowledged by historians of aesthetics, and rightly so; for, with the possible exception of Baumgarten's work, it is the most historically significant body of aesthetic thought that the eighteenth century produced prior to Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. But the result of this just historical judgment has been to throw the British rationalists completely into the shade and thus distort our picture of early eighteenth-century British aesthetics. It is my hope that the following three sketches will help achieve a more balanced historical perspective — not, however, at the cost either of overestimating the rationalists or denigrating the importance of Hutcheson's accomplishment.

(3) John Balguy began as a rationalist with regard to the perception of moral goodness but as a reluctant follower of the aesthetic sense school — an attitude similar to that of another rationalist in Enlightenment morality, Kant, during the period of the first *Critique*.³ Balguy based this “dualism” upon the contention that since there is universal agreement about what is good and what evil, but widespread disagreement about what is beautiful and what ugly, moral distinctions must be made by the understanding, whereas aesthetic judgments *may* require some such thing as a sense of beauty. Thus Balguy writes:

Virtue, or moral Goodness, may be considered under the notion of *Pulchrum* or *Honestum*. As to the *Pulchrum* or *Beauty* of *Virtue*, it seems to me somewhat doubtful and difficult to determine, whether *Understanding* alone be sufficient for the perception of it, or whether it be not necessary to suppose some distinct Power superadded for that Purpose . . . when I consider . . . that Perceptions of the *Pulchrum* and of the *Honestum*, seem not equally universal, or if universal, yet in very different Degrees; that while every rational Creature clearly and uniformly perceives, in all ordinary Cases, what is *fit*, and *just*, and *right*; many Men have little or no Perception of that *Beauty* in Actions, with which others are wonderfully charmed: And when I further consider, that some Actions appear to all Men more beautiful than others, tho' equally *right* and *fit*; . . . I find myself obliged to suspend, and wait for further Evidence.⁴

Even, of course, if Balguy were correct in his characterization of moral agreement and aesthetic disagreement, his conclusion would not follow: for agreement is not an infallible sign that the distinctions involved are rationally made, any more than disagreement is an infallible sign that the distinctions involved are not susceptible of a rational determination. In addition, it should be noted that the beauty he is talking about here is moral beauty, not the beauty of a flower or a poem. So what Balguy is saying is that, for example, there will be universal agreement with regard to such questions as whether the assassination of Caesar was right or wrong, but not as to whether it was a beautiful or an ugly action. All of which seems rather odd, since, one would think, when it was customary to refer to

actions as “beautiful” or “ugly” (in a moral sense), these terms were synonymous with “right” and “wrong,” or, at least, it was logically impossible for an action to be “right” and “ugly,” or “wrong” and “beautiful.” What, would we be disagreeing about, one wonders, if I said that the assassination of Caesar was “right” and “beautiful,” and you said it was “right” and “ugly”? About whether the knife strokes were gracefully executed? (I shall return to this question when I come to discuss Price's views, for Price makes a similar point. I will then attempt to answer it.)

Balguy's reluctance to subsume the perception of moral beauty under the reason was reinforced by what he took to be the prominent role of pleasure in the experience of it. Pleasure, he argued, must surely be perceived by sense, not intellect.

For however *Ideas, beautiful* in themselves, may be *seen* by the Understanding, yet Pleasure is not seen, but *felt*; and therefore seems to be an Object of some other Faculty than that which we are used to consider as merely *visive*. If the purest Pleasures be *Sensations*, of some kind or other; the Mind in receiving them, must be looked upon, not as *intelligent*, but *sensible*. And indeed, Sensibility seems to be as distinct from the *Understanding* as the *Understanding* is from the *Will*.⁵

In *The Second Part of the Foundation of Moral Goodness* (1729), Balguy spelled out his aesthetic position a little more fully, this time with reference to natural beauty and art, not merely moral beauty, and opted unequivocally for the aesthetics of sense perception.

Between the Numbers 2, 8, 32, there is a real agreement of *Proportion*; and between the *Three Angles* of an *equilateral Triangle*, a real Agreement of Equality. Such Agreements essentially belong to the Ideas themselves, independently of the Faculty, and even of the Creator's Will. This is, in the most proper sense, *Truth*; and as such, can only be the Object of *Intelligence*. — Between a certain kind of *Food*, and a Man's Palate; between a certain *Prospect*, and his *Eye*; between a certain Combination of *Sounds*, and his *Ear*; there is only an arbitrary Agreement of the Object with the Faculty. For whatever *real Order*, or *Proportion* there may be among

the several Parts of complex sensible Objects; these, like all other Relations, can only be apprehended by the *Understanding*. *Sense* judges of nothing but its own Sensations. Hence we find an endless Variety in Men's *Tastes* and *Fancies*, but not in their Understandings The Agreements between the *Numbers* and *Angles* above-mentioned appear uniformly and universally the same, to all Beings capable of understanding them. And the same may be said of the Agreements between *Benefits* and *Gratitude*, and other *Moral Truths*. In all such Cases the Agreements are not *relative* but *real*, as being inherent in the Ideas themselves. A Power of perceiving these *real* Agreements I call *Intelligence*; a Power of perceiving the other, *Sense*.⁶

Balguy obviously wants to preserve some analogy between aesthetic and moral qualities, despite the fact that the former are perceived by sense and the latter by reason. Since he conceives of moral qualities as *relations* ("Agreements between *Benefits* and *Gratitude*, and other *Moral Truths*"), it seems natural that relations should find their way into his account of aesthetic qualities as well. It would appear that aesthetic qualities, for Balguy, are to be thought of as relations, too: "an arbitrary Agreement of the Object with the Faculty" of sense. But this leads to difficulty.

If I "perceive" (feel) a pleasure upon hearing a C-major triad, for example, there is, Balguy would say, a relation between the triad and my sense of hearing — a relation which seems to have for him the status of an aesthetic "quality." And, Balguy would insist, that relation is perceived by sense, whereas the relation, say, among the numbers 2, 8, and 32 is perceived by the understanding. Suppose we think of the aesthetic relation as "fitness-for-giving-pleasure," or something of that kind. Do I *perceive* such a relation when I feel the pleasure? Well, it is very much a matter of what construction is put on the word "perceive." Certainly I do not perceive that — I am not conscious that — such a relation holds between the C-major triad and my sense of hearing until I have reflected on the question; and that reflection is, I presume, as much an operation of intelligence or understanding as is the perception of relations between numbers. One could experience pleasure from hearing C-major triads without ever perceiving that there existed a relation of fitness

between such sounds and one's sense. On the other hand, if by "perceiving" a relation Balguy means something like "perceiving the result of a relation," then it is proper to say that the relation of "fitness-for-giving-pleasure," which obtains between the C-major triad and the sense of hearing, is perceived by sense. But this is certainly not what we ordinarily mean when we talk about perceiving qualities.

It is not without significance that the difficulty here involves the question of whether relations can or cannot be perceived by sensation. For it is just this question that Balguy puts to the aesthetic sense school in his next work, *Divine Rectitude* (1730). He has now come to the conclusion, on theological grounds which need not concern us, that aesthetic qualities are objective qualities; that is, they are not merely relations obtaining between some object and a faculty of sense, but between objects and qualities independent of senses or other faculties of perception. And he argues, they are objective relations for Hutcheson, too; namely, relations of *uniformity* to *variety*. Therefore, Balguy concludes, Hutcheson must be mistaken in ascribing the perception of the beautiful to an inner sense. The "*Grounds of Beauty*," Balguy writes,

. . . are not to be sought for among our *Senses*, or the *Agreements* between those *Senses*, and their respective *Objects*; but in the *Objects* themselves, and the *Relations* interceding between them. And by consequence that *Beauty* is of an *absolute* Nature, and a real, *objective Perfection*. The ingenious Author of the *Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* [i.e., Hutcheson], tho' he professedly maintains the contrary Opinion, yet has nevertheless fixed Beauty on such a Foundation, as seems to me entirely inconsistent with his own Notion. For are not *Uniformity* and *Variety* real *Relations* belonging to the *Objects* themselves? Are they not independent on us, and our Faculties; and would they not be what they are, whether we perceived them or no? — And if they have no Dependence on any of our Faculties, much less on *Sense*. However Sense may convey to us the Ideas of external *Objects*, yet the Relations between them no *Sense* can reach.⁷

Balguy has obviously misunderstood Hutcheson's position here.

It is an instructive misunderstanding; but a misunderstanding nevertheless.

Hutcheson claims, as we have seen, that *uniformity amidst variety* causes us to have certain pleasurable feelings. He does not assert that we perceive *uniformity amidst variety* by the sense of beauty, or any other sense wholly, anymore than Locke would claim that we perceive with our eyes the atoms which cause us to have color-sensations. It is the feeling of beauty that we perceive by sense, not *uniformity amidst variety*. Reason finds out the *cause* of beauty, as it finds out the cause of color-sensation. We can indeed perceive *uniformity amidst variety* in a way we cannot perceive atoms. But Hutcheson, with perfect consistency, can claim that we perceive beauty by sense and *uniformity amidst variety*, the cause of beauty, in part by reason. One can perceive *uniformity amidst variety* without perceiving beauty, and beauty without perceiving *uniformity amidst variety*. They are not identical, as Balguy seems to think.

In what way, then, is Balguy's misreading of Hutcheson instructive? It suggests, I think, one of the places in which Hutcheson is drastically mistaken. Balguy has unconsciously assumed, in his misreading of Hutcheson, that *uniformity amidst variety* is an *aesthetic* quality, not merely the cause of one, as Hutcheson maintains. But here Balguy is entirely right and Hutcheson wrong. To perceive the world as possessing *uniformity amidst variety* is already to perceive it aesthetically: no further perception is needed to make it so. Nor is it the cause of beauty, as the properties of pepper are the cause of sneezing. The perceiving of *uniformity amidst variety* does not in its turn cause me to perceive beauty; it is, in part, constitutive of my aesthetic perception.

I shall revert to this subject again when we come to compare Hutcheson's position with Hume's in Chapter VIII. Suffice it to say now: Balguy's belief that aesthetic qualities are relational qualities and, by consequence, perceivable by reason only, provided the principal argument for Berkeley and Price in their subsequent attacks on the aesthetic sense doctrine.

(4) Berkeley chose Shaftesbury rather than Hutcheson as the representative of “sentimental” value theory and the butt of his criticism in the dialogue *Alciphron* (1732). T. E. Jessop, co-editor of the definitive edition of Berkeley's philosophical works, remarks that Alciphron — the principal spokesman, in the dialogue, for the moral sense school — “faithfully outlines the philosophy of Shaftesbury,” at least with regard to the perception of visual beauty.⁸

But just how faithful is the outline really, is a question well worth considering. Alciphron does indeed hold forth with what, at least on the surface, appears to be a plausible version of Shaftesbury:

[T]here is an idea of Beauty natural to the mind of man. This all men desire, this they are pleased and delighted with for its own sake, purely from an instinct of nature. A man needs no arguments to make him discern and approve what is beautiful; it strikes at first sight, and attracts without reason. And as this beauty is found in the shape and form of corporeal things, so also is there analogous to it a beauty of another kind, an order, symmetry, and comeliness, in the moral world. As the eye perceiveth the one, so the mind doth, by a certain interior sense, perceive the other; which sense, talent, or faculty is ever quickest and purest in the noblest minds. Thus, as by sight I discern the beauty of a plant or an animal, even so the mind applauds the moral excellence, the beauty and decorum of justice and temperance.⁹

What is missing in Alciphron's account of aesthetic perception (of the nonmoral kind) is *mind*; and it is mind that Berkeley attempts to reinstate. But if mind is absent from Alciphron's aesthetics, it is by no means absent from Shaftesbury's. And to this extent Berkeley's Shaftesbury is a straw man.

Of course there can be no doubt but that Shaftesbury's writings lend themselves to the interpretation Berkeley has given. In addition, the rhapsodic tone which Shaftesbury wallows in makes interpretation such an exasperating and seemingly impossible task that one is driven finally to oversimplification if only to escape the mire of Shaftesbury's style. Berkeley himself expressed the frustration of the severely logical mind in the face of

Shaftesbury's enthusiasms when he wrote elsewhere, "it be not always easy to fix a determinate sense on such a loose and incoherent writer."¹⁰ Yet the fact remains that Shaftesbury was far more of a rationalist than Berkeley thought — a fact that emerges with even greater clarity as Berkeley's argument progresses.

Alciphron is manipulated by Euphranor, Berkeley's mouth-piece, into defining beauty as "a certain symmetry and proportion pleasing to the eye." Euphranor then takes charge of the argument, easily compelling Alciphron to admit that proportion — and, hence, beauty — can be perceived by the mind only and never by sense.

EUPHRANOR. Is proportion one and the same in all things, or is it different in different kinds of things?

ALCIPHRON. Different, doubtless. The proportions of an ox would not be beautiful in a horse. And we observe also in things inanimate, that the beauty of a table, a chair, a door, consists in different proportions.

EUPHRANOR. Doth not this proportion imply the relation of one thing to another?

ALCIPHRON. It doth.

EUPHRANOR. And are not these relations founded in size and shape?

ALCIPHRON. They are.

EUPHRANOR. And, to make proportions just, must not those mutual relations of size and shape in the parts be such as shall make the whole complete and perfect in its kind?

ALCIPHRON. I grant they must.

EUPHRANOR. Is not a thing said to be perfect in its kind when it answers to the end for which it was made?

ALCIPHRON. It is.

EUPHRANOR. The parts, therefore, in true proportions must be so related, and adjusted to one another, as they may best conspire to the use and operation of the whole?

ALCIPHRON. It seems so.

EUPHRANOR. But the comparing of parts one with another, the considering them as belonging to one whole, and the referring this whole to its use or end, should seem the work of reason: should it not?

ALCIPHRON. It should.

EUPHRANOR. Proportions, therefore, are not, strictly speaking, perceived by the sense of sight, but only by reason through means of sight.

ALCIPHRON. This I grant.

EUPHRANOR. Consequently beauty, in your sense of it, is an object, not of the eye, but of the mind.¹¹

Euphranor's conclusion, that "Proportions . . . are not, strictly speaking, perceived by the sense of sight, but only by reason through means of sight," is meant as a denial of Shaftesbury's doctrine; yet it is, in fact, very close to the doctrine that we ascribed to Shaftesbury in Chapter 1. But if Euphranor's critique is wide of the mark where Shaftesbury is concerned, Hutcheson is by no means immune to it: the same vulnerable point has been struck at which Balguy aimed. Berkeley argues that proportion — one of the most commonly accepted neoclassical definitions of beauty — implies a relation of parts, and that the *comparing of parts* which the perception of such a relation would necessitate is clearly the province of reason, not sensation. And it makes little difference whether the sense involved be the eye, as in Berkeley's example, or an "inner sense" such as Hutcheson's sense of beauty which, after all, is modeled on the external sense organs.

Of course, the crucial question in Berkeley's critique, as in Balguy's, is just what construction is to be put on the term "perceive" when one talks about perceiving relations. If the

relations between the parts of an object are such as to make it well proportioned, we may take pleasure in it; and this pleasure is due, in some sense or other, we would want to say, to the “perceiving” of these relations. Now it is clear that we can perceive these relations by sense if by “perceive” we mean sense the pleasure in which such relations result when we look at the object. Or, if we already know that such relations give pleasure, it can be said that we perceive the relations by sense in that their presence is signaled to us by the feeling of pleasure. And it is only in these two senses that Hutcheson maintains we perceive the relation of *uniformity amidst variety* by sense. But there is another sense of “perceive” — and this is the sense in which Berkeley seems to be using the term — where the relations are *discovered* by an examination and comparison of parts. Surely Berkeley is correct in insisting that perception in this sense is, in part, *rational* perception. Which, however, Hutcheson need not deny.

Now if one argues that the perception of *uniformity amidst variety* involves the comparison of parts, and if, in addition, one takes Hutcheson to be saying that *uniformity amidst variety* is the aesthetic quality perceived by the sense of beauty (which is not Hutcheson's view), one might then be inclined to reject Hutcheson's view for the same reasons Euphranor rejects Alciphron's. And, indeed, an increasing number of critics followed this line of reasoning. It misrepresented Hutcheson's teaching; but it continued to expose the basic weakness of his position: the construal of qualities like *uniformity amidst variety* as causally, rather than noncontingently, connected with the perception of beauty.

(5) We come, now, to the last of our critics. Richard Price has recently regained a philosophical reputation that had become somewhat tarnished. Once characterized by Leslie Stephen as a “curious” writer, lacking in “intrinsic merit,”¹² he has since become a precursor of G. E. Moore¹³; and C. D. Broad lauds his *Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals* (1758) as the finest “rationalistic” ethics prior to Ross's *The Right and the Good*¹⁴ — high praise indeed from British moralists.

We close, then, with the aesthetic obiter dicta of a first-rate rationalist.

Is virtue a quality of the external world or merely of the perceiving mind? In Lockean terms, is it a primary or a secondary quality? *That*, for Price, was *the* principal question in morals. Nor was there any doubt where the rationalist stood: “*right* and *wrong*, or *moral good* and *evil*,” Price wrote, “signify somewhat *really true* of actions, and not merely sensations.”¹⁵ But although Price was willing to fight for an “objective” morality, he conceded beauty to the opposition, as Balguy at first had. The term “beautiful,” for Price, had reference to feelings only, both with respect to moral and natural beauty (and, it would seem, the beauty of art, at least in some cases). Hence he was, here, in accord with Hutcheson.

Price distinguished, then, between the use of “good” and “beautiful” in moral judgment, again following Balguy's early views. “Good” and “evil,” Price maintained, have reference to an objective state of affairs, discerned by reason. “Beautiful,” and its opposite, on the other hand, “denote the *delightful*; or on the contrary, the *horror* and *detestation felt* by ourselves; and, consequently, signify not any real qualities or characters of actions, but the *effects in us*, or the particular pleasure and pain, attending consideration of them.”¹⁶

It would seem, then, that for Price, as well as for Balguy, it makes some kind of sense to talk about two people agreeing that action *X* is right, say, but disagreeing that it is beautiful. What kind of sense *does* it make? “Right,” Price is claiming, refers to some objective quality of *X* found out by reason; “beautiful” refers to our *feeling* of delight in *X*. And Price is maintaining that two people can recognize (and hence agree) that *X* is right, while one feels delight in *X* and the other does not. What Price is driving at, I suggest, is that feeling delight in *X* means something like feeling delight in the contemplation of doing *X*; that is, feeling some desire, or having some motivation for doing *X*. He then must think that it is logically possible for someone to recognize that *X* is right and yet not have any desire or motive for doing *X*. If that is the case, then Price is what has been described recently as an “externalist” with regard to moral

obligation; that is, one who holds it logically possible for a moral agent to recognize his obligation of doing *X* and yet have no motivation whatever for doing *X*. This is in contrast to “internalism,” the view that to recognize an obligation to do *X* is, at the same time, to acquire at least some, if not an overriding, propensity to do *X*.¹⁷

There are, it must be acknowledged, passages in Price which are incompatible with an externalist interpretation. Thus he writes, on one occasion:

I cannot perceive an action to be right, without *approving* it; or *approve* it, without being conscious of some degree of *satisfaction* and complacency. I cannot perceive an action to be wrong, without *disapproving* it; or *disapprove* it, without being *displeased* with it.¹⁸

The strength of the “cannot” here seems, I think, logical rather than merely empirical; and its strength is reinforced rather than diminished as the passage progresses. Yet in the very next breath Price has slipped back into language which clearly indicates a causal, and hence contingent, relation between rightness and pleasure, and wrongness and displeasure, and provides a psychological explanation why one might fail to experience the appropriate feeling in contemplating moral qualities:

It should be remembered here, that the effects produced by the consideration of virtue and vice, must be different in different beings, and in the same being in different circumstances of his existence. The pleasure received from virtuous actions, (that is the sense of *beauty* in them) must be varied by numberless causes both in the circumstances of the actions, and in the understandings and conditions of the percipient beings.¹⁹

In any case, the distinction made here by Price, and, less incisively, by Balguy, joins one of the deep issues in moral theory, but one which we must leave merely stated, and not explored, as it carries us to a topic of no special relevance to our present concerns.

In describing natural beauty, too, we have objective as well as subjective terms: Hutcheson's *uniformity amidst variety* has an

objective signification; but natural beauty is merely its subjective concomitant.

It seems impossible for any one to conceive the objects themselves to be endowed with more than a particular order of parts, and with *powers*, or an *affinity* to our perceptive faculties, thence arising; and, if we call this *beauty*, then it is an absolute, inherent quality of certain objects; and equally existent whether any mind discerns it or not. But, surely, order and regularity are, more properly, the *causes* of beauty than beauty itself.²⁰

Thus, although moral qualities and physical proportions have an objective existence, for natural as well as moral beauty, to be is to be perceived.²¹ Unlike Balguy, Price was steady to this text, and although a rationalist in ethics, remained in Hutcheson's aesthetic camp: but with an important demur.

That part of the aesthetic complex which is objective, Price maintained, can be perceived by intellect only. His argument is reminiscent of Balguy's and Berkeley's.

Mere sense can perceive nothing in the most exquisite work of art . . . but what is painted in the eye, or what might be described on paper. It is the intellect that must perceive in it order and proportion; variety and regularity; design, connection, art and power; aptitudes, dependencies, correspondencies, and adjustments of parts so as to subserve an end, and compose one perfect whole; things which never can be represented on a sensible organ, and the ideas of which cannot be passively communicated, or stamped on the mind by the operation of external objects.²²

For Price, as for Balguy and Berkeley, *uniformity amidst variety, design, proportion, fitness*, all of the commonly accepted objective correlates of the aesthetic — accepted not only by the rationalists but by the school of “sentiment” as well — demanded a rational perception, involving a comparison of parts and a recognition of their fitness and proportion. It was a process, the rationalists argued, beyond the powers of sense perception alone. Where they differed was with regard to the aesthetic status of the objective correlate. For Balguy and Berkeley it was the aesthetic itself; for Price, merely the cause.

The external cause of natural beauty for Price, as for Hutcheson, is *uniformity amidst variety*. It, not the idea of beauty which it causes, can be brought to awareness only by intellect — a conclusion Hutcheson need not deny. Where Hutcheson and Price part company is in the explanation of how the idea of beauty arises. In regard to natural beauty, Price remarks,

The general source of it, as observed by Dr. *Hutcheson*, is UNIFORMITY AMIDST VARIETY. If we ask, why this *pleases*? The proper answer, I think, is, that by its nature it is adapted to please. — There seems no more occasion in this case to have recourse to an *implanted sense* than in the former [i.e., the case of moral beauty]. — Some objects, I have shewn, are necessarily satisfactory to our thoughts, and carry in themselves a power to give pleasure when surveyed.²³

Price, then, although he ascribes the perception of beauty to sense, wishes to dispense with the notion of a special sense of beauty. In this he is prophetic of things to come in eighteenth-century British aesthetics. He substitutes for it three psychological explanations of the pleasure we take in *uniformity amidst variety*, all encrusted with tradition, and two, as we have seen, quite familiar to Hutcheson, who used them in his theological explanation of our aesthetic dispositions. (i) Unity makes for ease of comprehension; objects in which variety is reduced to some unity “are more easily viewed and comprehended by our minds.” (ii) Unity is connected with utility; “Order and symmetry give objects their stability and strength, and subserviency to any valuable purpose.” (iii) Regularity and order are evidence of a rational designing mind; “The objects in which they appear bear the impresses of intelligence upon them; and this, perhaps, is one of the principal causes of their agreeableness.”²⁴

(6) In substituting for the sense of beauty a psychological reduction to principles of perceptual ease, utility, and the agreeableness of intelligence, Price was negating, in effect, the most basic premise of Hutcheson's aesthetic theory: that experience of the beautiful, and other aesthetic qualities, is *sui generis*, and not explainable in terms of other more basic human faculties,

pleasures, or perceptions. In so doing, Price created anew for those who came after the problem of isolating the aesthetic dimension. The absence of a true Hutchesonian sense of beauty left a void which eventually was filled by various ersatz senses — either, as in the case of Thomas Reid, sense made rational, or, in the cases of Alexander Gerard, Archibald Alison, and Dugald Stewart, sense made metaphorical. But before we turn to these developments, we must examine the sense of beauty as it survived in Hutcheson's most illustrious “follower,” David Hume.

VIII Hutcheson and Hume

(1) A philosophical doctrine influences its immediate posterity in diverse ways. There are disciples and there are critics; and there are those who, though the architects of their own thoughts, nevertheless accept what they can to build upon. Hutcheson's sense of beauty influenced in all these ways: it found discipleship and criticism, and, in the work of Hume, transformation and a kind of immortality that the great mind can give even to the occupations of a moment.¹

There can be no doubt but that Hume's moral theory had roots in the writings of Hutcheson. An examination of the respective positions reveals it clearly enough; but Hume has left us even more substantial historical evidence in the form of letters to Hutcheson, written between 1739 and 1741 — the period which saw publication of the *Treatise of Human Nature*.

Hume was explicit with regard to what he obviously considered a meeting of minds in ethics: “Morality according to your Opinion as well as mine,” he wrote Hutcheson, “is determin'd merely by Sentiment. . . .”² An analogous agreement existed in the realm of aesthetic theory, as Hume made manifest throughout his writing and particularly in the essay “Of the Standard of Taste” (1757).

There are, it will be recalled, two premises fundamental to Hutcheson's moral and aesthetic theory: (i) the value terms “good” and “beautiful” are applied to moral and aesthetic objects which occasion in the perceiver particular kinds of Lockean “ideas”; and (ii) these ideas are perceived by “internal

senses.” Hume accepts the first of these premises, although he substitutes “sentiment,” “pleasure,” and the like, for the more general term “idea.” The second premise, for Hume, coalesces with the first: all that can be said about the moral sense and sense of beauty is contained in the contention that “good” and “beautiful” are applied in virtue of our having moral and aesthetic “sentiments.” The position is summarized in the *Treatise*:

An action, or sentiment, or character, is virtuous or vicious; why? because its view causes a pleasure or uneasiness of a particular kind. In giving a reason, therefore, for the pleasure or uneasiness, we sufficiently explain the vice or virtue. To have the sense of virtue, is nothing but to *feel* a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character. The very *feeling* constitutes our praise or admiration We do not infer a character to be virtuous, because it pleases; but in feeling that it pleases after such a particular manner, we in effect feel that it is virtuous. The case is the same as in our judgments concerning all kinds of beauty, and tastes, and sensations. Our approbation is imply'd in the immediate pleasure they convey to us.³

For a thoroughgoing empiricist, the moral sense and sense of beauty are extra philosophical baggage. We are aware of the *sentiments*, not the *senses*; to say that we have a moral sense or sense of beauty can be only an elliptical way of saying that we have moral and aesthetic feelings.

Having chosen the path of “sentiment” in aesthetics, Hume was faced, as were others before him, with the specter of a subjective relativism. But no previous thinker had perceived the possible consequences of the “new aesthetics” more acutely or expressed them more forthrightly than the “dispassionate” sceptic who, in Kant's words, was “so peculiarly fitted for balanced judgment.”⁴ Yet Hume recognized that if relativism in taste seems an unimpeachable fact, so, too, does the existence of critical standards.

Beauty is no quality in things themselves: it exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty. One person may even perceive deformity, where another is sensible of beauty; and every individual ought to acquiesce

in his own sentiment, without pretending to regulate those of others

But though this axiom, by passing into a proverb, seems to have attained the sanction of common sense; there is certainly a species of common sense, which opposes it, at least serves to modify and restrain it. Whoever would assert an equality of genius and elegance between Ogilby and Milton, or Bunyan and Addison, would be thought to defend no less an extravagance, than if he had maintained a mole-hill to be as high as Teneriffe, or a pond as extensive as the ocean.⁵

The resolution of this paradox, this “antinomy” of taste, was Hume's task as it is ours; and the resolution he essayed merits the most serious consideration.

(2) Hume believed that a standard of taste could be saved only by a strong commitment to the rational. Nor did the Enlightenment look upon feeling and reason as necessarily incompatible. Hume was echoing a host of eighteenth-century moralists and critics when he wrote in the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1757), “*reason and sentiment* concur in almost all moral determinations and conclusions,” and specifically with regard to the problem of taste, “in many orders of beauty, particularly those of the finer arts, it is requisite to employ much reasoning, in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection.”⁶ Thus, the principal goal of criticism, Hume believed, must be “to mingle some light of the understanding with the feelings of sentiment. . . .”⁷

If I make an empirical statement, it is judged true or false on the basis of whether what I assert is or is not the case. This judgment is the province of reason. The touchstone of any such reasoning process is some external state of affairs; the “standard” of reason here consists in correspondence to the facts of the case. “In the operation of reasoning,” Hume tells us,

the mind does nothing but run over its objects, as they are supposed to stand in reality, without adding any thing to them or diminishing any thing from them To this operation of the mind, therefore, there seems to be always a real, though often

unknown, standard, in the nature of things; nor is truth or falsehood variable by the various apprehensions of mankind.⁸

But aesthetic judgments are not of this kind according to Hume. We do not, when we pronounce the judgment “beautiful,” or the reverse, merely “run over” the “objects” of thought “as they are supposed to stand in reality, without adding any thing to them.” We do add something; we add our feelings — our emotional reactions to the objects we perceive.

[T]he case is not the same with the qualities of *beautiful and deformed, desirable and odious*, as with truth and falsehood. In the former case, the mind is not content with merely surveying its objects, as they stand in themselves: it also feels a sentiment of delight or uneasiness, approbation or blame, consequent to that survey; and this sentiment determines it to affix the epithet *beautiful or deformed, desirable or odious*.⁹

Now our feelings vary with our subjective natures: “nor can the same object, presented to a mind totally different, produce the same sentiment.” We lack, in our aesthetic judgments, the “external standard” which our factual judgments possess. The quest for a standard of taste, then, is a quest for such an external standard. The Humean program in aesthetics is the translation of value judgments into factual judgments — judgments of sentiment into judgments of reason. This is what Hume intends when he speaks of mingling “some light of the understanding with the feelings of sentiment.”

The standard of taste is determined by judgments based on sentiment; but not all men are equal in their fitness to judge by sentiment: “few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or establish their own sentiment as the standard of beauty.”¹⁰ The standard of taste, then, is set by those qualified to give judgment on the basis of sentiment. And thus the question, What is good art? is easily answered. Good art is the art which good critics — those who are fit to judge by sentiment — approve. But now a new series of questions arises involving the nature of good critics: “where are such critics to be found?” queries Hume. “By what marks are they to be known? How

distinguish them from pretenders? These questions seem to throw us back into the same uncertainty from which . . . we have endeavoured to extricate ourselves.” Yet we have made some progress. For, Hume maintains, questions concerning good critics “are questions of fact, not of sentiment”; and such questions, “submitted to the understanding,” are susceptible, at least in principle, of a rational determination.

If, however, a rational judgment is to distinguish good critics from bad, it must find its criteria, its “standard,” in the *facts* of the case; there must be some enumerable set of characteristics whereby the sheep may be separated from the goats. Hume provides five such distinguishing qualities:

[i] When the critic has no *delicacy*, he judges without distinction, and is only affected by the grosser and more palpable qualities of the object: the finer touches pass unnoticed and disregarded. [ii] Where he is not aided by *practice*, his verdict is attended with confusion and hesitation. [iii] Where no *comparison* [between different kinds of beauty] has been employed, the most frivolous beauties, such as rather merit the name of defects, are the object of his admiration. [iv] Where he lies under the influence of *prejudice*, all his natural sentiments are perverted. [v] Where *good sense* is wanting, he is not qualified to discern the beauties of design and reasoning [i.e., the mutual relation of the parts of the work of art, and the purpose of the work], which are the highest and most excellent.¹¹

(3) Now it has often been maintained that Hume is involved here in a vicious circle whereby good art is defined in terms of the good critic and the good critic in terms of good art.¹² And it is in fact easy enough to generate just such a circular definition simply by asking ourselves how it is to be determined whether or not an individual possesses the five qualities of the good critic enumerated above. If the answer forthcoming is that we know a good critic to possess these qualities because he approves of good art, then we have certainly moved in a circle. To wit: (i) good works of art are works of art approved by good critics; (ii) good critics are critics possessing five requisite qualities; and (iii) critics possessing the five requisite qualities are critics who approve good works of art.

Is this a fair representation of what Hume has to say concerning aesthetic judgment? In part, I am afraid, it is, but only in part. For there are after all *five* qualities which, according to Hume, distinguish the good critic, and they are not all of a piece. Some end us in a circular definition; others, I believe, do not. Thus, we must examine these qualities more closely if we wish to do Hume justice in this matter.

Practice Hume thinks of as “the frequent survey or contemplation of a particular species of beauty.”¹³ *Use of comparisons* requires juxtaposing “the several species and degrees of excellence.”¹⁴ But we must be able to recognize the beautiful before we are able to determine whether a critic has or has not been engaged in “the frequent survey or contemplation of a particular species of beauty.” We must know what is excellent before we are able to determine whether or not a critic has compared “the several species and degrees of excellence.” Thus, (i) the beautiful (or excellent) is defined in terms of the good critic; (ii) the good critic is defined in terms of *practice* and *use of comparisons*; and (iii) *practice* and *use of comparisons* are defined in terms of the beautiful (or excellent). Obviously, in these two cases the definition of beauty is circular.

If, however, we examine the remaining three qualities — *delicacy*, *lack of prejudice*, *good sense* — we will find quite another situation obtaining. What I wish to argue is that these qualities have, for Hume, certain crucial features in common: all are qualities not limited to critics alone; all are qualities requisite not only for aesthetic judgment but for other activities as well; and, hence, all are identifiable by marks other than the critic's approval of good art. This being the case, the circle is broken; having defined good art in terms of good critics, Hume need not, with respect to these qualities, ultimately define good critics in terms of good art.

Hume describes *delicacy* in the following way: “Where the organs are so fine as to allow nothing to escape them, and at the same time so exact as to perceive every ingredient in the composition, this we call delicacy of taste, whether we employ these terms in the literal or metaphorical sense.”¹⁵ How are we to determine whether or not a critic possesses *delicacy of taste* in

the aesthetic sense? In “Of the Standard of Taste” the implication seems to be that such *delicacy* is determined on the basis of the critic's ability to distinguish aesthetic qualities in *good art*. And this of course leads us again to a circular definition: (i) good art is art approved by good critics; (ii) good critics are critics possessing *delicacy*; and (iii) *delicacy* is the ability to distinguish the aesthetic qualities of good art.

But in an earlier essay, “Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion” (1741), Hume relates aesthetic sensibility to emotive sensibility in general, implying in one place that those individuals characterized by the latter are likely to possess the former as well. He writes,

How far the delicacy of taste, and that of passion are connected together in the original frame of the mind, is hard to determine. To me there appears to be a very considerable connection betwixt them. For we may observe that women, who have more delicate passions than men, have also a more delicate taste of the ornaments of life, of dress, equipage, and the ordinary decencies of behaviour. Any excellency in these hits their taste much sooner than ours; and when you please their taste, you soon engage their affections.¹⁶

Thus, *delicacy of taste* can be identified (although perhaps not in all cases) by a nonaesthetic quality; namely, *delicacy of passion*. One could reasonably suppose an individual to possess *delicacy of taste* not on the basis of his critical judgments, but rather on the basis of his general emotional reactions to non-aesthetic situations. With this qualification in view, we can define good art in terms of *delicacy* and yet avoid the previous circularity. Our revised definition will be: (i) good art is art approved by good critics; (ii) good critics are critics possessing *delicacy of taste*; and (iii) *delicacy of taste* is a concomitant of *delicacy of passion*.

As for Hume's requirement that the critic be free from bias, its relevance seems obvious enough; we expect fairness in judgments, whether they be aesthetic, moral, or any other kind. “It is well known, that, in all questions submitted to the understanding, prejudice is destructive of sound judgment, and perverts

all operations of the intellectual faculties: it is no less contrary to good taste; nor has it less influence to corrupt our sentiment of beauty.”¹⁷

However, there is a special sense in which an aesthetic judgment must be free from bias. Hume makes this demand of himself as a critic: “considering myself as a man in general, [I must] forget, if possible, my individual being, and my peculiar circumstances.”¹⁸ In passing critical judgments we must shed our private skins. By means of a mental exercise we take the point of view of “a man in general” and disregard our “individual being” and “peculiar circumstances.” This is essentially an aesthetic version of what in Hume's moral theory has come to be known as the “disinterested spectator.” Hume writes in the *Treatise*, for example: “Nor is every sentiment of pleasure or pain which arises from characters and actions, of that *peculiar* kind which makes us praise or condemn” ‘Tis only when a character is considered in general, without reference to our particular interest, that it causes such a feeling or sentiment as denominates it morally good or evil.”¹⁹ We attempt, both in our moral and aesthetic judgment, to separate in thought that which varies with our own personalities and times, and attend only to the common element in all human sentiment. Only thus,

free

From taint of personality,

can we hope to make judgments on the basis of sentiment that are not merely expressions of personal preference but universal judgments.²⁰

As in the case of *delicacy*, the crucial point here for our purposes is that *lack of prejudice*, even in its special application to value judgments, is not a quality unique in the critic. It is, therefore, a quality that need not be determined solely on the basis of the critic's approving or recognizing good art. An individual who is generally fair-minded or able to take the point of view of the disinterested spectator in moral situations would likewise be able, one supposes, to take the point of view of “a man in general” when exercising critical judgment. Here again is

a quality of good critics that can be recognized prior to any knowledge of the critic's aesthetic performance. So, having defined good art in terms of approval by good critics, and good critics in terms of *lack of prejudice*, there is no need to close the circle and define *lack of prejudice* in terms of good art.

Finally, it seems abundantly clear that *good sense*, the last of Hume's critical qualities, can hardly be considered solely an attribute of critics. Indeed, it is precisely Hume's point here that intelligence is as much a part of criticism as it is of rational inquiry: "the same excellence of faculties which contributes to the improvement of reason, the same clearness of conception, the same exactness of distinction, the same vivacity of apprehension, are essential to the operation of true taste, and are its infallible concomitants."²¹ Fools do not make good critics; clever people do — nor need we make any reference to critical ability in separating the two. Again, good art can be defined in terms of approval by good critics, and good critics in terms of *good sense*; but *good sense*, having wider application than merely to good critics, need not be defined in terms of good art.

(4) Hume's definition of good art, or beauty, then, although circular in some instances, is not so in all. Good art, or the beautiful, is that approved by good critics; and good critics are characterized by five qualities: *delicacy*, *practice*, *use of comparisons*, *lack of prejudice*, and *good sense*. *Practice* and *use of comparisons* lead, as we have seen, to the vicious circle of which Hume has often been accused. For both are defined in terms of the beautiful. But *delicacy*, *lack of prejudice*, and *good sense*, being qualities not unique to critics, are free from this circularity; they are identifiable by marks other than the critic's approval of aesthetic objects and need not be defined in terms of good art.

But if Hume's definition of good art is free from the charge of circularity, the general argument of the essay on taste is not totally unblemished. Hume seems, in fact, to be involved in (among other things) an infinite regress.

Let us imagine that Smith and Jones disagree about a poem: Smith approves and Jones does not. Smith supports his judgment

by reference to the favorable verdict of a critic, to which Jones replies that the critic in question lacks *good sense*. This might at least be one sort of dispute in aesthetics envisaged by Hume; and he would claim here, as he apparently did at times with regard to ethical disputes, that (to use C. L. Stevenson's terminology) disagreements in evaluation are to a large extent "rooted in disagreement in belief." This is what Hume means in maintaining that a critical judgment based on "sentiment" can be reduced to a rational judgment involving "facts." If Smith and Jones are thoroughly apprised of the facts, they will agree with regard to the now disputed poem — the facts, in this instance, being the credentials of the critic whom Smith invokes as his authority.

But suppose we scrutinize the facts (so-called) of the case; the *good sense*, for example, which the critic is said to possess. The phrase *good sense* may describe; it also *approves*. What has happened is that in his attempt to reduce disagreements about aesthetic values to disagreements about facts, Hume has simply pushed the value judgment a step back: the question, Is *X* a good poem? has become: Does *Y* have *good sense*? And both are evaluative questions, questions of "sentiment," not (solely) questions of fact. Smith and Jones do not (to use Stevenson's terminology again) merely disagree in "belief" about the critic, as Hume would have us think, but in "attitude" toward the critic. Thus, we are now faced with the task of reducing *good sense* to matters of fact; and the result of this reduction will doubtless require a reduction of its own.

Many would claim that the Humean attempt to reduce matters of aesthetic sentiment to matters of fact is doomed from the start: there just is no guarantee to be had that agreement about facts will result in agreement about what is beautiful. And Hume himself seems in the last analysis to have been of the same mind. For although he did maintain that *some* aesthetic disputes are rooted in disagreement about facts, he did not, it appears, believe that all are. Very near the conclusion of the essay on taste Hume wrote:

The general principles of taste are uniform in human nature:

where men vary in their judgements, some defect or perversion in the faculties [a matter of fact] may commonly be remarked; proceeding either from prejudice, from want of practice, or want of delicacy; and there is just reason for approving one taste, and condemning another. But where there is such diversity in the internal frame or external situation as is entirely blameless on both sides, and leaves no room to give one the preference above the other [where, in other words, there is substantial agreement with regard to the facts]; in that case a certain degree of diversity in judgement [disagreement in attitudes] is unavoidable, and we seek in vain for a standard, by which we can reconcile the contrary sentiments.²²

When an aesthetic dispute arises, the facts of the case, which for Hume are the credentials of the critic, are relevant; and agreement about them *may* lead to a resolution of the dispute. This will occur when the facts either clearly condemn or clearly authorize the critic in the eyes of the disputants. But when the critic's credentials have been thoroughly examined, or when two rival critics present equally authoritative credentials and yet still disagree in their judgment, the facts of the case have been exhausted. If the dispute continues, it is now one of sentiment, not reason; it is a disagreement in attitudes, not beliefs, and “no *reasoned* solution of any sort is possible.”²³ We have done all we can *rationaly* do when we have laid bare the facts of the case. If disagreement still remains — and, for Hume, we have no assurance that it will not — it is a disagreement not susceptible of resolution by rational methods.

Hume, then, held out no absolute guarantees of resolution in aesthetic questions; and for an age that pursued such guarantees with the tenacity of a Grail Quest, this was a disappointment. As an anonymous reviewer of the essay on taste sadly remarked shortly after its publication, “instead of fixing and ascertaining the standard of taste, as we expected, our author only leaves us in the same uncertainty as he found us: and concludes with the philosopher of old, that all we know is, that we know nothing.”²⁴ Hume might well have replied with the words of another “philosopher of old”: “a well-schooled man is one who searches for that degree of precision in each kind of study which the nature of the subject at hand admits. . . .”²⁵

(5) It would be instructive at this juncture, I think, to contrast Hume's position with Hutcheson's, for the purposes of bringing out more clearly the general outlines of both, and determining the comparative weaknesses and strengths of each. Both construe aesthetic judgment on the model of *perceptual* judgments like "X is red"; but each emphasizes a different aspect of that model and, as a result, each approaches the question of justification, of what we are doing when we support our aesthetic judgments, in a very different way.

There are two distinctive features of the perceptual model worth noting here. They are (i) that there is a standard of normalcy which, when deviated from, licenses us to declare the deviation *incorrect*; and (ii) that there is a theory which correlates our perceptual reports with certain scientifically measurable properties such that we feel confident in supposing that the properties *cause* us to have the sensations which occasion our reports. Thus, (i) if Mr. A says that *X* is red and Mr. B that it is grey, it will be *prima facie* evidence that Mr. B is incorrect if his eyes differ from those which have been determined to be "normal," and/or if he has viewed *X* under conditions that differ from those which have been determined to be favorable or optimal ones; and (ii) there is a very successful scientific theory that correlates certain measurable properties of light and reflecting surfaces with the sensation of redness and which accommodates our notions of normal perceiver and favorable or optimal conditions. Mr. A can *defend* or *justify* his assertion "X is red" by appeal (in part) to what the normal perceiver would say under favorable or optimal conditions; and he (or a scientist) could explain what causes him to have the sensation that occasions the assertion "X is red." Both of these features of the perceptual model we must assume to have been known to Hutcheson and Hume, although not in as well-developed a form as we know them today.

We can now see quite clearly that although they both presented a perceptual model of aesthetic judgment, Hutcheson was drawn to the second feature and Hume to the first, although both paid some attention to the feature he did not emphasize. Hutcheson, as we have seen, was convinced that he

knew what “property” of objects causes the sensation of the beautiful; namely, *uniformity amidst variety*. And it is this causal feature of his perceptual model which he continually pushes to the fore, and which the casual reader of Hutcheson always remembers, although Hutcheson was aware of the part that the notion of the normal perceiver plays. Hume, on the other hand, defines the standard of taste in terms of the perception of the normal perceiver; that is, the good critic. There is indeed some evidence that he made at least a desultory effort to determine the cause of the sentiment of beauty or aesthetic approval. If, for example, Hume classified beauty as a *value*, then the following passage from the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* implies that he believed the sentiment of beauty to be caused by the perception of the useful or agreeable in objects. He writes: “Whatever is valuable in any kind, so naturally classes itself under the division of useful or agreeable, the *utile* or the *dulce*, that it is not easy to imagine why we should ever seek further, or consider the question as a matter of nice research or inquiry.”²⁶ It is by no means clear whether Hume really does have a firm opinion in this regard.²⁷ But there can be no doubt that he wrote little about it, and that he wrote extensively and carefully in the essay on taste about the first feature of the aesthetic perceptual model. We may fairly conclude, then, that Hutcheson markedly emphasized the causal explanation in the perceptual model of aesthetic judgment, and that Hume markedly emphasized the notion of normal perceiver; and herein lies the source both of their strengths and their weaknesses as aestheticians.

Let us now consider the following two conversations in which first Hutcheson, and then Hume, applies his theory.

Mr. Hutcheson. *X* is beautiful.

Mr. Quibble. Why do you say that?

Mr. Hutcheson. Because *X* has *uniformity amidst variety*.

Mr. Hume. *X* is beautiful.

Mr. Quibble. Why do you say that?

Mr. Hume. Because *X* is (or would be) approved by the majority of good critics.

Now Hutcheson's answer, I suggest, sounds altogether plausible, *until* we recall what he is up to; until we remember what the function of "Because . . ." is in Hutcheson's answer. For what we naturally take Hutcheson to be doing is *justifying* his assertion, giving a reason in support of it. And "*X* has *uniformity amidst variety*" seems quite acceptable as a justification of, a reason for, "*X* is beautiful," although perhaps it is not the *only* justification or a *sufficient* one. Having unity and/or variety is quite often advanced as a reason for believing that a work of art or some other aesthetic object is beautiful or aesthetically satisfactory. But, of course, Hutcheson is *not* offering a justification. He is offering a causal explanation. The "Because . . ." is explanatory not justificatory. And once we realize this, the plausibility of Hutcheson's answer vanishes. It is as if we asked someone why he killed his wife, expecting him to tell us what his motive or intention was, to justify his act in some way, and, instead, he gave us a physiological explanation of what caused his neurons to fire, his muscles to contract, and the blunt instrument in his hand to describe the arc that it did. We do not care that the explanation may be correct; for it is the answer to the wrong question; it completely misses the point.

Hume, however, shows, I think, that he knows the philosophically important question when he gravitates toward the first feature of the perceptual model: the feature which embodies justifying reasons. And Hutcheson, in gravitating toward the second feature, the causal explanation, leads aesthetics astray. Hume, in that he *is* trying to support or justify his assertion, rather than causally explain it, is answering the right question. But he is giving an entirely unsatisfactory answer to it. He is saying, essentially, "I think that *p* because *he* thinks that *p*," which carries no weight in the context in which it is said. We do indeed think it plausible to believe that *X* is red because the normal perceiver under favorable or optimal conditions believes that it is red. "I think so because *he* thinks so" is a satisfactory supporting reason for "*X* is red" where "*he*" is the normal

perceiver. Why is it not satisfactory in the aesthetic context?

The answer to this question lies, I think, in the special character of perceptual qualities like redness. They are simple qualities, whereas beauty and other aesthetic qualities are complex. By this I mean merely that in the case of redness we can never point to any feature of an object except its redness by virtue of which it is red; whereas we can defend our assertion that *X* is beautiful by pointing out other features — its unity, or variety, or color, or proportion — and saying: “It is beautiful because it is this, that, or the other.” To say “*X* is red because *he* says it is” is plausible because there is nothing else to say. But to say “*X* is beautiful because *he* says it is” carries no weight because there *is* a great deal more to say, and thus the answer becomes the least persuasive of all, the argument from authority — even less persuasive in an aesthetic context than anywhere else because, many would say, *here*, my word, rather than anyone else's, is the last word.

There is real irony here. For had Hutcheson asked Hume's question, his answer would have been a plausible one; and had Hume given Hutcheson's answer, his answer would have been a plausible one. But somehow the wires got crossed. Hutcheson asked the wrong question, but gave at least a partially correct answer to the right question. Hume asked the right question, but paid the price of giving the wrong answer. Hume, I think, is justly admired because it is usually harder to ask the right question than to give the right answer.

IX Common Sense and the Sense of Beauty

(1) The path that Hutcheson's sense of beauty had to travel in Britain in the waning years of the eighteenth century lay in two directions: an attempt at epistemological reconciliation with rationalism in the work of Thomas Reid; deflection and (finally) extinction in the work of the associationist aestheticians, most notably, Alexander Gerard, Archibald Alison, and Dugald Stewart. In this chapter, at the cost of becoming slightly out of phase chronologically, I examine Reid's version of the internal sense doctrine in aesthetics: the final flowering. In Chapters X-XII, I will backtrack a bit, take a brief look at the rise of associationist psychology, discuss its integration into the aesthetic sense doctrine by Gerard, and, finally, hear the associationist litany for the sense of beauty read by Alison and Stewart.

(2) Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Edinburgh spent the post-Humean decades of the eighteenth century doing philosophical penance for the fact that Hume was a Scot. This atonement took the form of a philosophical movement known today as the Scottish Common Sense School. It was dedicated to the refutation of Humean scepticism and those doctrines of Hume's predecessors, especially Locke, Berkeley, and Hutcheson, which were considered either as contributions to the Humean view or as obnoxious in their own right. The philosopher generally acknowledged to be the founder and principal spokesman of the

common sense philosophy was Reid, who himself traced the movement, in its contemporary form, to Shaftesbury. And it was Reid who forged the last important link in the evolutionary chain of Hutcheson's seventh sense.

Reid's aesthetics is a special case of a general theory of perception; and the general theory itself arises from a critique of the Lockean perceptual model. It is, therefore, with Reid's animadversions on Locke that we must begin. The basic tenet of Locke's theory of perception Reid took to be the notion that "mind . . . perceives nothing but a world of ideas in itself." Because of this axiom, as interpreted by Reid and many others, the principal problem for British empiricism became, to use Russell's phrase, our knowledge of the external world; for if we perceive the external world at all, it is through a glass darkly, mediated always by the ideas. "Mr. Locke was aware, no less than Des Cartes, that the doctrine of ideas made it necessary, and at the same time difficult, to prove the existence of the material world without us. . . ."¹ Above all else, Reid wished to strengthen our grasp on the "material world," from which, he thought, the successive onslaughts of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume had pried us loose.

Reid's approach is straightforward: if the notion that ideas are directly perceived, but objective qualities are not, leads to difficulties, then it must be revised. If this axiom stands between man and the external world, then the axiom, not the world, must be denied. Thus, Reid insists that the objective qualities of the external world are direct objects of awareness. But it is, I think, in a quite different sense of "awareness" than would be understood by the naive realist. Naive realism was characterized by Broad as a doctrine which maintains that the quality of an object is identical with the content of the sensation:

[T]he objective correlate just is that quality of sensible yellowness which, according to that theory, is spread out over the surface of the thing ready to be presented whenever the appropriate revelatory conditions are fulfilled. The subjective correlate just is the power of prehending the yellowness of yellow things when such conditions are fulfilled.²

This is not the position Reid is espousing, although his statements out of context sometimes seem to suggest it; and, in fact, Berkeley is much closer to such a view than Reid.

Reid does not discard the Lockean idea (which he calls a “sensation”) as a mental entity. On the contrary, the idea, or sensation, is a necessary element in the process by which the external world is made known to us; but it is not the only element. It is coupled with what Reid at times calls “perception.” With regard to a sensation, to be is to be perceived:

Its very essence consists in being felt; and, when it is not felt, it is not. There is no difference between the sensation and the feeling of it — they are one and the same thing. It is for this reason . . . that, in sensation, there is no object distinct from the act of the mind by which it is felt — and this holds true with regard to all sensations.³

Thus far, then, Reid is a thorough empiricist in the Locke and Berkeley stamp — with the suggestion, however, that sensations are processes, rather than objects, since “in sensation, there is no object distinct from the act of the mind by which it is felt. . . .”

Perception as opposed to sensation is, however, on a very different footing: “Perception has always an external object. . . .” If, to use Reid's example, I smell a rose, “The agreeable odour I feel, considered by itself, without relation to any external object, is merely a sensation.” But accompanying this sensation is a *belief* that the sensation is occasioned by an objective quality. “This quality in the rose is the object perceived; and that act of my mind by which I have the conviction and belief of this quality, is what in this case I call perception.”⁴

We can now make out more clearly the nature of Reid's realism. As I understand the naive realist's position, “direct awareness” of objective qualities is just what Reid calls “sensation,” except that for the naive realist the sensation is identical with the objective quality whereas for Reid it is not; and what Reid would call the “direct awareness” or “perception” of an objective quality is a rational, not a sensible, awareness. There is a difference between sensing and knowing an objective quality,

and that is the difference between what Broad calls naive realism and the position of Reid. Reid has made of perception a rational, concept-laden activity, to an extent unheard of heretofore in the British empiricist tradition. Extended to the aesthetic, this means he can embrace Hutcheson's sense of beauty, and yet accommodate the rationalist's claim that intellect must be involved in the perception of the beautiful. He is prepared to rationalize the aesthetic sense in answer to its rational critics.

(3) The relation between sensation and perception Reid takes to be a relation of sign to significatum: "Every different perception is conjoined with a sensation that is proper to it. The one is the sign, the other the thing signified."⁵ It was this notion of Reid's which, I believe, G. E. Moore was describing in one of his early papers as "the theory that one thing 'intrinsically points to,' or is 'intrinsically the sign or symbol of' the existence of another thing."⁶

William Hamilton argued in response to this part of Reid's theory that if the perception of an external quality is a *consequence* of sensation, then perception is not an immediate awareness, his implication being that Reid is guilty of a contradiction, "an explicit disavowal of the doctrine of an intuitive or immediate perception."⁷ In one sense, of course, Hamilton is correct: as we have remarked, Reid is not a naive realist and does not maintain, in the manner of the naive realist, that we are directly aware of objective qualities. Hamilton construes "immediate perception" in the naive realist's sense, and is quite right in pointing out that Reid does not adhere to it. But I do not believe Reid ever suggested that he did; and can hardly be accused of disavowing a doctrine he never held. Reid contradicted Hamilton, not himself.⁸ Nor, by the way, need Reid deny that perception is temporally "immediate" and experientially "simple" merely because it is in fact complex and "consequential" upon analysis. As Reid himself explains,

[I]t is with the operations of the mind, in this case, as with natural bodies, which are, indeed, compounded of simple principles or elements. Nature does not exhibit these elements separate, to be

compounded by us; she exhibits them mixed and compounded in concrete bodies, and it is only by art and chemical analysis that they can be separated.⁹

The complex process can appear simple, and become temporally immediate.

What then is the exact nature of Reid's "perception"? In what way does it vouchsafe our belief in objective qualities and, hence, the external world. According to Reid,

Every man feels that perception gives him an invincible belief of the existence of that which he perceives; and that this belief is not the effect of reasoning, but the immediate consequence of perception. When philosophers have wearied themselves and their readers with their speculations upon this subject, they can neither strengthen this belief, nor weaken it; nor can they show how it is produced. It puts the philosopher and the peasant upon a level; and neither of them can give any other reason for believing his senses, than that he finds it impossible for him to do otherwise.¹⁰

The appeal, then, is to the "common sense" of mankind (and the enormities that appeal to *it* has produced, in Berkeley, Moore, and Santayana, to name but a few, must give the rational man pause).

Common sense, for Reid, seems to be the rational process by which we discern immediately or, perhaps, intuit self-evident truths. He writes in one of his manuscript notes:

As soon as this truth is understood, that two and two make four, I immediately assent to it; because God has given men the faculty of immediately discerning its truth, and if I had not this faculty, I would not perceive its truth. The truth itself, therefore, does not depend on my constitution; for it was a truth before my existence, and will be a truth, although I were annihilated: but my perception evidently depends on my constitution, and particularly upon my having, as a part of my constitution, that faculty, whether you call it reason or common sense, by which I perceive or discern this truth.¹¹

Common sense is one of two elements in the rational process. "We ascribe to reason two offices, or two degrees," says Reid:

The first is to judge of things self-evident; the second to draw conclusions that are not self-evident from those that are. The first of these is the province, and the sole province, of common sense; and therefore it coincides with reason in its whole extent, and is only another name for one branch or one degree of reason.

Thus, common sense is that part of the rational machinery by which we intuit first principles. It is an innate talent: “purely the gift of Heaven. And where Heaven has not given it, no education can supply the want.”¹² This is, however, not what we ordinarily mean by “common sense.” We would not think our plumber lacked “common sense” if he did not see that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, but we would if he did not know to get out of the rain; yet the former, being axiomatic, would be “common sense” to Reid, whereas the latter would not.

Our knowledge of the external world, then, is, for Reid, rational; but we can give no reason for our belief in the external world, any more than we can give a reason for believing a “self-evident” truth, if by “reason” is meant some proposition or set of propositions from which these beliefs follow, or some body of evidence which establishes them beyond a reasonable doubt. Such beliefs are themselves the reasons for other beliefs which are not “common sense” beliefs; but they are themselves believed without reasons or evidence. To quote Moore again.

That for which we have no reason may, nevertheless, be certainly true. And, indeed, one of the philosophers who hold most clearly and expressly that we do know not only the existence of other people but also that of material objects, is also one of those who deny most emphatically that our own observations can give any reason for believing either in the one or in the other. I refer to Thomas Reid.¹³

This is, I submit, a substantially correct statement of Reid's “common sense,” although, obviously, an extremely compressed one.

(4) One further aspect of Reid's general theory of perception requires our attention before we can move on to his aesthetic

views: the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. Reid retains the distinction, but places it, in one important respect, on a different footing than had Locke. It will be recalled that Locke characterized the ideas of primary qualities as resemblances of the qualities themselves, whereas the ideas of secondary qualities were not so characterized. (This is, of course, not the only difference between primary and secondary qualities, according to Locke.) The theory of resemblance was immediately seized upon by Locke's critics (John Sergeant, for example)¹⁴ long before Berkeley delivered it what many, including Reid, considered the *coup de grace*. Feeling, as he did, that Berkeley had given the resemblance theory its due, Reid dismissed it without too much ceremony, assuming that his readers were familiar with Berkeley's critique. In general, Reid considered it amply demonstrated that the notion of a resemblance between subjective and objective entities was palpably absurd. This, Reid claimed,

was clearly discerned by Bishop Berkeley. He had a just notion of sensations, and saw that it was impossible that anything in an insentient being could resemble them; a thing so evident in itself, that it seems wonderful that it should have been so long unknown.¹⁵

In rejecting the notion of a resemblance between mental and physical "objects," Reid was rejecting at the same time one of the principal criteria by which Locke had distinguished primary from secondary qualities. Wishing, however, to retain the primary-secondary distinction, Reid apparently felt the need to substitute another. He found such a substitute in the older Cartesian dictum of clearness and distinctness. Descartes, as Reid well knew, had distinguished the primary from the secondary qualities, although he had not so designated them. The distinction had been adumbrated in the *Meditations* (1641) and emerged fully in Part I of the *Principles of Philosophy* (1644). According to Descartes, our knowledge of certain qualities, some of which, at least, Locke later designated secondary qualities, is not clear and distinct knowledge in that our sensations give us no information

as to the objective nature of these qualities. Descartes writes in the *Principles of Philosophy*:

[W]e have a clear or distinct knowledge of pain, colour, and other things of the sort when we consider them simply as sensations or thoughts. But when we desire to judge of such matters as existing outside of our mind, we can in no wise conceive what sort of things they are. And when anyone says that he sees a colour in a body or feels pain in one of his limbs, it is the same as if he told us that he there saw or felt something but was absolutely ignorant of its nature, or else that he did not know what he saw or felt.

But what Locke later called primary qualities are known to us clearly and distinctly:

[S]ize in the body which is seen, or figure or movement . . . , or situation, or duration, or number, and the like, which we clearly perceive in all bodies . . . are known to us in quite a different way from that in which colour is known in the same body, or pain, odour, taste, or any of the properties which, as hitherto mentioned, should be attributed to the senses. For although in observing a body we are not less assured of its existence from the colour which we perceive in its regard than from the figure which bounds it, we yet know this property in it which causes us to call it figured, with much greater clearness than what causes us to say that it is coloured.¹⁶

It is this Cartesian statement to which Reid returns. His position is couched in rationalist terms:

[O]ur senses give us a direct and distinct notion of the primary qualities and inform us what they are in themselves. But of the secondary qualities, our senses give us only a relative and obscure notion. They inform us only, that they are qualities that affect us in a certain manner — that is, produce in us a certain sensation; but as to what they are in themselves, our senses leave us in the dark.¹⁷

What the exact nature of the distinction between clear and obscure notions is for Descartes, vis-à-vis the primary-secondary quality distinction, can well be disputed. In the Cartesian statement

one feels some kind of resemblance theory lurking. Descartes emphasizes both in the *Meditations* and in the *Principles of Philosophy*: sensations of color, odor, taste, and the like — that is, the sensations of the secondary qualities — do *not* resemble the qualities themselves. Is the implication, perhaps, that in the case of the primary qualities, there *is* resemblance between the sensation and the quality?¹⁸ If Descartes intended this, Reid clearly did not; for, as we have seen, Reid considered the distinction between clear and confused perceptions as an alternative to the resemblance theory, not a version of it. Hamilton, however, accuses Reid of having lapsed into the resemblance heresy, despite Reid's insistence to the contrary. For if, Hamilton argues, we have a distinct notion of what the primary qualities are in themselves, “these qualities, as known, must *resemble*, or be identical with, these qualities as existing.”¹⁹ But it is not by any means obvious that a quality “as known” must be *identical with*, or *resemble*, an objective quality if we have distinct knowledge or a distinct perception of the objective quality. The former alternative smacks of naive realism, which, for reasons already given, I do not believe is the position Reid maintains. And as for the latter, it seems very odd to talk about knowledge, whether distinct or not, as “resembling” that which it is knowledge of.

We turn now, after overlong delay, to Reid's aesthetics. But we will have occasion later to return again to the distinction between primary and secondary qualities.

(5) Reid's aesthetic theory is expounded in two places: Essay VIII of the *Essays On the Intellectual Powers of Man*, which was published in 1785, and the *Lectures On the Fine Arts* (1774), which existed only in manuscript until very recently.²⁰ But we have an indication that one major feature of the aesthetics, namely, Hutcheson's sense of beauty, had been adopted as early as 1764. For in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, published in that year, Reid gives us, in passing, a theory of musical perception that is clearly derived from the aesthetic sense doctrine. He writes:

Although it is by hearing that we are capable of the perception of harmony and melody, and of all the charms of music, yet it would seem that these require a higher faculty, which we call a *musical ear*. This seems to be in very different degrees, in those who have the bare faculty of hearing equally perfect; and, therefore, ought not to be classed with the external senses, but in a higher order.²¹

The “higher faculty” is, of course, Hutcheson's sense of harmony — the musical counterpart of the sense of beauty. Reid's use of it in 1764 set the pattern for the aesthetic theory that was to follow.

Reid begins his aesthetics proper with a conventional characterization “of taste in general”:

That power of the mind by which we are capable of discerning and relishing the beauties of Nature, and whatever is excellent in the fine arts, is called *taste*.

The external sense of taste, by which we distinguish various kinds of food, has given occasion to a metaphorical application of its name to this internal power of the mind, by which we perceive what is beautiful and what is deformed or defective in the various objects that we contemplate.

Like the taste of the palate, it relishes some things, is disgusted with others; with regard to many, is indifferent or dubious; and considerably influenced by habit, by associations, and by opinion. These obvious analogies between external and internal taste, have led men, in all ages, and in all or most polished languages, to give the name of the external sense to this power of discovering what is beautiful with pleasure, and what is ugly and faulty in its kind with disgust.²²

Such a statement is one that any number of aestheticians or critics might have made from before Hutcheson to the end of the eighteenth century. But it is mostly with the early eighteenth century that Reid's sympathies lie: with Hutcheson and Addison, but with Shaftesbury and the older rational tradition as well. And as Reid develops this rather conservative position, in the context of his realist theory of perception, it takes on a significance of more than passing interest and some originality.

Following Addison and Hutcheson (in the first *Inquiry*), Reid makes a tripartite division of aesthetic objects into the *novel*,

the *grand* (or *sublime*), and the *beautiful*. But these three categories do not imply three distinct senses. Reid rejects the proliferation of aesthetic faculties as merely an arbitrary matching of qualities with “senses.” He argues that the number of aesthetic qualities acknowledged is itself arbitrary; for the number of aesthetic qualities distinguished depends, he thinks, on the number of names a given language may have for such qualities. Thus, the proliferation of faculties in aesthetics reduces itself to an exercise in naming and nothing more. Says Reid,

I conceive every division that has been made of our internal senses to be in some degree arbitrary. They may be made more or fewer, according as we have distinct names for the various kinds of beauty or deformity; and I suspect the most copious languages have not names for them all.²³

We have, then, three distinct classes of aesthetic qualities and, apparently, one “sense,” or “power,” appropriate to their perception, sometimes called by Reid the “internal taste” and sometimes the “sense of beauty.”

As we have seen, Reid fashioned the sense of harmony in the *Inquiry* after Hutcheson's model. In the *Essays* the same model served for the sense of beauty:

Our external senses may discover qualities which do not depend upon any antecedent perception. Thus, I can hear the sound of a bell, though I never perceived anything else belonging to it. But it is impossible to perceive the beauty of an object without perceiving the object, or, at least, conceiving it. On this account Dr. Hutcheson called the senses of beauty and harmony reflex senses [in his later works]; because the beauty cannot be perceived unless the object be perceived by some other power of the mind. Thus, the sense of harmony and melody in sounds supposes the external sense of hearing, and is a kind of secondary to it. . . . The like may be said of beauties in colouring and in figure, which can never be perceived without the senses by which colour and figure are perceived.²⁴

If, in light of this passage, and the one quoted earlier, we ask ourselves where Reid stood in the argument between aesthetic

rationalism and the aesthetic sense doctrine, the obvious answer would seem to be: with Hutcheson unequivocally. The answer is substantially correct; but it would be grossly misleading if it were left at that. Reid, as I have suggested before, opted for the sense of beauty only after he had greatly altered the empiricist account of perception, injecting into it a strong dose of rationalism. Perception acquired, in Reid's hands, a distinctly Kantian tinge; and this colored his notion of aesthetic perception as well. Thus, Reid took care to emphasize in the *Lectures On the Fine Arts* that "there is a judgment implied in every one of our perceptions," and, hence, "a judgment in every operation of taste."²⁵ Reid, then, was not merely a follower of Hutcheson's aesthetic sense doctrine, but one who intended, clearly, to attempt a reconciliation between that doctrine and the rationalist critique. And in making the general theory of perception the foundation of this *entente*, he showed the true philosopher's instinct for first principles.

(6) There are, it seems to me, two distinctive features that set Reid's aesthetic sense doctrine apart from Hutcheson's. The first, already discussed, is his "rationalization" of aesthetic perception. The second, now to be discussed, is the nature of the qualities that the sense of beauty is supposed to perceive.

As would be expected, Reid's realism in the general theory of perception rubs off on the aesthetic. Thus, Reid insists from the outset that the beautiful is an objective quality and not a sensation or feeling. It is a claim repeated again and again with a certain evangelical fervor.

When a beautiful object is before us, we may distinguish the agreeable emotion it produces in us, from the quality of the object which causes the emotion. When I hear an air in music that pleases me, I say it is fine, it is excellent. This excellence is not in me, it is in the music. But the pleasure it gives is not in the music, it is in me.²⁶

Now what is puzzling here is that Hutcheson, at whom this passage seems to be aimed, never denied that the feeling of beauty was caused by "the quality of the object." In fact, he

insisted on it no less than Reid. Nor do Reid and Hutcheson differ merely on the question of whether the term “beautiful” names the feeling or the objective quality; Reid himself admits that it can denote either.

In the external sense of taste, we are led by reason and reflection to distinguish between the agreeable sensation we feel, and the quality in the object which occasions it. *Both have the same name*, and on that account are apt to be confounded by the vulgar, and even by philosophers.²⁷

And, Reid adds, “the internal power of taste bears a great analogy in this respect to the external.”

We find this same puzzling attitude on Reid's part to his predecessors in his discussion of secondary qualities. According to Reid,

We see, then, that Locke, having found that the ideas of secondary qualities are no resemblances, was compelled, by a hypothesis common to all philosophers, to deny that they are real qualities of body. It is more difficult to assign a reason why, after this, he should call them *secondary qualities*; for this name, if I mistake not, was of his invention. Surely he did not mean that they were secondary qualities of the mind; and I do not see with what propriety, or even by what tolerable license, he could call them secondary qualities of body, after finding that they were no qualities of body at all.²⁸

Now it is simply false that Locke denied secondary qualities are “real” qualities of bodies. Secondary qualities do really exist in the external world for the Lockean. But they exist as “powers” which certain arrangements of primary qualities have of exciting certain sensations in the perceiver. The objective existence of a quality can be understood, in the Lockean tradition, in two ways. When a Lockean alludes to the objective existence of secondary qualities, he means that the secondary qualities have objective existence only as “powers” of primary qualities. “Spherical,” the name of a primary quality, can refer either to the quality itself or to the idea which it arouses in the perceiver (and which resembles it). “Red,” the name of a secondary quality,

can refer either to an arrangement of primary qualities, or to an idea which this arrangement has the power to produce in the perceiver. In the absence of sentient beings like ourselves, the list of qualities would, on this view, certainly include the term “spherical”; but it would hardly include the term “red” because it is not the name of any single quality. “Red” might be included in a list of arrangements in which certain qualities might be found, but not in a list of those qualities themselves. As a quality term it would be redundant, not naming any quality that was not already named by other quality terms. Thus, a quality is objective, for the Lockean, in either a *weak* or a *strong* sense. A quality is objectively real in the weak sense if its objective existence can be understood in terms of other objectively real qualities, having a certain identifiable effect on the perceiver. A quality is objectively real in the strong sense if it cannot be reduced and, thus, survives the absence of the perceiver (in the way explained above).

Reid says that Locke denied secondary qualities are real qualities of bodies. But Locke did no such thing. He denied only that they are real qualities of bodies in the strong sense. Either, then, Reid did not understand one of the most elementary principles of Locke's philosophy, or he simply assumed that anyone with the slightest knowledge of Locke would understand him to be saying that Locke denied the reality of secondary qualities in the strong sense. I suggest that Reid was groping for the second alternative for the purpose of claiming, contra Locke, that secondary qualities do indeed exist in the strong sense. I suggest, further, that this has an exact analogue in Reid's critique of Hutcheson and his departure from Hutcheson's aesthetic views.

(7) Hutcheson was committed to the objective existence of aesthetic qualities in the weak sense only; although the idea of beauty is occasioned by objective qualities, these qualities are not themselves aesthetic, but are merely the primary qualities, or the primary and secondary qualities, arranged in such a way as to give rise to an aesthetic idea in sentient beings of a certain kind. Beauty does have an objective existence, for Hutcheson,

in that *uniformity amidst variety*, which occasions the idea of beauty, is a real quality of objects: an arrangement of primary or primary and secondary qualities with the “power” of arousing a particular sensation in us. But take away the perceiver and the aesthetic quality is no more, although the disposition of external qualities with the particular “power” remains.

Reid insists *continually* that the idea of beauty, which he identifies with a pleasure, is occasioned by an *objective quality*. But why should he feel it necessary to insist on something that his predecessor, Hutcheson, never denied. Clearly, this insistence makes sense only if Reid did not understand a very elementary aspect of Hutcheson's aesthetics, or if he was leaving something unsaid which he thought would be obvious to his reader; namely, that the quality he insists is the cause of the aesthetic idea is not the cause of the aesthetic but is the aesthetic itself; is not the cause of the beautiful but the beautiful itself. I can scarcely believe that Reid misunderstood Hutcheson so sophomorically, any more than he misunderstood the elements of Locke. I conclude, therefore, that Reid was insisting on the objective existence of aesthetic qualities in the strong sense, a view he was quite right in believing Hutcheson did not hold. For Reid, I suggest, the world was nondispositionally colored and aesthetic. We must now see if the aesthetic half of the conjunction will wash.

It is quite clear that novelty has no objective existence in the absence of the perceiver. Reid defines novelty as “a relation which the thing has to the knowledge of the perceiver.”²⁹ If one is ignorant of, or unfamiliar with, the object, then it is novel; if one has knowledge of the object, then it is not. Since novelty is a relation between object and perceiver, it obviously cannot exist if one term of the relation, the perceiver, does not exist. And so it makes no sense to talk about novelty without a perceiver to whom the object can be novel. If Reid is arguing for the existence in the strong sense of aesthetic qualities, they must be qualities other than novelty. The two remaining are grandeur and beauty. Let us see how things stand with them.

“The emotion raised by grand objects,” Reid tells us, “is awful, solemn, and serious.”³⁰ The “object” most capable of

exciting such an emotion is the Deity. But other objects, too, are capable, in varying degrees, of giving rise to it. The “objects” which Reid first mentions as “grand” are *minds*; and he insists, in characteristic fashion, that grandeur is predicated of these objects, and properly so, not merely of the feeling of the perceiver.

There is therefore a real intrinsic excellence in some qualities of mind, as in power, knowledge, wisdom, virtue, magnanimity. These, in every degree, merit esteem; but in an uncommon degree they merit admiration; and that which merits admiration we call grand.³¹

There seems no room for doubt about Reid's meaning here. The grandeur of mind is an objective quality in the strong sense: a “real intrinsic excellence.” If it were not, there would have been no need for Reid to insist so emphatically on its existence independent of the feeling of grandeur; for everyone agreed that *something* causes the feeling, the only possible disagreement being about what kind of a something it is. What Reid is insisting upon is that the aesthetic value is in the object; the object does not become aesthetically valuable because of any relation to the perceiver: “if we hearken to the dictates of common sense, we must be convinced that there is real excellence in some things, whatever our feelings or our constitution be.”³²

As for objects other than minds — material objects, works of art, natural phenomena — they cannot, strictly speaking, possess the quality of grandeur, according to Reid; it is possessed by mind alone. Grandeur, he writes, “is found, originally and properly, in qualities of mind; . . . it is discerned, in objects of sense, only by reflection, as the light we perceive in the moon and planets is truly the light of the sun; and . . . those who look for grandeur in mere matter, seek the living among the dead.”³³ Matter, then, is a sign, or evidence, of grandeur in something else not grand itself. Thus, “When we contemplate the earth, the sea, the planetary system, the universe,” we ascribe grandeur to them indirectly by virtue of our conceiving the sublime

mind that created them: "They appear truly grand, and merit the highest admiration, when we consider them as the work of God. . . ." And when we perceive grandeur "in" literary works, "we ascribe to a work that grandeur which properly is inherent in the mind of the author."³⁴ Reid follows here the Platonic tradition that Shaftesbury bequeathed to eighteenth-century British aesthetics. His insistence that grandeur can belong to the mind only, and the obvious association of it with moral qualities, recalls the identification of the aesthetic with the moral on the part of Shaftesbury and the Cambridge Platonists. We shall encounter the same Platonic strain in Reid's theory of beauty and find it still surviving in the aesthetics of Reid's fellow Scot, Archibald Alison.

(8) It remains for us now to examine Reid's account of the beautiful in light of the distinction between "weak" and "strong" objective qualities.

"Our determinations with regard to the beauty of objects," Reid states, "may, I think, be distinguished into two kinds; the first we may call instinctive, the other rational."³⁵ The distinction is couched in the same terms as that between primary and secondary qualities. In rational judgments of beauty, as in our perception of primary qualities, we have clear and distinct knowledge of the objective quality; such judgments are "grounded on some agreeable quality of the objects which is distinctly conceived, and may be specified."³⁶ But instinctive judgments are of "occult" qualities, as are our perceptions of secondary qualities: "Some objects strike us at once, and appear beautiful at first sight, without any reflection, without our being able to say why we call them beautiful, or being able to specify any perfection which justifies our judgment."³⁷

Now most rational judgments of the beautiful seem to have for their objects the same kind of quality as the grand: a quality of mind, or a quality in nonmental objects which suggests and draws the perceiver to a quality of mind. Reid illustrates this contention with an example reminiscent of Shaftesbury: the beauty displayed by a man of "good breeding."

There is nothing in the exterior of a man more lovely and more attractive than perfect good breeding. But what is this good breeding? It consists of all the external signs of due respect to our superior, condescension to our inferiors, politeness to all with whom we converse or have to do, joined in the fair sex with that delicacy of outward behavior which becomes them. And how comes it to have such charms in the eyes of all mankind; for this reason only, as I apprehend, that it is a natural sign of that temper, and those affections and sentiments with regard to others, and with regard to ourselves, which are in themselves truly amiable and beautiful.³⁸

The occult qualities of beauty, the objects of instinctive aesthetic perception, can be compared, as we have remarked, to the secondary qualities.³⁹ We do not perceive their external nature clearly and distinctly; no reason can be given for the sensation of beauty instinctively felt. But we are not necessarily committed forever to ignorance here: the occult quality of beauty “is a proper subject of philosophical disquisition; and by a careful examination of the objects to which Nature hath given this amiable quality, we may perhaps discover some real excellence in the object, or, at least some valuable purpose that is served by the effect which it produces upon us.”⁴⁰ The successful outcome of such an examination is the transformation of an instinctive judgment of beauty into a rational one, as in the following example which Reid provides:

The beauties of the field, of the forest, and of the flower-garden, strike a child long before he can reason. He is delighted with what he sees; but he knows not why. This is instinct, but it is not confined to childhood; it continues through all the stages of life. It leads the florist, the botanist, the philosopher, to examine and compare the objects which nature, by this powerful instinct, recommends to his attention. By degrees, he becomes a critic in beauties of this kind, and can give a reason why he prefers one to another. In every species, he sees the greatest beauty in the plants and flowers that are most perfect in their kind. . . . When he examines the internal structure of these productions of Nature, and traces them from their embryo state in the seed to their maturity, he sees a thousand beautiful contrivances of Nature, which feast his understanding more than their external form delighted his eye.

Thus, every beauty in the vegetable creation of which he has formed any rational judgment, expresses some perfection in the object, or some wise contrivance in its Author.⁴¹

Two points are worth noting here. First, if the transformation of an instinctive judgment of beauty to a rational one means, *in all cases*, coming to perceive a mental quality, there would be no need to juxtapose a “perfection in the object” with “a wise contrivance in its Author,” juxtapose, that is, a material excellence apparently real in the strong sense, with a mental excellence. Thus, although Reid, I think, considered *most* aesthetic qualities to be, ultimately, qualities of mind, there are statements which seem to suggest that at least some nonmental qualities are aesthetically real in the strong sense.

The second point is this. We have claimed that the qualities of beauty and grandeur exist, for Reid, in the strong sense, like the primary (and perhaps the secondary) qualities of bodies. Yet there is an important difference. The aesthetic qualities must be what David Ross has called “consequential” qualities.⁴² They are dependent upon other qualities (for the most part, mental qualities) for their existence, although this does not make them any the less real in the strong sense. The Deity is “grand” because he is omnipotent and omniscient and good. Take these qualities away and he ceases to exemplify grandeur. But for all of that his grandeur is not identical with his omnipotence, omniscience, and goodness; it is an “emergent” fourth quality. Interpreting Reid in this way only can we reconcile his apparent insistence upon the existence of aesthetic qualities in the strong sense with his belief that we can in some way “reduce” our instinctive aesthetic judgments about “occult” qualities to rational ones about moral qualities of mind.

(9) It has been stated in recent years that Reid's aesthetics is “the most philosophical and least amateurish of the whole English eighteenth-century speculation.”⁴³ If I believed this, I would have written a study of Reid rather than Hutcheson. But there is no doubt that Reid's aesthetic speculations were philosophical, and were far from amateurish. They deserve more attention than they customarily receive.

I take Reid's major contribution to eighteenth-century British aesthetics to be the accommodation of Hutcheson's sense of beauty to an increased realization of the role of reason in perception in general, and in aesthetic perception in particular. Reid himself had a different view of his primary accomplishment in aesthetics; and perhaps it would be appropriate to close with that.

Reid wrote in a letter to Archibald Alison: "I am proud to think that I first, in clear and explicit terms, and in the cool blood of a philosopher, maintained that all the beauty and sublimity of objects of sense is derived from the expression they exhibit of things intellectual, which alone have original beauty."⁴⁴

What are we to make of this claim? After all, the doctrine which Reid takes credit for originating is hardly a new one; and that the great Neoplatonists lacked, and Thomas Reid possessed, "the cool blood of a philosopher" scarcely requires refutation. Yet there is no evidence that Reid was either an immodest man or an ignorant one. What, then, does he mean to say here that expresses neither an overestimation of his own philosophical talents nor ignorance of the history of philosophy?

What Reid had in mind when he spoke of the cold-blooded philosopher, I imagine, was the philosopher as exemplified by Locke: the plain, no-nonsense, "underlaborer," who eschews metaphysics and speculation in the grand manner. And if this is what he intended, then he was not so far wrong in his claim to be the first philosopher of *that* sort to hold aesthetic qualities to be exclusively "mental," or "intellectual," ones. Where Reid erred, I think, was in selecting this as his aesthetic testament. But we need not make the same mistake. Contemporary aesthetics has far more to learn from Reid's struggles with the sensereason antinomy than with his ingenious but unfruitful reinterpretation of Neoplatonism.

X The Rise of Association

(1) Reid was the last philosopher or critic of any importance to embrace the aesthetic sense doctrine in anything like its characteristic form; and, in fact, it was a dead issue long before he promulgated his aesthetic theory. In 1759, when Alexander Gerard still spoke the language of internal senses, his meaning was a very different one: the doctrine as Hutcheson had known it was no more. The sense of beauty had been destroyed by its own bosom serpent: the association of ideas.

It would be beyond the purview of this study to trace fully the development of the associationist philosophy in eighteenth-century British aesthetics.¹ But some brief historical remarks are necessary, after which we will examine the use to which Gerard put the association of ideas in reinterpreting Hutcheson's sense of beauty.

(2) The association of ideas, we saw, performed a special function in the aesthetic sense doctrine from the outset; but it was a negative function. For Hutcheson and his followers, association was a useful means of sweeping under the carpet the diversities in taste which seemed to militate against the notion of an implanted universal sense or instinct. But it is a double-edged sword. If the internal sense theorist can make negative use of association to explain how the “inherently” pleasant can lose its attractiveness through habitual association with the unpleasant, or how the neutral or “inherently” unpleasant can gain in attractiveness through habitual association with the pleasant,

then it must be possible to cut the other way and use his own principle in showing that what may seem “inherently” pleasant or unpleasant has gained its pleasantness or unpleasantness in the same way.

One of the first to make this move was the moralist John Gay (cousin of the poet), who attacked Hutcheson's moral sense doctrine in his dissertations *Concerning the Fundamental Principles of Virtue or Morality* (1731).² Gay is in substantial agreement with Hutcheson on two points:

that [i] the generality of mankind do approve of Virtue, or rather virtuous actions, without being able to give any reason for their approbation; and also, that [ii] some pursue it without knowing that it tends to their own private happiness [i.e., do not act with self-interest as their end in view]; nay even when it appears to be inconsistent with and destructive of their happiness.³

Now the question is: How are we to account for these two phenomena of moral experience? Hutcheson, of course, appeals to inner senses: in this particular case, the moral sense and the sense of benevolence. We cannot give reasons for our moral judgments because they are nonrational; and we act in the interest of others, on Gay's interpretation of Hutcheson, in order to gratify our sense of benevolence, thus revealing that our benevolent actions are altruistic in appearance only.⁴

Gay, then, takes Hutcheson (mistakenly, I think) to be a psychological hedonist, agrees with him that even apparently altruistic actions are self-interested, but refuses to accept the moral sense doctrine as an explanation of the “fact.” It is, he maintains, a flight to ignorance and dangerously close to the empiricist's bugbear, innate ideas.

But this account seems still insufficient, rather cutting the knot, than untying it; and if it is not akin to the doctrine of innate ideas, yet I think it relishes too much of that of occult qualities. This ingenious author [Hutcheson] is certainly in the right in his observations upon the insufficiency of the common methods of accounting for both our election and approbation of moral actions, and rightly infers the necessity of supposing a moral sense (i.e. a power or faculty whereby we may perceive any action to be

an object of approbation, and the agent of love) and public affections, to account for the principal actions of human life. But then by calling these instincts, I think he stops too soon, imagining himself at the fountain-head, when he might have traced them much higher, even to the true principle of all our actions, our own happiness.⁵

For Gay, then, all benevolent acts are, in the last analysis, motivated by private interest, even though we may not necessarily have private interest as our end in view. But the question remains: Why are the majority of moral agents unable to give their moral reason; namely, self-interest? How is it they *see immediately* that a benevolent act is right without going through the elaborate process of reasoning, with self-interest as its conclusion? Gay's answer is *association*: having long ago connected benevolence with self-interest, we no longer bother about it. The approbation of self-interest has been psychologically transferred to benevolence. We feel in performing a benevolent act what long ago we felt only after discovering by reason that benevolent acts are in our interest. We have gained immediacy through habit, by obliterating the intermediary steps:

[O]ur approbation of morality, and all affections whatever, are finally resolved into reason pointing out private happiness, and are conversant only about things apprehended to be means tending to this end; and . . . whenever this end is not perceived, they are accounted for from the association of ideas, and may properly enough be called habits.⁶

A subsequent passage articulates the point still more clearly:

We first perceive or imagine some real good, i.e. fitness to promote our natural happiness, in those things which we love and approve of. Hence . . . we annex pleasure to those things. Hence those things and pleasure are so tied together and associated in our minds, that one cannot present itself, but the other will also occur. And the association remains even after that which at first gave them the connection is quite forgot, or perhaps does not exist, but the contrary.⁷

Innate moral principles are apparent only, being merely acquired

habits of thought and action whose origins and *raison d'être* have been forgotten.

(3) The direct inheritor of Gay's associationism was David Hartley, who systematically developed the doctrine in his influential *Observations on Man* (1749).⁸ Hume, too, had made important use of the associationist psychology at about this time in his theory of knowledge. But whereas Hartley applied his theory to aesthetics, Hume did not in any significant way; and thus it is Hartley whom we must consider here.

"I begin with the Pleasures and Pains of Imagination; and shall endeavour to derive each Species of them by Association. . . ," writes Hartley in introducing his brief remarks on aesthetics.⁹ Let us examine some instances of his procedure.

Here is Hartley's associationist interpretation of that venerable aesthetic principle, *uniformity amidst variety*.

Uniformity and Variety in conjunction are also principal Sources of the Pleasures of Beauty, being made so partly by their Association with the Beauties of Nature; partly by that with Works of Art; and with the many Conveniences which we receive from the Uniformity and Variety of the Works of Nature and Art. They must therefore transfer part of the Lustre borrowed from the Works of Art, and from the Head of Convenience, upon the Works of Nature.¹⁰

To take another example, consonance and dissonance in music are both "original" in their effects, the former of course being naturally pleasing, the latter naturally unpleasant. But as both are used together in musical composition, dissonance gradually becomes pleasing through the connection with consonance. "By degrees the Discords become less and less harsh to the Ear, and at last even pleasant, at least by their Associations with the Concords, that go before, or follow them. . . ." ¹¹

And when all other associationist explanations fail, we can resort to the "Pleasures of Theopathy": the pleasures we feel in associating any object with thoughts of God, its creator.

Those Persons who have already formed high Ideas of the Power, Knowledge, and Goodness, of the Author of Nature, with suitable

Affections, generally feel the exalted Pleasures of Devotion upon every View and Contemplation of his Works, either in an explicit and distinct Manner [i.e., consciously], or in a more secret and implicit one [i.e., unconsciously].

Hartley himself did not put forth his associationist aesthetics (such as it is) as an attack upon, or an alternative to, the aesthetic sense doctrine. But it came ready to hand when Gerard set out to “modernize” the aesthetic senses in the light of continuing criticism.

(4) Gerard, like Shaftesbury, is a transitional figure, although the breach he spans is of considerably less importance to the history of aesthetics. It is, nevertheless, crucial to the history of the sense of beauty. Gerard occupies a position between the doctrine of inner senses which Hutcheson fashioned out of Locke, and the later Enlightenment's attempt to interpret the sense of beauty as an amalgam of acquired habits and responses. Gerard uses the principle of association, which was to be the major weapon of his successors, to a greater extent than any previous aesthetician. Yet he still speaks the language of Hutcheson's inner sense theory—a theory which associationism was instrumental in rendering obsolete. Thus, although Gerard recognizes a large number of aesthetic “senses,” he at the same time, as a result really, decreases the significance of the term “sense.”

In the *Essay On Taste* (1759), Gerard's major aesthetic work and the one which will occupy us here, seven “*internal or reflex senses*” are distinguished: the senses (or tastes) of *novelty*, *grandeur* and *sublimity*, *beauty*, *imitation*, *harmony*, *ridicule*, and *virtue* (a list obviously indebted to Addison and Hutcheson). What significance these “senses” have for Gerard, considering their obvious profusion, is a question I request the reader to hold in abeyance until the conclusion of this chapter, at which point, I hope, at least a partially satisfactory answer will have emerged.

The *Essay* begins with some preliminary remarks on taste and the internal senses:

A fine taste is neither wholly the gift of *nature*, nor wholly the effect of *art*. It derives its origin from certain powers natural to the mind; but these powers cannot attain their full perfection, unless they be assisted by proper culture. Taste consists chiefly in the improvement of those principles which are commonly called the *powers of imagination*, and are considered by modern philosophers as *internal* or *reflex senses*, supplying us with finer and more delicate perceptions, than any which can be properly referred to our external organs.¹³

That “fine taste is neither wholly the gift of *nature*, nor wholly the effect of *art*” is, of course, a common enough contention. But in the context of Gerard's position, the relation between the acquired and the innate raises a special question because of Gerard's use of the appellation “inner sense.” As a recent writer observed, “The seven internal senses are not ultimate principles of human nature: they are compound and derivative faculties.”¹⁴ Gerard makes it very clear at a number of points in the *Essay* that he wishes to divorce himself from the traditional concept of the internal senses as innate faculties—“the gift of *nature*.” Rather, the internal senses are, for Gerard, “the effect of *art*.” He was obviously influenced by the critics of the inner sense doctrine who looked with a jaundiced eye on a theory that in a seemingly arbitrary manner could provide an *ad hoc* “sense” for every occasion. And thus Gerard was anxious to represent the inner aesthetic “senses” as acquired responses, not organs of perception. The association of ideas gave him his principal psychological mechanism.

Such a concept of the inner senses was a step into a new region of aesthetic speculation, necessitated by the sort of criticism Balguy, Berkeley, and Price had been leveling at the moral sense school and, *en passant*, at the sense of beauty. Yet Gerard, as we have remarked, stood midway between the new tradition and the old: his roots were in the old law. Gerard derived his notion of the aesthetic senses, as he himself declared, from Hutcheson. And it was to Hutcheson's later works that his debt was greatest. He seemed to discern (I think correctly) a shift in Hutcheson's position.

Mr. Hutcheson was the first who considered the powers of the imagination as so many senses. In his *Inquiry concerning beauty and virtue*, and his *Essays on the passions*, he calls them *internal senses*. In his later works he terms them *subsequent* and *reflex* senses: *subsequent*, because they always suppose some previous perception of the objects about which they are employed; . . . *reflex*, because, in order to their exertion, the mind reflects upon, and takes notice of some circumstance or mode of the object that was perceived, besides those qualities which offered themselves to its attention at first view. . . . In the following essay, the terms *internal sense* and *reflex sense* are used promiscuously.¹⁵

Now what exactly did Hutcheson mean in his later works, notably the *Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, when he referred to *reflex* or *subsequent* senses? And does Gerard retain Hutcheson's meaning when he "promiscuously" uses the terms?

In answering the first question, it might be well to return for a moment to Hutcheson's early position. We determined, after rather lengthy considerations, that in Hutcheson's first *Inquiry*, the term "beauty" refers to a pleasurable quality very much like a *secondary quality*. If this is indeed the case, then the sense of beauty can be said to perceive external objects. In other words, it perceives the external world to the same extent that, for Locke, the external senses do in perceiving secondary qualities. But there is another kind of perception whereby we perceive not the external world, even to the extent that the external senses do for the Lockean; that is the kind of perception that we sometimes describe as *introspection*. And the sense which gives rise to such second-order perception is, in the terminology of Hutcheson's later works, a *reflex* or *subsequent* sense. For the later Hutcheson, the internal senses, including the sense of beauty, have become reflexive: "INTERNAL senses," he writes, "are those powers or determinations of the mind, by which it perceives or is conscious of all within itself, its actions, passions, judgments, wills, desires, joys, sorrows, purposes of action."¹⁶ The sense of beauty has ceased to be a spectator of the external world and has become a spectator merely of its own prison, the mind.

Hutcheson appends to his later definition of the internal

senses a rather broad hint as to the source of the doctrine. "This power," he writes, "some celebrated writers call *consciousness* or *reflection*, which has for its objects the qualities, actions or states of the mind itself, as the external senses have things external."¹⁷ What "celebrated writers" does Hutcheson have in mind? Well, the notion of an internal sense monitoring its own habitation can be traced at least as far back as Saint Augustine, who writes of an "interior sense" by which one perceives one's own perceiving.¹⁸ But the example that was closest to Hutcheson both in time and sympathy was, as usual, his spiritual father, Locke, who refers to reflection at times as an *internal sense*.¹⁹ In fact, the aesthetic sense doctrine has now described a perfect circle: from Locke to Locke in two generations.

Now to our second question: Does Gerard retain Hutcheson's concept of the reflexive aesthetic sense? He does, in his fashion: for Gerard, taste is "the perception of the perception" of external objects "in contrast to the direct perception of them by the external sense."²⁰ But it is a reflexive sense that is acquired, not innate, deriving from Hutcheson's later position, yet moving toward complete rejection of implanted faculties. To appreciate the full extent of Gerard's position, both its indebtedness to Hutcheson and its departure from him, we must examine in some detail the inner workings of the aesthetic "senses." However, there is no need to canvas them all: I have chosen, rather, to concentrate on the sense of beauty.

(5) "Beautiful objects are of different kinds, and produce pleasure by means of different principles of human nature." So begins Gerard's disquisition on "*the sense or taste of Beauty*."²¹ We are not to look, in Gerard, for any single definition of *the* beautiful object, or single faculty for its perception. In these respects Gerard has departed from the inner sense school to which he owed his first allegiance.

But if Gerard's opening remark on the beautiful is a departure, the first definition restores the prodigal: "The first species of beauty is that of figure; and belongs to objects possessed of *uniformity*, *variety*, and *proportion*. Each of these qualities

pleases in some degree; but all of them united give exquisite satisfaction.”²² This, of course, is a definition that Hutcheson would have readily accepted, as far as it goes; but it is not supposed to be complete, or of universal application.

The question now arises: Why do objects possessing *uniformity*, *variety*, or *proportion* give rise to pleasure when perceived. Hutcheson's answer is that there is a *sense* disposed to receive pleasure from such objects: every Lockean simple idea given in perception must have an appropriate disposition to receive it. Gerard, on the other hand, makes no mention here of inner senses, but (like Price, Edmund Burke, and others) ascribes the pleasure associated with the perception of such qualities as we might call “aesthetic” to various perceptual principles. Thus, the pleasure taken in *uniform* (or *simple*) objects is ascribed by Gerard, as it was by Price and, in the seventeenth century, by Descartes and Spinoza, to ease of perception and conception: “Facility in the conception of an object, if it be moderate, gives us pleasure. . . . Hence too it is that *uniformity* and *simplicity* become agreeable. Objects endued with these qualities enter easily into the mind. . . .”²³ And *variety*, as a foil to *unity*, pleases, according to Gerard, because it exercises the mind—the principle of mental exercise being a sacred cow in Enlightenment aesthetics, since its extensive use by L'Abbe DuBos, who himself inherited it from the seventeenth century.²⁴ As Gerard expresses the idea,

But uniformity, when perfect and unmixed, is apt to pall upon the sense. . . . *Variety* is necessary to enliven it. . . . Variety in some measure gratifies the sense of novelty, as our ideas vary in passing from the contemplation of one part to that of another. This transition puts the mind in action, and gives it employment, the consciousness of which is agreeable.²⁵

Proportion, according to Gerard, is of two kinds: the first is related to *size*, and the second to *fitness*. There must be a proportion struck between the whole and its parts: a proportion relative to the size of the whole and the sizes of its parts “when none of the parts are so small, in respect of one another, and of the whole, as to disappear through their smallness, while we

contemplate the whole; and when none of them are so large, that, when we fix our view on them, we cannot distinctly perceive at the same time their relation to the whole, and to the other parts.”²⁶ Proportion thus renders an object and its parts conformable to our perceptual faculties; lack of it has the opposite effect. And whereas proper proportion makes the perceptual process successful, lack of it frustrates that process; and from thence arises the relish for proportion and the distaste for its lack.

As nothing gives us greater pleasure than what leads us to form a lofty conception of our own faculties, so nothing is more disagreeable than what reminds us of their imperfection. On this account it is, that the want of this kind of proportion disgusts us. It leads us to entertain a low, and consequently ungrateful, opinion of our capacity, by rendering it impossible to form one entire distinct conception of the object.²⁷

Disproportion, then, displeases because it gives us a perceptual inferiority complex: an explanation that would have delighted Hobbes, who, we recall, explained laughter as an expression of our superiority.

The second species of proportion, *fitness*, is of course another eighteenth-century shibboleth; it had a firm grip on the Enlightenment mind from Hutcheson to Kant, despite the dissenting voices of a few like Burke. Gerard seems to interpret fitness as a kind of *association*; indeed, the principle of association plays such a prominent role in the perception of the beautiful, even where it is not specifically alluded to, that there is no area in which it cannot be seen to obtrude. For even the “pure” perceptions of unity and variety can, in part, be reduced to the association of ideas. They are “indications of design, wisdom, and contrivance; qualities of mind which we never fail to survey with pleasure.”

When we behold uniformity in a work, we naturally conclude, that it could not be the effect of chance, and that it could scarce be formed without intention. . . . we take pleasure in conceiving the excellence of the cause, and by this the delight is heightened which we find in beholding the effect that suggests that excellence.²⁸

Thus, the mind is led by the train of association from the object to the idea of its (supposed) cause; and in that the contemplation of this associated *idea* is pleasant, the primary object of contemplation, be it pleasurable of itself or not, becomes a sharer in the associated pleasure and basks in a reflected light. A similar process is at work in the perception of fitness: the fitness of an object for its end also betokens a rational agent.

When therefore we see a work, it leads us by a natural association to conceive its end; prone to comparison, we examine the propriety of the parts in relation to this end; if any of them are prejudicial to it, we are disgusted with the want of skill which this imperfection betrays. . . . But when, on examination, the fitness of all the parts appears, the satisfaction with which we think on the skill and ingenuity thus displayed communicates itself to the effect so closely connected with it by causation. . . .²⁹

This is clearly an associationist version of Reid's Neoplatonic view that material objects are beautiful only as signs of mental qualities, although Gerard does not underscore, as Reid does, the "only."

It is obvious that the role of association in aesthetic perception is very different for Gerard than it had been for Hutcheson. The latter looked upon the association of ideas as the chief corrupter of taste, joining what is innately pleasurable with what is not and thus poisoning aesthetic sensibility. The former, on the contrary, "usually treats the functioning of association not as a corrupter of taste but as one of the main occasions for its activity and one of the principal causes of its extension."³⁰ For Gerard, in fact, association is the mainspring of aesthetic perception in general and the perception of beauty in particular: "There is perhaps no term used in a looser sense than *beauty*, which is applied to almost every thing that pleases us. . . . In all these cases, beauty is, at least in part, resolveable into association."³¹

(6) There are, then, a number of qualities that bear the appellation "beautiful," according to Gerard. Each can be explained in terms of certain operations of the mental faculties

and various associations of ideas. But what do these qualities have in common that they should all be called by the same name? Gerard answers, "by reason of the similitude of their feelings, they are reduced to the same *genus*."³² The causes of beauty are multifarious and complex, the feeling itself always the same, simple Lockean idea. The sentiment or idea of beauty "is compound in its *principles*, but perfectly simple in its *feeling*."³³ And this is in part Gerard's justification for calling this complex of associations a "sense" of beauty.

Gerard distinguishes three characteristics of a "sense" which he takes to be definitive:

[i] It is a power which supplies us with such *simple* perceptions, as cannot be conveyed by any other channel to those who are destitute of that sense. [ii] It is a power which receives its perception *immediately*, as soon as its object is exhibited, previous to any reasoning concerning the qualities of the object, or the causes of the perception. [iii] It is a power which exerts itself *independent of volition*; so that, while we remain in proper circumstances, we cannot, by any act of the will, prevent our receiving certain sensations, nor alter them at pleasure. . . .³⁴

As we can see from this passage, *innateness* is no longer considered a *sine qua non* for a "sense." And thus Gerard's *acquired* senses do not fail to qualify as "senses" on this account. Nor is the philosopher any longer convinced by the *immediacy* of aesthetic perception that the "sense" of beauty must be a superadded aesthetic faculty, distinct from the commonly accepted ones, and that it cannot be complex in its function. Burke, for example, had already argued that "this celerity of its operation is no proof that the Taste is a distinct faculty"; for here, as elsewhere in the operation of our complex mental processes, we "are obliged to spell" at first, but eventually we "read with ease and with celerity."³⁵ Again, the nonvolitional character of sense perception is no bar to calling a complex faculty a "sense." For why, after all, should there not be complex psychological processes as immune to our wills and desires as the seeing of red or the feeling of heat? And since the feeling of beauty is simple, even though its causes are not, the last impediment is removed, and Gerard can conclude that "the

powers of taste may, with the greatest propriety, be reckoned senses, though they be derived faculties. . . .”³⁶ Although Gerard is in perfect agreement with Hutcheson that the idea of beauty is a simple idea, he rejects Hutcheson's assumption that the sense of beauty must, therefore, be a simple faculty.

(7) The aesthetic faculties were, in Hutcheson's later writings, both innate and subsequent. For Gerard, as we have seen, they are no longer innate, but are still subsequent or reflexive. Like the inner senses of Hutcheson's later position, their material is subjective. For the Lockean, an external sense has for its object (though not its direct object) the external world, which it delivers to the mind in the form of ideas of primary and secondary qualities. But the subsequent or reflexive sense has for its object not the external world (even indirectly), but rather ideas that have already been delivered by the external senses and worked over by the mind—in other words, predigested material. Even as the sensation of color is produced by the figure and motion of the external (primary) qualities, so the sensation of beauty is produced by the figure and motion of internal objects: the ideas of primary and secondary qualities.

Now what strikes one about this position is its strange kinship with Locke. But it is a different sort of kinship from that which we observed in Hutcheson's early position. It is not so much an extension of Lockean principles as the first *Inquiry* had been, but rather a return, at least in some important respects, to Locke's own aesthetic theory, in so far as Locke can really be said to have had one at all.

As we saw in our earlier discussions of Hutcheson, beauty for Locke is a complex idea; as such, it is never given directly in perception, as are simple ideas. A complex idea, rather, is constructed out of simple ones by an act of the mind. And it can, “when the mind pleases,” be “considered . . . as one entire thing, and signified by one name.”³⁷

Now for both Locke and Gerard, there is a certain sense in which beauty is a complex idea. For Locke, the idea of beauty is *identical with* a complex idea, and for Gerard the idea of beauty is *caused by* a complex idea. But just as for the Lockean,

the word “red” can name either the sensation of red or its cause, so for Gerard, it would seem, the word “beauty” can name either the sensation of beauty or its cause; and in the case of beauty, the cause is a complex idea.

However, for Gerard there is one *simple* idea or feeling that can correctly be called beautiful. Is such also the case for Locke? Here the analogy seems to break down, although not perhaps as drastically as one might think. For Locke does tell us that the complex idea of beauty can, “when the mind pleases,” be “considered . . . as one entire thing.” It would, I think, be contrary to Locke’s intentions to claim that when we do consider the complex idea of beauty in this way, there arises a new simple idea or sentiment of beauty. But it surely is a notion that one might be teased into by reading Locke. In any case, both Locke and Gerard certainly are suggesting that there is a way of experiencing the complex idea of beauty such that its complexity gives way to a wholeness not previously present. But for Locke this wholeness is achieved by a free act of will, whereas for Gerard it is caused by perceptual and psychological processes over which the aesthetic perceiver has no control.

It would certainly be a mistake to exaggerate the kinship between Locke and Gerard. Aesthetic thought, after all, by no means stood still between 1690 and 1759; on the contrary, it was a period of unparalleled activity. Yet one can still feel the influence of Locke, even at a distance. The British critics, as Professor Stolnitz has observed, “were, like everybody else, nurtured on Locke.”³⁸ And this was, apparently, even truer of Gerard at mid-century than it had been of Hutcheson at the outset; all of which gives further evidence, if further evidence were really needed, that, in the words of A. C. Fraser, “Few books in the literature of philosophy have so widely represented the spirit of the age and country in which they appeared, or have so influenced opinion afterwards, as Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.”³⁹

XI The Triumph of Association

(1) I have presented Gerard as rather an ambiguous figure because he seems to adopt two theories which do not keep very good company together: Hutcheson's doctrine of aesthetic senses, and the doctrine of associationism which, more than anything else, contributed to the downfall of the internal sense aesthetics. I conclude, however, with two thinkers who display no ambivalence in this regard: Archibald Alison and Dugald Stewart. They brought the associationist aesthetics to full flower and, in so doing, laid the ghost of Hutcheson and the sense of beauty to rest.

Gerard, as we have seen, did not put forth the association of ideas specifically as an attack upon, or an alternative to, the aesthetic sense doctrine, but rather as a reinterpretation of it. Others, however, prior to Alison and Stewart, had already seen associationism as rendering appeal to inner aesthetic senses unnecessary. Among these was Joseph Priestley, for example, who wrote in the *Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism* (1777):

Whatever it be, in the sentiment or ideas, that makes a discourse to be read with pleasure, must either be *interesting*, by exciting those gross and more sensible feelings we call passions, or must awaken those more delicate sensations, which are generally called *pleasures of the imagination*. Each of these kinds of feelings are, by some philosophers, referred to so many distinct *reflex*, or *internal senses*, as they call those faculties of the mind by which we perceive them; whereas according to Dr. Hartley's theory,

those sensations consist of nothing more than a congeries or combination of ideas and sensations, separately indistinguishable, but which were formerly associated either with the idea itself that excites them, or with some other idea, or circumstance, attending the introduction of them. It is this latter hypothesis that I adopt. . . .¹

We can see Priestley's remark as setting the stage for Alison and Stewart. For they, too, conceived of associationism not only as an aesthetic principle acceptable on its own merits, but also as an answer to the internal sense doctrine in aesthetics: an alternative to the sense of beauty free from the taint of apriorism and innate ideas. The last of the eighteenth-century Scottish aestheticians still felt the presence of the internal sense doctrine enough to make it the object of their criticism, perhaps because it had been part of the Scottish philosophy almost from the start. Hutcheson, the one most often associated with the doctrine, Reid, its latter-day proponent, Gerard, its "modernizer," all were Scots. The sense of beauty was the Scots' baby, not perhaps by birth, but by adoption, which, being an act of free choice, often makes ties as strong as those of blood.

(2) Before we come to consider the work of Alison and Stewart, it would be useful to review the basic tenets of the aesthetic sense doctrine. We shall then be able to see directly those they reject, those they accept, and those they ignore.

The inner sense aesthetics can be summarized in six propositions. I will state them in terms of the beautiful; but, clearly, they hold for other aesthetic qualities as well.

- i. The feeling of beauty is simple and unanalyzable.
- ii. The perception of the beautiful is innate; it can be improved, but not implanted, by instruction.
- iii. The perception of the beautiful is immediate; it does not proceed by stages.
- iv. The perception of the beautiful is not susceptible of control by the will; under the proper perceptual conditions, an object is perceived as beautiful despite any contrary wish on the part of the perceiver.
- v. The perception of the beautiful is nonrational and achieved

through the agency of an internal sense; this is alleged to follow from i–iv.

- vi. The quality in objects which produces the idea of beauty in the perceiver is definable (for example, as *uniformity amidst variety*).

Not every philosopher who espoused the doctrine of aesthetic senses held all six of these propositions; nor, of course, were all of them the sole property of the aesthetic sense school. But Hutcheson, implicitly or explicitly, held them all; and he, after all, was rightly considered by followers and critics alike to be both founding father and leading spokesman of the internal sense school.

(3) At the outset of his *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* (1790), Alison attacked the notion that the feelings of beauty and sublimity are simple feelings (proposition i). This, he believed, was his own special contribution to aesthetics. With regard to the genesis of his theory, Alison stated: “It seemed to me that the SIMPLICITY OF THE EMOTION OF TASTE, was a principle much too hastily adopted; and that the consequences which followed from it [the internal sense doctrine among them] . . . were very little reconcileable with the most common experience of human feeling. . . .” With the aesthetic sense doctrine as his principal whipping boy, Alison rejected the axiom of simplicity and outlined his own projected analysis of the pleasures of the imagination.

I shall endeavour to show, that this effect is very different from the determination of a SENSE; that it is not in fact a simple, but a complex emotion; that it involves in all cases, *1st*, the production of some simple emotion, or the exercise of some moral affection; and *2^{dly}*, the consequent excitement of a peculiar exercise of the imagination; that these concomitant effects are distinguishable, and very often distinguished in our experience; and that the *peculiar* pleasure of the BEAUTIFUL or the SUBLIME is only felt when these two effects are conjoined and the complex emotion produced.²

Of course one would like to know precisely what Alison meant by a “complex emotion.” If we say, for example, that

lemonade has a “complex” taste, being sweet by virtue of the sugar, and tart by virtue of the lemons, we would mean, most likely, that the taste of lemonade is itself a distinct, “simple” taste, but that it is the result of—analyzable into—two components. The taste of sugar or of lemons, that is, sweet or sour, we would say is a simple taste in that it is both experienced as simple and is in fact unanalyzable—irreducible into (taste) components. But now take another example: liver and onions. Like lemonade, it is analyzable into two distinct flavors and is, therefore, a complex taste. However, the ingredients do not blend (chopped liver excepted) as lemon and sugar: the components never give rise to a distinct liver-and-onions flavor as lemon and sugar do to a lemonade flavor; the flavor is always liver *and* onions. Thus, liver and onions, unlike lemonade, is complex both in that it is analyzable into two components and is experienced as two flavors; that is, experienced as complex. The question is, in which sense of “complex” is Alison's aesthetic emotion complex? Is it experienced as simple or complex: lemonade or liver and onions?

One interesting hint is given us in Alison's none too modest posture as an innovator: “I am conscious,” he wrote, “that I have entered upon a new and untrodden path. . . .”³ If we take this claim at all seriously, we must reject the possibility that Alison thought of the feelings of beauty and sublimity as complex in feeling, for it is hardly a new and untrodden path: it is Locke pure and simple. What is left is the view that the feelings of beauty and sublimity are complex feelings which are experienced as simple. This would distinguish Alison's view from Gerard's, which is that the aesthetic feelings are simple ideas *caused by* complex ones. There is, truth to tell, only a very thin line between Gerard and Alison; and Alison seems to cross it at times. It is often difficult to tell whether his complex emotion of taste is the cause of the ideas of beauty and sublimity or the ideas themselves. What I am suggesting is that the most charitable interpretation we can make, given his innovative stance, is the latter: that, for Alison, the emotions of beauty and sublimity are complex emotions experienced as simple.

But if we accept this interpretation, we cannot accept it *tout*

court. For Alison writes, to begin with, “these concomitant effects,” that is, the simple emotion and the chain of ideas which make up the complex emotion of taste, “are distinguishable, and very often distinguished in our experience. . . .” This seems to suggest that the emotions of beauty and sublimity are often experienced as complex, but that they are sometimes experienced as simple. In emphasizing that they *are* distinguishable, Alison is clearly intimating that they are more usually not distinguished; that they tend to be taken for simple. Thus, it would seem Alison's real position is that the emotions of taste are a mixed bag: some experienced as simple and some as complex.

Again, the statement that “the *peculiar* pleasure of the BEAUTIFUL or the SUBLIME is only felt when these two effects [the simple emotion and the train of ideas] are conjoined and the complex emotion produced,” raises similar ambiguities. And to increase our perplexity we now appear to have two subjective phenomena in the aesthetic experience: a “*peculiar* pleasure” and a “complex emotion” which produces it. One would expect that the “complex emotion” is the emotion of taste, pleasure and all. We shall recur to this “*peculiar* pleasure” after having explored Alison's position more fully. But what we have already seen is that Alison has a difficult time keeping his position distinct from Locke's on the one hand and Gerard's on the other; from the view that the idea of beauty (or sublimity) is a complex idea experienced as such, and the view that the idea of beauty (or sublimity) is a simple idea caused by a complex one.

(4) Alison's complex emotion is composed of two basic elements: (i) a “simple emotion” or “moral affection”; and (ii) “the consequent excitement of a peculiar exercise of the imagination.” The simple emotion or moral affection which initiates the complex aesthetic emotion is not itself an emotion of taste, but some “nonaesthetic” emotion, say, fear or love, aroused by the aesthetic object. “Whenever the emotions of sublimity or beauty are felt, I believe it will be found, that some affection is uniformly excited, by the presence of the object,

before the more complex emotion of beauty is felt; and that if no such affection is excited, no emotion of beauty or sublimity is produced.”⁴

Now the simple emotion is the triggering mechanism for a chain reaction: that reaction constitutes the succession of ideas which, together with the simple emotion, constitute the complex emotion of taste. What is the nature of this train? It is a string of *connected* ideas. But connected by what? After all, consciousness itself is a string of “connected” ideas; but aesthetic experience is only one part of consciousness. The association of ideas raises such a wide variety of feelings (or ideas) consequent upon the contemplation of one object that it becomes vital for the associationist aestheticians to decide which are valid—relevant to the aesthetic experience—and which are not.

For Alison, the key lies in the leading emotion which excites the train. An aesthetic train of ideas must be characterized by emotive unity: the delight of beauty “is proportioned to the degree in which this uniformity of character prevails.”⁵ In other words, the degree to which a train of ideas is aesthetic is proportional to the degree to which the original simple emotion is expressed in the ensuing train. And it follows that an object is aesthetic in the degree to which it is capable of exciting some leading emotion; it, too, must possess emotive unity (for which reason, incidentally, Alison favored the tragedy of Corneille to the mixed tragi-comedy of Shakespeare). “If it is true, that those trains of thought which attend the emotions of taste, are uniformly distinguished by some general principle of connexion, it ought to be found that no composition of objects or qualities in fact produces such emotions, in which this unity of character or of emotion is not preserved.”⁶ Both the aesthetic object and the aesthetic experience, then, possess emotive unity. Alison's language almost has the ring of John Dewey in making the point, although the association of ideas seems hardly the psychological principle capable of achieving the kind of organic integration which, for Dewey, characterizes *an* experience.

How does a train of associations manage to embody or express the leading emotion that has given rise to it? “Express”

and “embody” are, perhaps, rather highfalutin words for what, in the end, turns out to be the principle of *resemblance*. Hume had distinguished three relations between ideas “by which the mind . . . is convey'd from one idea to another. . .”: these are “RESEMBLANCE, CONTINGUITY in time or place, and CAUSE and EFFECT.” He had also essentially decreed *resemblance* for aesthetics (as had Hobbes) by ascribing it to the “aesthetic” faculty, *imagination*. “’Tis plain,” Hume wrote, “that in the course of our thinking, and in the constant revolution of our ideas, our imagination runs easily from one idea to any other that *resembles* it, and that this quality alone is to the fancy a sufficient bond and association.”⁷ For Alison *resemblance* is “sufficient bond and association” to establish the unity of emotion that characterizes the ideas of beauty and sublimity.

In those trains . . . which are suggested by objects of sublimity or beauty, however slight the connexion between individual thoughts may be, I believe it will be found, that there is always some general principle of connexion which pervades the whole, and gives them some certain and definite character. They are either gay, or pathetic, or melancholy, or solemn, or awful, or elevating, &c. according to the nature of the emotion which is first excited.⁸

Thus, the complex emotion of taste can be thought of as a train of ideas which resemble each other in that they give rise to emotions of the same kind.

(5) But thus far we have been dealing exclusively with the nature of the complex emotion of taste. We must now turn to the pleasure of taste, the pleasure of beauty or sublimity, which, as we have seen, Alison considers an integral part of the aesthetic experience. There are two relevant questions here: (i) How is this pleasure aroused? (ii) What is its nature?

To answer the first question, we must recall that Alison refers to the aesthetic train of ideas as an “exercise of the imagination.” He has, in fact, adopted the then ubiquitous notion of aesthetic pleasure as deriving from mental exercise: the notion which Du Bos inherited from the seventeenth century and

passed on to the Enlightenment. Alison adds to this notion an indigenous product of British thought: the principle of aesthetic disinterestedness.⁹ Alison maintains that “there is a pleasure annexed, by the constitution of our nature, to the exercise of imagination. . . .”¹⁰ It is this pleasure which the aesthetic train of ideas elicits; the imagination, in following the aesthetic train, is engaged in a kind of exercise: “according to common expression, our imagination is seized, and our fancy busied in the pursuit of all those trains of thought. . . .”¹¹ But the imagination is not always in a state susceptible to the stimulation of this exercise. It must be free and unimpeded by practical considerations if it is to skip lightly from one idea to another, guided by their resemblance only; in a word, it must be *disinterested*.

That state of mind, every man must have felt, is most favourable to the emotions of taste, in which the imagination is free and unembarrassed, or in which the attention is so little occupied by any private or particular object of thought, as to leave us open to all the impressions, which the objects that are before us can create. It is upon the vacant and the unemployed, accordingly, that the objects of taste make the strongest impression. It is in such hours alone, that we turn to the composition of music, or of poetry, for amusement. The seasons of care, of grief, of business, have other occupations, and destroy, for the time at least, our sensibility to the beautiful or the sublime, in the same proportion that they produce a state of mind unfavourable to the indulgence of imagination.¹²

The pleasure of taste, then, is in part the pleasure of mental exercise; but it is something more. It is the pleasure which, according to Alison, is given by the simple emotion with which the aesthetic experience begins. And thus aesthetic pleasure—the pleasure of sublimity or beauty—is, according to Alison, a complex pleasure, even as the aesthetic emotion is a complex emotion.

The pleasure, therefore, which accompanies the emotions of taste, may be considered not as a simple, but as a complex pleasure; and as arising not from any separate and peculiar sense, but from the union of the pleasure of SIMPLE EMOTION, with that which is

annexed, by the constitution of the human mind, to the exercise of IMAGINATION.¹³

Again the complexity of the aesthetic feeling—in this instance, the pleasure of taste—is claimed by Alison to cast doubt upon the inner sense doctrine, a claim increasingly heard in the waning years of the eighteenth century.

This brings us to our second question: What is the nature of this pleasure of taste? It is complex. But is it experienced as complex or simple? As in the case of the emotions of sublimity and beauty, the question seems, in the last analysis, a moot one. Alison simply does not give us enough of a clue. Perhaps he didn't see the distinction.

(6) Alison's book is divided into two parts: two *Essays*. We have, so far, been concerned exclusively with the first: "Of the Nature of the Emotions of Sublimity and Beauty"; that is, the nature of aesthetic experience. But in order to understand the full extent of Alison's departure from the inner sense school of Hutcheson, we must concern ourselves also with the second: "Of the Sublimity and Beauty of the Material World"; that is, the nature of material aesthetic objects.

The second essay deals extensively with five classes of material beauty and sublimity: sound, objects of sight, forms, motion, and the human countenance (added in the second edition). In each case, Alison applies the same basic principles; and as the principles, not their specific applications, are our primary interest, we shall concern ourselves for the most part with the preliminary remarks in which these principles are stated.

The experience of taste begins with the arousing of a simple (nontaste) emotion; and thus the first prerequisite for a material object being an aesthetic (taste) object is the power to arouse such an emotion. But, Alison argues, "matter itself is unfitted to produce any kind of emotion." Matter produces sensations; and "such sensations might be either pleasing or painful, but . . . in no case could they be attended with any emotion."¹⁴

How, then, can a material object (or quality) be an aesthetic object (or quality), if it lacks the necessary prerequisite; namely, the power to arouse emotion? The answer is *association*.

But although the qualities of matter are in themselves incapable of producing emotion, or the exercise of any affection, yet it is obvious that they may produce this effect, from their association with other qualities; and as being either the signs or expressions of such qualities as are fitted by the constitution of our nature to produce emotion.¹⁵

The habitual association of a quality that cannot evoke emotion with one that can gradually renders the former emotively potent: “the constant connexion we discover between the sign and the thing signified, between the material quality and the quality productive of emotion, renders at last the one expressive to us of the other, and very often disposes us to attribute to the sign, that effect which is produced only by the quality signified.” It seems clear, then, that what Alison means to say when he maintains the seemingly implausible view that matter cannot arouse emotion is simply this. Emotive responses are acquired; and they are acquired by association. The only unlearned responses we make are physical responses to physical stimuli, and these are not emotive responses. Expressed in this way, the view loses some of its implausibility.

Alison enumerates seven kinds of association—not, he points out, an exhaustive list:¹⁶

- i. Qualities of form and color, by which objects of use or pleasure are identified, become, through association with them, capable of arousing the emotions which the objects arouse.
- ii. Forms, colors, and sounds associated with “qualities of design, of wisdom, of skill” take on the emotive potency of those qualities.
- iii. Such material signs of mental qualities as countenance, gesture, and voice take on, through association, the power of arousing emotion which their significata possess.
- iv. Qualities that resemble the natural signs of mental qualities, by a sort of second-order association, gain the power of emotive arousal from the signs which have previously gained it from their significata.
- v. There are “resemblances” between certain sensations and certain emotions: “Thus, there is some analogy between the sensation of gradual ascent, and the emotion of ambition—

between the lively sensation of sunshine, and the cheerful emotion of joy—between the painful sensation of darkness, and the dispiriting emotion of sorrow.” It is not clear whether the “resemblance” means that the sensations *feel like* the emotions, or, as some of Alison's examples seem to suggest, that there is a kind of structural isomorphism between them. In any case, the material objects and qualities which *ex hypothesi* give rise, in their pristine state, to sensations, not emotions become through the resemblance of emotions to those sensations capable of arousing the emotions also.

- vi. Language contributes to the process of association by serving as a collective memory, a repository of associations acquired by past generations. Each individual is limited by time and situation to a relatively small number of associations; but language gives him the benefit of associations acquired by the whole human race in its collective lifetime.
- vii. Finally, each man's own personal associations, consequences of his own special circumstances, contribute to the power material objects have of arousing his emotions.

(7) The first of Alison's *Essays* attacks Hutcheson's aesthetic sense doctrine explicitly by denying the simplicity of the emotions of taste. The second attacks it implicitly by denying the innateness of aesthetic judgment (proposition ii) and the existence of qualities common to all objects of taste in reference to which taste terms may be defined (proposition vi). Both denials follow, as we shall see, from the concept of association. This leaves the immediacy of the judgments of taste (proposition iii), the freedom of such judgments from control by the will (proposition iv), and the nonrationality of judgments of taste (proposition v) as possible survivors of the inner sense school.

As to the immediacy of the judgments of taste, Alison is silent, although the associationists, as we have seen, did not believe immediacy and association to be incompatible doctrines, either in ethics or aesthetics. Quite to the contrary, the association of ideas was an attractive hypothesis just because it could preserve immediacy without recourse to innate senses.

The nonrationality of aesthetic perception is obviously implied by Alison's theory. The aesthetic experience begins with an emotion and consists in the preservation of that emotion through the ensuing train of ideas. This is not to say reason is entirely absent from the realm of the beautiful and sublime; the critic and the philosopher both employ rational methods. But in the judgment of taste proper, emotion is supreme.

The relation between taste and the will is another topic on which Alison is completely silent. But here, too, we can read his opinion in his doctrine. Association is essentially a form of mechanistic psychological determinism. According to the doctrine (which, it should be recalled, had Hobbes as an early proponent), the succession of our ideas follows a predictable course, determined by the laws of association. A recent description of Lord Kames along these lines seems to me admirably suited to Alison as well. "He looked upon the human mind as a machine which determined its nature and therefore its reality in accordance with the laws of association and those corollary laws which an investigation of our ways of knowing had established."¹⁷ There seems little place for volition here.

But to return to the two points at issue between Alison and Hutcheson in the second essay, namely, the innateness of the judgments of taste and the definability of its objects, Alison's denial of both follows directly from his associationist viewpoint. The rejection of innateness clearly follows simply from the fact that associations are *acquired* and are also the *sine qua non* for taste. Alison emphasizes continually, throughout the second essay, that all so-called "beautiful" or "sublime" material objects have acquired these characters. Even the most likely candidates for original beauty, sounds, for example, are reduced by Alison to acquired associations.

The observations which I have offered on the subject of simple sounds, are perhaps sufficient to show, that the sublimity and beauty of these sounds arise, in all cases, from the qualities with which we have observed them connected, and of which they appear to us as the signs or expressions; and that no sounds in themselves are fitted by the constitution of our nature to produce these emotions.¹⁸

Even such a hallowed quality as proportion acquires its beauty, Alison maintains, from its association, in this case with fitness, which in turn derives its effect from association with the idea of an intelligent creator. Alison writes, "certain proportions affect us with the emotion of beauty, not from any original capacity in such qualities to excite this emotion, but from their being expressive to us of the fitness of the parts to the end designed."¹⁹ It would seem that Alison is willing to grant nothing to the opposition, not even the "natural" appeal of the most simple, formless, raw perception.

Now it is indeed true that we are not born with our aesthetic responses ready made, and that experience is necessary to form them. It may perhaps be true that this experience consists, at least in part, of the acquisition of associations. But suppose association is necessary for all aesthetic responses to the material world. Is it sufficient, too? Are there not, perhaps, qualities innately suited by their nature and ours to produce aesthetic emotions in the sense of being the only ones suited to the forming of associations? Even if we grant (which is a very large concession indeed) that every quality of material objects which is beautiful or sublime is so by virtue of its associations, must we grant that associations of the kind necessary for aesthetic responses can accrue to all material qualities? In a word, are all qualities of material objects potentially beautiful or sublime?

Alison's answer must be, I think, that all material qualities are potentially aesthetic, although some perhaps may be more prone to the formation of the proper associations because they are the "natural" signs of emotive qualities. But in the final analysis, *any* quality of material objects, no matter how offensive to common sensibility, can become beautiful or sublime because any such quality can, through association, conceivably come to elicit a pleasurable emotion in someone or other. I don't know anyone who is likely to feel a simple sensation of pleasure at the sight of a mangled corpse; but I can see no reason why it might not produce in some individual an association with a quality which would produce such a sensation. And for Alison that is the initial step in a psychological process which might ultimately result in a pleasure of taste. And thus all

attempts, including those of Hutcheson and the internal sense theorists, to enumerate those qualities common to all the objects of taste, are misguided, according to Alison. No material quality or object is by nature either “aesthetic” or “nonaesthetic.”

(8) One question remains: If material qualities are not capable of eliciting emotive responses except by association with qualities which are, what sort of qualities have the power of emotive arousal? The cat which, as might be expected, is now to be let out of the bag is *mental* qualities. Here Alison aligns himself with the old Platonic tradition of Shaftesbury, and its more recent adherents:

with a DOCTRINE that appears very early to have distinguished the PLATONIC school; which is to be traced, perhaps, (amid their dark and figurative language), in all the philosophical systems of the East, and which has been maintained in this country, by several writers of eminence—by Lord Shaftesbury, Dr. Hutcheson, Dr. Akenside, and Dr. Spence, but which has no where so firmly and so philosophically been maintained as by Dr. Reid in his invaluable work ON THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS OF MAN. The doctrine to which I allude, is, that matter is not beautiful in itself, but derives its beauty from the expression of MIND.²⁰

Of course the doctrines of Alison and his predecessors are, as he himself recognized, parallel but not identical. For the British Platonists of Shaftesbury's and Reid's persuasion, mental qualities are aesthetic and raise aesthetic emotions directly. (Why Hutcheson is included in this list at all is not altogether clear.) But for Alison, no quality, either material or mental, can raise aesthetic emotions directly. What mental qualities, and material qualities by association, can do is arouse simple, nonaesthetic emotions, which, in turn, trigger the complex emotion in which beauty and sublimity consist. Says Alison,

The conclusion, therefore, in which I wish to rest, is THAT THE BEAUTY AND SUBLIMITY WHICH IS FELT IN THE VARIOUS APPEARANCES OF MATTER, ARE FINALLY TO BE ASCRIBED TO THEIR EXPRESSION OF MIND: OR TO THEIR

BEING, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, THE SIGNS OF THOSE QUALITIES OF MIND WHICH ARE FITTED, BY THE CONSTITUTION OF OUR NATURE, TO AFFECT US WITH PLEASING OR INTERESTING EMOTION.²¹

XII End of an Era

(1) Alison shows every indication of having thought that he had given Hutcheson's doctrine its final and conclusive refutation. But the strength of Hutcheson's reputation was such that in 1810 the doctrine was still alive enough to elicit considerable critical comment in Dugald Stewart's *Philosophical Essays*.

Stewart is a *convenient* figure with whom to close our history of Hutcheson's influence on eighteenth-century aesthetic speculation. I underscore “convenient” for the obvious reason that the *end of an era* is, to some degree, at least, an arbitrary point. But Stewart's *Philosophical Essays* makes as natural a coda to Hutcheson's aesthetic sense doctrine as I have been able to find. Stewart was one of the leading purveyors of the Scottish Common Sense School in the first half of the nineteenth century (and even beyond); and as such he must rank as a most influential molder of nineteenth-century philosophical opinion, particularly in Britain and the United States. But although there is, consequently, some reason to think of Stewart as basically a nineteenth-century figure, his roots are deep in the Enlightenment, and his philosophy was still working out the destiny of concepts that would have been familiar to Hutcheson.

(2) Looking back over eighteenth-century aesthetics from his vantage point, Stewart saw, in the attempt to ascertain the quality or qualities which aesthetic terms such as “beautiful” and “sublime” name, a major failure. Why had the Enlightenment failed here? Not, Stewart thought, for any other reason but that

the attempt was misguided, the puzzle insoluble. "It has long been a favorite problem with philosophers," Stewart wrote, "to ascertain the common quality or qualities, which entitles a thing to the denomination of *beautiful*: but the success of their speculations has been so inconsiderable, that little can be inferred from them but the impossibility of the problem to which they have been directed."¹

The Enlightenment landscape was littered with the ruins of theories, Hutcheson's perhaps the most prominent of all, each attempting to define aesthetic terms by matching them with their objects in a one-to-one relation, or, at least, assigning one term to a relatively small group of qualities which together make a sufficient and necessary condition. But this is a bootless effort, Stewart maintained, because—and here, as we shall see, he is strikingly modern—it was predicated on a false view of language: a view which mistakenly assumed that for a noun or adjective to be meaningful, it must have, in all of its uses, some common referent. As Stewart put it,

The speculations [of eighteenth-century aestheticians] . . . have evidently originated in a prejudice, which has descended to modern times from the scholastic ages;—that when a word admits of a variety of significations, these different significations must all be *species* of the same *genus*; and must consequently include some essential idea common to every individual to which the generic term can be applied.²

Stewart was not the first Enlightenment figure to make this linguistic move. Berkeley, who, as we have seen, had already shaken up the rigid Lockean view of language as solely descriptive, was well ahead of Stewart in denying that general terms must each name some common property or idea. In the introduction to the *Principles of Human Knowledge* he stated that "there is no such thing as one precise and definite signification annexed to any general name, they all signify indifferently a great number of particular ideas."³ But if Stewart was not the first to enunciate this view of language, he was well in advance of his time in working out its logical details, and certainly the first to apply it to questions of an aesthetic nature.

What linguistic theory does Stewart put in place of the one rejected? His problem is to give some satisfactory account of how a single noun or adjective comes to name many different individuals. The rejected answer was: every general term is a name. Every name must be the name of something; if it refers to different individuals, it must do so by virtue of some characteristic—some second-order “individual”—common to them all. Stewart denies that an adjective used univocally for a number of different individuals must name some property common to them all. To support his contention, he must give a satisfactory account of how such adjectives as “beautiful” can refer to so vast an array of different individuals. He begins by agreeing that common properties of objects are the occasion for their being referred to by the same adjective; but, he argues, no single property (or group of properties) need be held in common by more than two objects for any number of objects to be referred to by the same adjective. All that is necessary is that a continuous chain of connected properties connect any group of individuals referred to by the same adjective. Stewart writes:

I shall begin with supposing, that the letters A, B, C, D, E, denote a series of objects; that A possesses some one quality common with B; B a quality in common with C; C a quality in common with D; D a quality in common with E;—while, at the same time, no quality can be found which belongs in common to any *three* objects in the series. Is it not conceivable, that the affinity between A and B may produce a transference of the name of the first to the second; and that, in consequence of the other affinities which connect the remaining objects together, the same name may pass in succession from B to C; from C to D; and from D to E? In this manner a common appellation will arise between A and E, although the two objects may, in their nature and properties, be so widely distant from each other, that no stretch of the imagination can conceive how the thoughts were led from the former to the latter.

Stewart has, in fact, come very close to Wittgenstein's concept of “family resemblances” as a substitute for the “common property” theory of language.⁵ In his now celebrated examination of language games in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein rejected the notion that for the term “game” to be

meaningful in its various applications, it must have reference to some characteristic common to all games. There is no common characteristic, he claimed; only a complicated structure of inter-locking properties.

Consider for example the proceedings that we call 'games.' I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all?—Don't say: 'There *must* be something common, or they would not be called "games" '—but *look and see* whether there is anything common to all.—For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to *all*, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think, but look!—Look for example at board-games, with their multifarious relationships. Now pass to card-games: here you find many correspondences with the first group, but many common features drop out, and others appear. When we pass next to ball-games, much that is common is retained, but much is lost. . . . And we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how similarities crop up and disappear. And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities in detail.⁶

(3) Before we leave the subject of Stewart and contemporary thought, it might be worthwhile to consider a more general parallel between Stewart's situation at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the state of value theory during the first half of the twentieth. I think deeper affinities will be revealed than just a chance anticipation of Wittgenstein.

I began this discussion by remarking that in 1810 Stewart looked back over the eighteenth century to see a vast array of attempts to define aesthetic terms by identifying each with some quality or discrete group of qualities possessed in common by objects of the same aesthetic kind. In all cases, Stewart argued, the attempts had failed. In 1903, G. E. Moore, making a broader survey of ethical theory, came to the same conclusion. Moore, like Stewart, asked: Why have they failed? Stewart's answer was that they have failed because aesthetic terms do not each refer to some single quality, but to different qualities in

different objects. Moore's answer was that they have failed because "good" does not refer to any *naturalistic* quality or group of qualities: "good is not to be considered a natural object"; it is a single quality, but that quality is nonnatural, "simple and indefinable." "In fact, if it is not the case that 'good' denotes something simple and indefinable, only two alternatives are possible: either it is a complex, a given whole, about the correct analysis of which there may be disagreement; or else it means nothing at all, and there is no such subject as Ethics."⁷ Moore envisions no fourth alternative; the second and third are untenable, and so he takes the first.

Moore's argument did not remain within the boundaries of ethical theory. It was quickly adopted by members of the Bloomsbury group, among them Clive Bell, who concurred with Moore in the belief that if a group of objects is to bear the same name, the objects must have some common characteristic: specifically, if the word "art" is to be meaningful, the objects to which *it* refers must have a common characteristic: "For either all works of visual art have some common quality, or when we speak of 'works of art' we gibber. . . . There must be some one quality without which a work of art cannot exist. . . ."⁸

Thus Stewart, in aesthetics, and Moore, in ethics, faced a similar problem. Why, they asked, have we been unable to find some quality common to the objects which the terms of our respective disciplines name? Stewart took one alternative in rejecting the notion that for a term to name different objects, these objects must have some quality or discrete group of qualities in common. Moore took another tack in his insistence that for a term to refer meaningfully to different objects, they must possess a common property. The mistake of previous moralists, rather, was to assume that the common property is natural and analyzable when, in fact, it is neither.

What is of particular interest is that in recent years many value theorists have rejected Moore's alternative and turned toward Stewart's. Wittgenstein himself had already applied the theory of "family resemblances" both to ethics and aesthetics in his lectures at Cambridge. G. E. Moore, who attended many of these lectures, reports:

He introduced his whole discussion of Aesthetics by dealing with one problem about the meaning of words. . . . He illustrated this problem by the example of the word 'game,' with regard to which he said both (1) that, even if there is something common to all games, it doesn't follow that this is what we mean by calling a particular game a 'game,' and (2) that the reason why we call so many different activities 'games' need not be that there is anything common to them all, but only that there is 'a gradual transition' from one use to another, although there may be nothing in common between the two ends of the series. And he seemed to hold definitely that there is nothing in common in our different uses of the word 'beautiful,' saying that we use it 'in a hundred different games'—that, e.g., the beauty of a fact is something different from the beauty of a chair or a flower or the binding of a book.⁹

And today we have such moralists as Paul Edwards maintaining that "the features to which moral judgments refer or which they imply are no more nonnatural than the features to which judgments about the niceness of foods refer. . . ."¹⁰; that "'good' is polyguous as far as its referent is concerned."¹¹ We have such aestheticians as Helen Knight arguing that "good," in its aesthetic applications, "does not name an indefinable quality,"¹² although it is indefinable in the sense that it does not refer to one single quality, or discrete group of qualities, but to "criterion-characters" which vary with the occasion. And we have Morris Weitz using Wittgenstein's concept of "family resemblances" in support of "art" as an "open concept," having reference to "no common properties—only strands of similarities."¹³ In many areas of value theory, then, the eighteenth and twentieth centuries have delivered themselves of similar doctrines; but, in addition, whole segments of development have been parallel, the direction of evolution being away from an impacted one-term—one-object concept of language to a looser, more flexible logical model.

(4) Stewart's notion of terms such as "beautiful" and "sublime" *transferring* their applications from object to object has as its psychological analogue the doctrine of the association of ideas, to which Stewart also subscribed. He had adopted the

terms “transitive” and “transitivity” from another associationist aesthetician, Richard Payne Knight.¹⁴ The transference must begin with some object or class of objects that is originally sublime or beautiful. This was a point that Stewart felt the need to emphasize in the face of an associationist aesthetics which seemed, at times, to fall into an infinite regress from one derived pleasure to another, and was in a way a concession to Hutcheson and his school. The association of ideas enables

us to conceive how a thing indifferent in itself, may become a source of pleasure, by being connected in the mind with something else which is naturally agreeable; but it presupposes, in every instance, the existence of those notions and those feelings which it is its province to combine: insomuch that, I apprehend, it will be found, wherever association produces a change in our judgments on matters of Taste, it does so, by co-operating with some natural principle of the mind, and implies the existence of certain original sources of pleasure and uneasiness.

In a word, “If there was nothing originally and intrinsically pleasing or beautiful, the associating principle would have no materials on which it could operate.”¹⁶ At some point the chain of associations “must at last arrive at principles of which no account can be given, but that such is the will of our maker.”¹⁷ That there are “principles of which no account can be given, but that such is the will of our maker,” sounds very like pure, unalloyed Hutcheson. Where Stewart and his predecessor part company is in Stewart's reluctance to describe such principles as internal senses. It is the *external* senses which, for Stewart, are the source of original aesthetic perceptions. And those more complex and cerebral pleasures of the imagination, that, for Hutcheson, demanded the postulating of internal senses, Stewart made the work of the association of ideas.

In the case of beauty, the original objects are objects of sight; and the first qualities of these objects to be aesthetically enjoyed, to bear the name of “beautiful,” are colors. The next are forms: “When in addition to the pleasures connected with *colours*, external objects present those which arise from certain modifications of *forms*, the same name will be naturally applied

to both the causes of the mixed emotion.” The emotion is *mixed*, be it noted, but experienced as simple:

The emotion appears, in point of fact, to our consciousness, simple and uncompounded, no person being able to say, while it is felt, how much of the effect is to be ascribed to either cause, in preference to the other; and it is the philosopher alone, who ever thinks of attempting, by a series of observations and experiments, to accomplish such an analysis.¹⁸

Both color and form please the eye, are pleasures of seeing; yet there are other pleasures which visible objects give that are pleasures not of seeing, but of *understanding*. And if these come to bear the name of “beautiful,” it is through association with the eye, which is their avenue to the understanding. Order, fitness, utility, symmetry are by “the *consent* of all mankind,” beautiful. And all “are calculated to give pleasure to the *understanding*,” not the organs of sight; “but as this pleasure is conveyed through the medium of the *eye*, they are universally confounded with the pleasing qualities which form the direct objects of its physical perceptions.”¹⁹ We have here a classic case of what Stewart calls “transference.” Fitness, for example, a pleasure of the understanding, is called “beautiful,” a term previously applied to pleasures of sight, because it has in common with pleasures of sight the characteristic of being perceived by the eye.

The only other external sense whose “objects” bear the name “beautiful,” Stewart points out, is the sense of hearing. It is another case of transference: “this use of the word appears to me,” Stewart remarks, “to be plainly *transitive*, arising, in part, from the general disposition we have to apply to one class of our perceptions, the epithets strictly appropriated to the agreeable qualities perceived by another.” However, the qualification “in part” is well taken; for the tendency to transfer the term “beautiful” from the pleasures of the sense for which it was meant to those of another “suggests no reason why the epithet *beautiful* should be applied to agreeable *sounds*, rather than to agreeable *tastes*, or to agreeable *odors*.” This can be explained, Stewart thinks, only by the wider associations which sound can

encompass through its *picturesque effect* ("Thus, the clack of a mill . . . conjures up at once to the mind's eye the simple and cheerful scene which it announces; and thus . . . the songs which delighted our childhood, transport us into the well-remembered haunts where we were accustomed to hear them"); and its *expressive power*.²⁰

The above examples will, I think, convey something of the way in which Stewart explains the proliferation of aesthetic objects. The procedure is not novel but is characteristic of the associationist aestheticians, although the logical sophistication which Stewart brings to his work is in contrast to that of many of his predecessors. What remains to be pointed out is that Stewart, like Alison, has rejected (by implication) one of the basic tenets of Hutcheson's first *Inquiry*: the definability of aesthetic terms by reference to a common property of aesthetic objects (proposition vi). The use of the association principle also contributes, as in the case of Alison, to the rejection of another doctrine of the inner sense school: the innateness of the aesthetic judgment (proposition ii). We shall see this aspect of Stewart's position explicitly stated in his discussion of *taste*, to which we now turn our attention.

(5) Taste, for Stewart, seems to mean two (not necessarily distinct) things: a disposition to have "aesthetic" feelings in the contemplation of "aesthetic" objects, and the ability to make judgments about what sorts of objects will elicit "aesthetic" feelings. Thus, it is the faculty of the creator, the audience, and the critic, too. But in all cases, Stewart insists, taste is not simple, it is complex; it is not a gift, it is an acquisition:

. . . Taste is not a simple and original faculty, but a power gradually formed by experience and observation. It implies, indeed, as its groundwork, a certain degree of natural sensibility, but it implies also the exercise of the judgment; and is the slow result of an attentive examination and comparison of the agreeable or disagreeable effects produced on the mind by external objects.²¹

It was the accomplishment of his own immediate predecessors, Stewart acknowledges, to have made the aesthetic sense doctrine

a dead issue: "Mr. Burke, Sir J. Reynolds, Dr. Gerard, and Mr. Alison have combatted in our own times, the prevailing doctrines which class Taste among the simple and original faculties which belong to our species."²²

But what of the celerity with which the judgments of taste are made? Is it consistent with a complex and acquired reaction? For Hutcheson and the early internal sense theorists, as we have seen, the immediacy of aesthetic judgment was reason enough to conclude that it is innate and nonrational. However, for the later critics of the doctrine, this was not the case: surely, they argued, repetition and habit could so ingrain a response that it would indeed be immediate and seem simple and innate when it was, as a matter of fact, no more so than reading or writing. To this latter view Stewart gravitated, comparing taste with "those intellectual processes, which, by often passing through the mind, come at length to be carried on with a rapidity that eludes all our effort to remark it; giving to many of our judgments, which are really the result of thought and reflection, the appearance of instantaneous and intuitive perceptions."²³

Taste, in its critical and creative employments, is an acquired power of "*discrimination* or *discernment*," characterized by "the *promptitude* with which its judgments are commonly pronounced."²⁴ The method of acquiring taste is the "experimental" method: "it is not by reasonings *a priori*, that we can hope to make any progress in ascertaining and separating the respective effects of the various ingredients which may thus be blended in the composition of Beauty," Stewart writes.

In analyzing these, we must proceed on the same general principles by which we are guided in investigating the physical and chemical properties of material substances; that is, we must have recourse to a series of observations and experiments on beautiful objects of various kinds; attending diligently to the agreeable or the disagreeable effects we experience, in the case of these diversified combinations.

The instrument by which successes and failures are determined in the aesthetic laboratory is our own aesthetic response. "In all these experiments and observations, . . . the result is judged of

by attending to our own feelings; as, in our researches concerning *heat*, we appeal to the thermometer.”²⁵

But there is one crucial difference between the experimental method of the natural sciences and that of aesthetics: a difference which goes further than the vague notion of “habit” toward accounting for the *promptitude* of aesthetic judgments. The natural scientist must manipulate, or at least observe in some special way, the world of nature external to him; and so must the aesthetic “scientist”—but only in the beginning. For the artist and critic, aesthetic objects soon become objects of the imagination which the imagination can call up at will and manipulate in any way required by the “experimental” method. The aesthetic experiment becomes a mental experiment.

In the infancy of Taste, indeed, the first step is to compare object with object;—one scene with another scene; one picture with another picture; one poem with another poem:—and, at all times, such comparisons are pleasing and instructive. But when the mind has once acquired a certain familiarity with the beauties of Nature and of Art, much may be effected, in the way of experiment, by the power of Imagination alone. Instead of waiting to compare the scene now before me with another scene of the same kind, or of actually trying the effects resulting from the various changes of which its parts are susceptible, I can multiply and vary my ideal trials at will, and can anticipate from my own feelings, in these different cases, the improvement or the injury that would result from carrying them into execution. The fact is still more striking, when the original combination is furnished by Imagination herself, and when she compounds and decompounds it, as fancy or curiosity may happen to dictate. In this last case, the materials of our experiment, the instruments employed in our analysis or synthesis, and the laboratory in which the whole process is carried on, are all alike intellectual. They all exist in the observer's mind; and are all supplied, either immediately by the principles of his nature, or by these principles cultivated and assisted by superinduced habits.²⁶

Now the essence of mental activity, particularly imaginative activity, is speed; and therein lies a primary reason for the promptitude of taste. For although the acquisition and operation of taste depend upon an experimental method, with all its

stages of trial and error, that method is swift as the “fancy.” It is carried on continually; it never wants materials on which to work. The experimental wherewithal is never out of hand—or, rather, out of mind.

The account which has now been given of the habits of observation and comparison, by which Taste acquires its powers of *discrimination* or *discernment*, explains, at the same time, the *promptitude* with which its judgments are commonly pronounced. As the experiments subservient to its formation are carried on entirely in the mind itself, they present, every moment, a ready field for the gratification of curiosity; and in those individuals whose thoughts are strongly turned to the pursuit, they furnish matter of habitual employment to the intellectual faculties. These experiments are, at the same time, executed with an ease and celerity unknown in our operations on Matter; insomuch that the experiment and its result, seem both to be comprehended in the same instant of time. The process, accordingly, vanishes completely from our recollection; nor do we attempt to retrace it to ourselves in *thought*, far less to express it to others in *words*, any more than we are disposed, in our common estimates of distance, to analyze the acquired perceptions of vision.²⁷

(6) To conclude, let us take stock of Stewart's position in relation to Hutcheson's. He denies the simple unanalyzable nature of aesthetic perceptions (proposition i) but maintains, nevertheless, that they are experienced as simple. He rejects the innateness of aesthetic judgments (proposition ii). He affirms, with Hutcheson, that the judgment of taste is immediate (proposition iii). He expresses no opinion as to the volitional or nonvolitional character of aesthetic judgments (proposition iv), but denies their nonrationality (proposition v), maintaining, on the contrary, that rational judgment, in the form of inductive inference, plays a prominent role. Finally, he denies the definability of aesthetic terms such as “beautiful” and “sublime” by reference to common properties of objects (proposition vi). Thus, with regard to the six principal claims of Hutcheson and his school, Stewart rejects three outright, accepts one in modified form, accepts one outright, and stands mute on one. Something of Hutcheson, then, still survived; but the sense of beauty

as he had known it did not exist. The mind's aesthetic eye had closed its rheumy lid forever, enduring as a phrase, but not as a theory.

(7) We have spanned almost one hundred years from our consideration of Hutcheson's first *Inquiry* to the present discussion of Dugald Stewart. The history of aesthetic thought in this period is a complex and tangled web: and even the small part of it we have told is not by any means a direct route from one philosophical terminus to another. Yet there are themes and directions discernible; and now is the time to bring them out. There are, it seems to me, a number of ways of looking at the development of the aesthetic sense doctrine from Hutcheson to Stewart.

Perhaps the most obvious frame in which to put our history is the "nature or nurture" antinomy. For it is easy to see the progression from Hutcheson's innate sense of beauty, to Gerard's acquired "sense," and, finally, to the demise of the sense of beauty in Alison and Stewart, as simply a progression from the notion of aesthetic responses as inborn to the notion of them as learned: from the aesthetic birth of man to the aesthetic education of man.

That this is an oversimplification hardly needs pointing out; for Hutcheson insisted that the aesthetic nature is educable as well as corruptible (to the extent that attention can be developed); and Stewart of course was forced to admit that for *any* aesthetic responses to be acquired, some must be innate. The reply to this is an obvious one: that what we have here is not a difference in kind but one of degree; that Hutcheson *emphasized* nature, and Stewart nurture; that the general direction of thought was from the one emphasis to the other. Such a view has the unmistakable mark of an uninteresting truth, and I let it stand for whatever it is worth.

A second way of looking at the progression from senses to association is to see it as a history of aesthetic and moral psychology, beginning in the dark ages of an a priori psychological Aristotelianism and emerging into the enlightenment of a Newtonian science of the mind (which is the way Hume

thought of his associative principles). This is the view, I think, which many eighteenth-century writers took. It is reflected in Burke's wielding of Ockham's razor in Hutcheson's direction, and in Diderot's remark in the *Encyclopédie* that "Hutcheson and his followers try to establish the necessity of an *internal sense of beauty*; but they only succeed in demonstrating that there is something obscure and inscrutable in the pleasure which beauty occasions in us. . . ." ²⁸ For, clearly, if Hutcheson is a psychologist, and his "explanation" of the perception of the beautiful is a sense of the beautiful, then he has conformed to the eighteenth-century stereotype of the scientific nincompoop whose sleeping potion has a dormitive virtue and whose clock runs on clockness. Surely the association of ideas, for all of its weaknesses as a psychological theory, is better psychology than can be found in the inner sense doctrine. And if one reads Hutcheson's first *Inquiry* merely as aesthetic psychology, it can be seen only as a primitive beginning to a century of progress.

If we see the history of the aesthetic sense against the background of the philosophy of perception, a third view emerges. It is, of course, a commonplace notion in the history of philosophy that perception, as Locke construes it, is characterized by "passivity," the mind being a sensitive receiver, recording dumbly the input from the external world, whereas for Kant it is a mind-laden, concept-laden *activity*. And the transformation of aesthetic perception from Hutcheson (who, after all, is a Lockean in his basic assumptions) to Stewart can, with some justice, be described as a progression in which mental processes play an increasingly important role.

Two points, I think, can usefully be made about this general characterization. It is, of course, oversimplified to the extent that both Locke and Hutcheson recognized at least one essential mental activity in perception, as we have seen: that of *attention*. And, second, there is a world of difference between the kind of mental processes that Stewart, for example, injected into aesthetic perception and the kind of deep structure Kant formulated for the general theory of perception. The mind is no more *active* in aesthetic perception for Stewart than it had been for Hutcheson. The association of ideas is, as we have noted, a

deterministic system, and the mind is no less passive for being equipped with it.

Taking, rather, the point of view of the literary critic and historian of taste, yet another way emerges of seeing the growth of the sense of beauty, and its demise in the doctrine of association. That way is to see a normative, rather than a psychological or analytic, question at stake. In its most general terms, the difference between Hutcheson and Stewart is that Hutcheson does not allow certain acquired perceptions as beautiful or sublime—in other words, “aesthetic”—which Stewart is willing to allow. Yet the issue here may not be what is or is not aesthetic, but what ought or ought not be counted as such. And this seems to involve, really, deciding either to encourage or discourage certain ways of making or responding to works of art (or other potentially “aesthetic” objects). Thus, a correlation can perhaps be drawn between the history of the aesthetic sense from Hutcheson to Stewart and the history of literary taste, say, from Pope to Blake.

Now for those who tend, for various reasons, to see certain philosophical disputes as disguised disputes about value, such an interpretation of Hutcheson and his followers is naturally congenial. In addition, the proverbial recalcitrance of normative disagreements to rational resolution of course lends support to the interpretation, since the philosophical analysis of the aesthetic is itself such a seemingly irresolvable issue. There is, doubtless, an intermingling of aesthetic philosophy and literary criticism throughout this period, with philosophers engaging in the latter as well as the former, and critics in the former as well as the latter. But although the literary and other tastes of writers have certainly influenced their views, it is by no means obvious that the only issue was a normative one.

Let us say that the question before both Hutcheson (at the beginning of the eighteenth century) and Stewart (at the beginning of the nineteenth) was: What makes a judgment or a perception peculiarly “aesthetic”? (And we shall intend by an “aesthetic” judgment or perception nothing more than a judgment or perception of the “sublime” or the “beautiful.”) It might be suggested that this is really a slightly misleading way of asking

the question: What kinds of judgments or perceptions ought to be allowed as ones of beauty or sublimity? And, given the normative implications of the terms “beautiful” and “sublime,” this begins to look like a matter of *recommending* what responses to art, say, should be cultivated and what responses should be discouraged; what responses should be legitimized and what responses ruled irrelevant. Perhaps this *is* all that the question amounts to. But that is by no means clear. And we can retain the normative question without throwing out the conceptual one. The question “Is such and such a response to art an *aesthetic* one?” might be construed as “Is such and such a response to art a *proper* one?” But we can also ask “Is an *aesthetic* response to art the only *proper* one?” and “Is the response to art that so and so recommends an *aesthetic* one?” And now we can still ask our conceptual question “What is the *aesthetic*?” independent of the normative one.

What I would say about the matter is this. There is a normative issue present in the argument between Hutcheson and the associationist aestheticians. But that does not preclude there being a conceptual issue as well. And the conceptual issue is the one I have tried to bring out in the preceding analysis of Hutcheson, his followers, and his critics.

Appendix A Some Minor Figures

(1) To examine every writer on aesthetics in Enlightenment Britain who was influenced by the sense of beauty would be a task of staggering proportions and, at least from the philosophical point of view, one that, I suspect, would not pay sufficient returns on the investment. Nevertheless, some consideration of “disciples” may be called for to limn in more fully our picture of the aesthetic sense doctrine during the mid-1700s. I have chosen, therefore, to discuss three minor writers—William Melmoth, John Gilbert Cooper, and Hugh Blair—as representative of the influence which Hutcheson wielded at this time. My choice of Melmoth and Cooper was dictated mainly by the fact that their names are to be found to some small degree in previous studies of the period.¹ They are hardly first-rate philosophical or critical minds, and their influence on the aesthetic sense doctrine is a trivializing one; but such influences also belong to the history of ideas and cannot be totally ignored. Blair, of course, is of somewhat greater importance, not perhaps as an original philosophical thinker, but certainly as a talented popularizer of various aesthetic and critical ideas.²

(2) William Melmoth's reputation seems to have rested, in his own day, on two literary productions: a translation of the *Epistles* of Pliny the Younger, which appeared in 1753, and a series of essays on various topics, published during the 1740s as *Letters of Sir Thomas Fitzosborne*.³

The thirty-ninth of the *Fitzosborne Letters* is an epitome of Hutcheson's *Inquiry*, with a little bit of this and that from Addison, Sir William Temple, and others. Melmoth conceives of aesthetic sensibility as a God-given gift in the form of a faculty or sense from which the standard of taste is derived and to which it owes its authority. He writes:

The charms of the fine arts are, indeed, literally derived from the author of all nature, and founded in the original frame and constitution of the human mind. Accordingly, the general principles of *taste* are common to our whole species, and arise from that internal sense of beauty which every man, in some degree at least, evidently possesses.

However, whereas Hutcheson tends to play down the role of “education” in developing aesthetic perception (it being, as we have seen, a perversion rather than a corrective influence, for Hutcheson), Melmoth, in this respect perhaps under the influence of Addison and Temple, acknowledges the innate and the acquired as necessary and equal in the functioning of the aesthetic sense. Thus “taste is nothing more than this sense of beauty, rendered more exquisite by genius, and more correct by cultivation”⁴

In the tradition of the aesthetic sense theorists, Melmoth presses the analogy between critical judgment and sense perception: the critical process is involuntary, immediate, and therefore nonrational. “There are certain forms which must necessarily fill the soul with agreeable ideas; and she is instantly determined in her approbation of them, previous to all reasonings concerning their use and convenience.”⁵

As we have seen, the standard of taste is assured, for Melmoth, by a common aesthetic nature among men in the form of a God-given internal sense. But if such a common ground exists, the fact of manifest differences in taste must be accounted for; it is a problem for Melmoth as it had been for his predecessors and as it must be for anyone whose critical position implies unanimity. Melmoth, like Hutcheson, appeals here to the principle of association, although the term itself is not used and the argument is but brief. Melmoth writes:

The opposition, however, which sometimes divides the opinions of those whose judgments may be supposed equal and perfect, is urged as a powerful objection against the reality of a fixed canon of criticism: it is a proof, you think, that, after all which can be said of fine taste, it must ultimately be resolved into the peculiar relish of each individual. But this diversity of sentiments will not, of itself, destroy the evidence of the criterion; since the same effect may be produced by numberless other causes. A thousand accidental circumstances may concur in counteracting the force of the rule, even allowing it to be ever so fixed and invariable, when left in its free and uninfluenced state.⁶

The “accidental occurrences,” I presume, are the chance associations of ideas through which Hutcheson and many others attempted to account for diversity of taste. Melmoth does not explore the position further.

There can be no doubt that Melmoth's critical ideas are purely derivative: there is not one that cannot be traced to his immediate predecessors. Nor has he added any depth to what he has appropriated. In Melmoth the sense of beauty has ceased to have any real epistemological significance; it has behind it neither the profound Platonism of Shaftesbury nor the Lockean empiricism with which Hutcheson imbued the doctrine, although it bears the merest traces of both. The aesthetic nature has become the most obvious sort of mechanism, “programmed” by a Deity of convenience. But perhaps we are too severe; Melmoth, after all, made no real pretensions to philosophy.

(3) In John Gilbert Cooper's *Letters Concerning Taste* (1755) we have a more extensive treatment of the aesthetic sense than is to be found in the *Fitzosborne Letters* and, perhaps, some small contribution of original thought. Cooper identifies taste with an “*internal Sense*” and gives us a description of it in complete conformity with what we have come to expect from such theorists. He writes:

The Effect of *good* TASTE is that instantaneous Glow of Pleasure which thrills thro' our whole Frame, and seizes upon the Applause of the Heart, before the intellectual Power, Reason, can descend to ratify its Approbation, either when we receive into the Soul

beautiful Images thro' the Organs of bodily Senses; or the Decorum of an amiable Character thro' the Faculties of moral Perception; or when we recall, by the imitative Arts, both of them thro' the intermediate Power of the Imagination.⁷

The relationship between the sense of beauty and its objects is determined by the Deity: “the ALMIGHTY has in this, as well as in all his other Works, out of his abundant Goodness and Love to his Creatures, so *attuned* our Minds to Truth, that all Beauty from without should make a responsive Harmony vibrate within.”⁸ And here aesthetic speculation must end; any further question would amount to prying “into Matters, which the Deity, for Reasons known only to himself, has placed above our limited Capacities. . . .”—the age-old Deist dodge.⁹

Cooper's language is reminiscent of Shaftesbury's rhapsodic tone, and in other respects, too, there are affinities between them. For Cooper, “TRUTH and BEAUTY are coincident”¹⁰ As with Shaftesbury, “truth” is used here in the sense of “true” proportions—thus, well proportioned, measuring up to some ideal or standard. It is the Neoplatonic tradition, rather than Hutcheson's empiricism, which Cooper seems to follow. But what he lacks is Shaftesbury's deep commitment to rationalism. As W. J. Bate has pointed out, Cooper tends to luxuriate in feeling¹¹; and this separates him from Shaftesbury's aesthetics of reasoned sensibility as well as Hutcheson's somewhat tame subjectivism in which “perception” is a far more appropriate word than “feeling” for describing aesthetic judgment. In apparent response to the charge of apriorism, which many critics were leveling against Hutcheson and his school, Cooper seems to be maintaining that the aesthetic sense need not be considered an additional psychological principle but, rather, a distinct operation which the traditionally accepted faculties—sense organs, intellect, and imagination—perform in concert. Taste, according to Cooper, “does not wholly depend upon the natural Strength and acquired Improvements of the *Intellectual Powers*; nor *wholly* upon a fine Construction of the *Organs* of the Body; nor wholly upon the intermediate Powers of the *Imagination*; but upon an Union of them all happily blended,

without too great a Prevalency in either.”¹² That both mental and physical attributes must conspire together in the man of taste is, of course, common knowledge, neither the discovery of Cooper nor his century. But that these faculties, in a certain dynamic relationship, *constitute* what can be termed a “sense of beauty” (a position at least adumbrated here) points to the future: to the later Scottish school and (if we are not reading too much into Cooper) to Kant's “free play of the cognitive faculties,” the aesthetic *sensus communis* of the third *Critique*. Here, perhaps, Cooper is breaking new ground or, at least, timidly lifting the spade.

(4) Hugh Blair, the last of our trio, and the most familiar to students of eighteenth-century criticism, published his major critical work, the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, in 1783, although according to Blair himself the published *Lectures* essentially reproduced what he had been presenting to his classes at Edinburg since 1759.¹³ Blair made no pretensions to originality, but he did claim to have done some hard thinking of his own. He wrote candidly of the *Lectures*,

The Author gives them to the world, neither as a Work wholly original, nor as a Compilation from the Writings of others. On every subject contained in them, he has thought for himself. . . . At the same time, he availed himself of the ideas and reflections of others, as far as he thought them proper to be adopted.¹⁴

In his opinion of himself, as in his opinions on more controversial topics, Blair was middle-of-the-road.

Blair defines taste as “The power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature and of art.” He then asks whether this power “is to be considered as an internal sense, or as an exertion of reason?” opting, on familiar grounds, for the “internal sense”:

It is not merely through a discovery of the understanding, or a deduction of argument, that the mind receives pleasure from a beautiful prospect or a fine poem. Such objects often strike us intuitively, and make a strong impression, when we are unable to assign the reasons of our being pleased Hence the faculty by

which we relish such beauties, seems more nearly allied to a feeling of sense, than to a process of understanding. . . .¹⁵

Because the reasons for our critical judgments cannot be determined, Blair seems willing to conclude that there are none and, therefore, that critical judgments are perceptual. He fails, apparently, to see that *both* our inability to determine reasons *and* the absence of reasons to determine are compatible with our judgments' being rational, not to mention the fact that our inability to determine reasons does not imply absence of reasons. And in spite of his introduction of the notion of intuition, Blair sees no other alternatives beyond *discursive* reason and perception.

Blair conceived of taste as a *common* sense: "a faculty common in some degree to all men."¹⁶ And thus he, too, faced the all too familiar questions which this position raises: If we have a common aesthetic sense, why do we dispute in matters of taste? If we do dispute, on what grounds do we seek for resolution? Blair's answer is, essentially, the answer of old: taste is "in some degree" innate; but it must be nurtured to its full flowering: "This inequality of Taste among men is owing, without doubt, in part, to the different frame of their natures; to nicer organs, and finer internal powers, with which some are endowed beyond others. But, if it be owing in part to nature, it is owing to education and culture still more."¹⁷

It is not surprising to find that the education of feeling, for the most part, lies with reason. Starting out bravely with a sense of beauty, Blair now must summon reason in through the back door. He writes,

But although Taste be ultimately founded on sensibility, it must not be considered as instinctive sensibility alone. Reason and good sense . . . have so extensive an influence on all the operations and decisions of Taste, that a thorough good Taste may well be considered as a power compounded of natural sensibility to beauty, and of improved understanding.¹⁸

Are we to conclude, then, that reason forms the standard to which the sense of beauty conforms, in Shaftesbury's manner? Is reason the final court of appeal? For Blair there seems to be

no straight answer: like Buridan's ass, he stands transfixed between alternatives—reason on the one side, the sense of beauty on the other. Blair leads us a merry chase from feeling to reason to feeling again; for “the ultimate conclusions to which our reasonings lead, refer at last to sense and perception.”¹⁹ Blair is caught up in the same sort of vicious circle attributed falsely to Hume. But whereas Hume understands that the circle must be broken, his fellow Scot seems blissfully unaware that anything at all is amiss.

Appendix B Lord Kames and the Sense of Beauty

(1) It may come of something of a surprise to the student of eighteenth-century thought to find Lord Kames, whose name is frequently associated with the doctrine of inner sense, exiled from the body of a work devoted to that doctrine and imprisoned in an appendix. Yet the fact is that although entirely within the moral sense tradition and indeed often cited as an example of its excesses, Kames does not adhere to the internal sense doctrine in aesthetics except in a rather offhand manner. Nevertheless, his fame demands that he at least be put in proper perspective with regard to the doctrine he is often alleged to espouse—my intention here.

Kames's *Elements of Criticism*, perhaps the most widely known work of Scottish aesthetics, is a long book; and if, as is likely, you give up before reaching the bitter end—the appendix, in fact—you will emerge with the impression that Lord Kames had little if anything to do with the school of Hutcheson. Indeed, the term “sense” occurs but rarely in the body of the work; it is in the appendix, which Kames called “Terms Defined or Explained,” where his connection with the sense of beauty is revealed. And it is thus with the end of the *Elements* that we must begin.

Kames begins the appendix, significantly enough, with definitions of terms central to the aesthetic sense doctrine: *perception, internal sense, external sense*.

That act of the mind which makes known to me an external object, is termed *perception*. That act of the mind which makes

known to me an internal object, is termed *consciousness*. The power of faculty from which consciousness proceeds, is termed an *internal sense*. The power or faculty from which perception proceeds, is termed an *external sense*. This distinction refers to the objects of our knowledge; for the senses, whether external or internal, are all of them powers or faculties of mind.¹

For Kames, the hallmark of perception and consciousness is *passivity*. “Senses” are “faculties”; and the verbs “to see,” “to feel,” and the like are *active* verbs, and this seems to ascribe some kind of positive “doing” to the senses. But this is a mistake: the sense does not *do* anything, any more than a piece of wax *does* something when it is melted by a flame. It is the flame to which we must ascribe the *doing*; the “power” of the wax is purely passive: the power *to be* melted. And it is the same with the senses, whether internal or external:

A tree in flourish makes an impression on me, and by that means I see the tree. But in this operation I do not find that the mind is active: seeing a tree is only an effect produced on it by intervention of the rays of light. . . . Perception accordingly is not an action, but an effect produced in the mind. Sensation is another effect: it is the pleasure I feel upon perceiving what is agreeable.²

Although a distinction is made between internal and external senses, Kames ascribes all perception, both the internal and the external varieties, to the mind: “the senses,” he says above, “whether external or internal, are all of them powers or faculties of mind.” This point is emphasized in the introduction to the *Elements*, where Kames makes it clear that the pleasures of sense, though in certain instances mistakenly placed in the organ of perception, are, in reality, “in the mind.” He writes:

[E]very feeling, pleasant or painful, must be in the mind; and yet because in tasting, touching, and smelling, we are sensible of the impression made upon the organ, we are led to place there also the pleasant or painful feeling caused by that impression; but with respect to seeing and hearing, being insensible of the organic impression, we are not misled to assign a wrong place to the pleasant or painful feelings caused by that impression; and therefore we naturally place them in the mind, where they really are: upon that account, they are conceived to be more refined and spiritual, than

what are derived from tasting, touching, and smelling; for the latter feelings seeming to exist externally to the organ of sense, are conceived to be merely corporeal.³

The pleasures of visual perception are considered on a higher level than the pleasures of touch, taste, and smell, not because the latter are corporeal and the former mental; for *both* are mental. Rather, they occupy a higher plane merely because they *seem* to be mental (and are indeed mental), whereas the so-called corporeal pleasures of sense, though they are mental, too, *seem* corporeal. Thus, the distinction between mental and physical pleasures of sense is based merely on a “delusion”; but a delusion which we are unable to dispel at the perceptual level and which we would not even be aware of “Were it not that the delusion is detected by philosophy”⁴

Kames distinguishes sharply between perception and sensation, the former pertaining to external objects, the latter to feelings. But both are, in large measure, mental processes: “internal acts.”

Perception is a general term for hearing, seeing, tasting, touching, smelling; and therefore *perception* signifies every internal act by which we are made acquainted with external objects: thus we are said to perceive a certain animal, a certain colour, sound, taste, smell &c. *Sensation* properly signifies that internal act by which we are made conscious of pleasure or pain felt at the organ of sense: thus we have a sensation of the pleasure arising from warmth, from a fragrant smell, from a sweet taste; and of the pain arising from a wound, from a fetid smell, from a disagreeable taste. In perception, my attention is directed to the external object: in sensation, it is directed to the pleasure or pain I feel.⁵

Let us review what we know of Kames's position so far. By *perception* we are made aware of external objects, by *consciousness* of internal objects. The power of perception is an external sense, the power of consciousness an internal sense. Both are *passive*: that is the definitive characteristic of senses. Now the term “perception” includes two distinct processes: the first, perception proper, whereby we are made aware of external objects, and the second, sensation, whereby we are made conscious

of the pleasures or pains inherent in perception. And this same distinction between perception and sensation holds both for internal and external senses. We are made conscious of a perceptual pleasure or pain—that is, we *sense* it—by an internal mental act which, in the case of vision, locates the feeling (correctly) in the mind, and in the case of the corporeal senses (taste, smell, touch) locates the feeling (incorrectly) in the sense organ itself.

The question before us is whether, in this perceptual scheme, there is a *sense of beauty* (or anything else of the kind). But before we give an answer, we must examine Kames's concept of the beautiful.

(2) Kames's theory of beauty was fully formed ten years before the publication of the *Elements of Criticism* in his *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion* (1751), parts of which found their way, with little or no alteration, into Chapter III of the later work. The term “beautiful,” according to Kames, is applied to any visual object the perception of which gives pleasure. “With regard to objects of sight, whatever gives pleasure, is said to be beautiful; whatever gives pain, is said to be ugly.” And visual beauty is the “original” beauty; all other objects called beautiful are called so in a “figurative” sense only.

The terms beauty and ugliness, in their original signification, are confined to objects of sight But though this be the proper meaning of the terms beauty and ugliness; yet, as it happens with words which convey a more lively idea than ordinary, the terms are applied in a figurative sense to almost every thing which carries a high relish or disgust, where these sensations have not a proper name of their own.⁶

Kames makes the customary eighteenth-century distinction between intrinsic beauty and relative beauty (the fitness of means to ends), the latter being a higher species.

Objects considered simply as existing, without relation to any end proposed, or any designing agent, are to be placed in the

lowest rank or order with respect to beauty and ugliness. But when external objects, such as works of art, are considered with relation to some end proposed, we feel a higher degree of pleasure or pain. Thus, a building regular in all its parts, pleases the eye upon the very first view: but considered as a house for dwelling in, which is the end proposed, it pleases still more, supposing it to be well fitted to its end.⁷

The higher rank of relative beauty is explained by the fact that it is, in the fullest degree, an intellectual perception.

Intrinsic beauty is an object of sense merely: to perceive the beauty of a spreading oak or of a flowing river, no more is required but singly an act of vision. The perception of relative beauty is accompanied with an act of understanding and reflection; for of a fine instrument or engine, we perceive not the relative beauty, until we be made acquainted with its use and destination.⁸

Of course the statement that intrinsic beauty requires merely an “act of vision” must be unpacked, in the context of Kames's perceptual model, if we are to be completely accurate. For, as we have seen, both the perception of external objects and the sensation of pleasurable or painful feelings are mental acts. Thus, it would be more accurate to say that whereas the perception of intrinsic beauty involves but two mental acts, (i) an act of perception by which the external object is brought to consciousness and (ii) an act of sensation by which the feeling of intrinsic beauty is experienced; the perception of relative beauty requires three mental acts, (i) an act of perception by which the object is brought to consciousness, (ii) an act of understanding by which the *relation* of means to ends is discovered, and (iii) an act of sensation by which the feeling of relative beauty is experienced. Thus, sensation is common to both. But the process of perception, in the case of relative beauty, is augmented by an act of understanding, not present in the mental act by which the external object is merely brought to consciousness.

(3) Now I think we are prepared to state whether or not there is a sense of beauty in Kames's general theory of aesthetic

perception. The conclusion must be, it seems to me, that there is not. The perception of the beautiful for Kames involves both the perception of external objects and the sensing of pleasurable feelings; but no internal sense, so far as I can see, plays a part, explicitly or implicitly, in either process. One might be tempted to call the internal act of sensation the province of an inner sense. However, Kames never does so himself, nor indeed would it be consistent with his general theory of perception. For the internal act of sensation can accompany both external and internal perception; and in both cases it is perception which is the province of the senses, not sensation. For Kames, there is no “sense of beauty” properly so called. He has no need for that hypothesis.

Kames's rejection of the sense of beauty and, with it, the mainstream of the aesthetic sense tradition does not, however, mean that he rejected the entire internal sense doctrine outright. On the contrary, he frequently appealed to inner “senses” of various kinds in a none too critical manner, a fact which has brought him a good deal of adverse criticism. Gordon McKenzie writes that Kames, “like most men, held unalterable intuitive beliefs, and being of an inquiring turn of mind he spent a good deal of his time divising arguments which would prove them.”⁹ All too often, these arguments ended in an innate faculty and, as Spinoza would have said, “the will of God—in other words, the sanctuary of ignorance.”¹⁰

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Part III The Logic of Taste

“the logic of taste, if I may be allowed the expression. . .”

Edmund Burke

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XIII The Logic of Taste: The First Fifty Years

(1) A Logic of Taste?

In an obviously uncomplimentary characterization of what he described a few years back as “the present trend” in philosophy of science, Paul K. Feyerabend wrote: “Take a subject that is full of unsatisfactory features, where pseudo explanations abound and non sequiturs are the rule, and many philosophers will point out that the subject is not so bad after all, that it possesses a ‘logic of its own’ and must be judged by the standards of this logic.”¹ Shorn of its exaggeration and innuendo, this is a fairly accurate reflection not only of recent trends in philosophy of science but in other branches of philosophy as well. For titles which begin “The Logic of. . .” are as common these days in philosophical journals and publishers’ lists as fleas on a dog.

It is of course clear that Professor Feyerabend’s rather overdrawn caricature does contain a warning that must be heeded. To defend astrology or entrail-reading on the grounds that each has a “logic of its own” and therefore should not be judged harshly because it violates our standards of good inductive inference is, doubtless, carrying the “Logic of. . .” movement to its logically absurd conclusion. But whether we are committing this kind of logical howler when, for instance, we insist that there is a “logic of moral discourse,” or that explanations in physics and psychology may be, in some deep sense, different in kind, is not all that obvious.

So it seems to me that the discovery of what might be called a “logic of aesthetic discourse”—in other words, a “logic of

taste”—is not, at least on first reflection, a foredoomed and misguided endeavor. But my subject here is not what I have discovered the logic of taste to be; rather, some of the kinds of things it was thought to be during a crucial period in the history of modern aesthetic theory: from the publication of Joseph Addison's paper on taste and those *On the Pleasures of the Imagination* in 1712, to Alexander Gerard's dissertation “Of the Standard of Taste,” added to the third edition of his *Essay on Taste* in 1780. I shall not, however, be a neutral observer of these proceedings. For if I am not entirely clear about what the logic of taste is, I have a pretty good idea of some of the things it is not. And my examination of this seminal period in the history of aesthetics is motivated not merely by historical curiosity (which is a worthwhile enough motive) but by a desire to know the answer to the question that some of the most talented men of the British Enlightenment failed to answer. Thus how they failed is as important to me as what they said in failing.

But why begin with Addison, and why in Britain?

Most philosophers who worry about such things seem to agree that the discipline of aesthetics, as practiced by professional philosophers today, came into being in Britain early in the eighteenth century, and that Addison's *Spectator* papers *On the Pleasures of the Imagination* is the inaugural work, if any single work is.² So part of the answer to our question is: begin with Addison because he is the beginning of the discipline to which this study is intended to contribute.

But there is more to be said than that, and it involves asking ourselves why such a contemporary-sounding phrase as “the logic of taste” should ever have been coined in the eighteenth century at all. The answer, I would suggest, is that philosophers start trying to demonstrate the logic of this or that in response to philosophical skepticism. And it is only in the presence of aesthetic skepticism that the quest for an aesthetic logic will arise as such. At other times it is simply taken for granted. It was the climate of aesthetic skepticism at the beginning of the eighteenth century which gave rise to Burke's phrase and the philosophical inquiry which it (somewhat belatedly) baptized.

I think we can, now, frame a more satisfactory justification for beginning a study of the logic of aesthetic discourse with Addison. Part of the justification is, indeed, that Addison marks the beginning of modern aesthetics, if anyone does. But we can add that necessary for a philosophically interesting theory of the logic of taste is a climate of philosophical skepticism which casts serious doubt on its possibility. Such a climate existed in the early years of the eighteenth century as never before, except perhaps in the *Ion* and the skeptical Socrates. But Plato is a plausible starting place for *anything* in philosophy. And the reasons for not *always* starting with Plato are obvious enough to permit me to pass them over in silence.

(2) Addison: Materials for a Theory

What, then, is Addison's account of taste? And can it really be thought of as (in Burke's phrase) a "logic" of the thing?

Addison begins, in the paper on taste, by defining taste as "that faculty of the soul, which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike."³ Hutcheson and his followers would have read "sense" for "faculty" here; but there is no evidence that Addison meant anything more by "faculty" than "ability."⁴ Or, rather, a combination of an ability and a propensity: for we *discern* beauty with our taste, and we *discern* imperfection with it; but we also enjoy the former when we discern it, and dislike the latter; and although it seems all right to call discernment an ability, it hardly seems appropriate to talk about an ability to like or dislike or enjoy. So we may conclude that for Addison "taste" for the beautiful is an ability to discern and a propensity for enjoying it; and, conversely, an ability to discern its absence, and a propensity for disliking this lack.

So much, then, for what taste is. How do I know if I possess it? Addison offers us three tests, but I shall pass over the third as it is not, I think, of any particular interest.⁵ The first is the familiar "test of time":

If a man would know whether he is possessed of this faculty, I would have him read over the celebrated works of antiquity, which

have stood the test of so many different ages and countries, or those works among the moderns which have the sanction of the politer part of our contemporaries. If, upon perusal of such writings, he does not find himself delighted in an extraordinary manner, or if, upon reading the admired passages in such authors, he finds a coldness and indifference in his thoughts, he ought to conclude, not (as is too usual among tasteless readers) that the author wants those perfections which have been admired in him, but that he himself wants the faculty of discovering them.

One test, then, for the presence of taste is to see if you are delighted by those works whose excellence is generally agreed upon. It is, on first reflection, an egregious example of either the *vox populi* argument (if you emphasize the reference to “so many different ages and countries”) or the argument from authority (if you fix your eye on “the politer part of our contemporaries”). But more of that in a moment.

The second taste test, a refinement, really, of the first, is to determine if you are pleased with the *proper* qualities of what you are perceiving. It is no good just to be pleased (say) by Bach: you must be pleased by what he is universally admired for. Thus, the taste tester must, Addison writes,

in the second place, be very careful to observe, whether he tastes the distinguishing perfections, or, if I may be allowed to call them so, the specific qualities of the author whom he peruses; whether he is particularly pleased with Livy for his manner of telling a story, with Sallust for his entering into those internal principles of action which arise from characters and manners of the persons he describes, or with Tacitus for his displaying those outward motives of safety and interest, which give birth to the whole series of transactions which he relates.⁷

In other words, we are to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto Livy what is Livy's.

Three questions may now occur to the thoughtful reader of Addison's essay on taste. First: How do I know when I am experiencing the pleasure of taste in the beautiful? I can, after all, be reading a beautiful book, be experiencing pleasure in the reading, and yet my pleasure may be sexual pleasure, because the book is sexually arousing, or ego satisfaction, if it is a book I have

written, or any number of other things. Is there any particular “feel” that pleasure in the beautiful has, that other pleasures do not? Does it have some special *qualè*?

Second: What is the “excellence” in books, and other beautiful objects, that occasions the pleasure? Addison promises at the close of the paper on taste to answer this question in the succeeding papers *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*.

Third: Is there any special state of mind which renders us particularly receptive to the beautiful? For, clearly, there are states of mind that would be completely inimical either to its perception or enjoyment. A cutpurse, about to be drawn and quartered, is not likely to perceive or enjoy the beauty of the Twenty-third Psalm, no matter how eloquently it is rendered by the clergyman in attendance.

To all these questions we can detect at least the trace of an answer in *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*. And when, with the help of a little hindsight, we combine these with what we already have in the paper on taste, the bare bones of a “logic of taste” will begin to emerge.

First, then: What is the “phenomenology” of the feeling of beauty? It is, Addison says, “an inward joy, . . . a cheerfulness and delight . . .”⁸ Not much of a description, you will say; but I am not really concerned here with its adequacy—merely that a description is attempted at all. For it is the logical structure of Addison's theory that concerns me, not the details of its working out.

Second: What is it in objects that causes us to feel this “inward joy,” this peculiar “cheerfulness and delight”? Here we must recognize a division of beauties into three kinds: (i) The beauty which creatures perceive in members of their own species: it is caused, Addison tells us, by “several modifications of matter which the mind, without any previous consideration, pronounces at first sight beautiful or deformed.”⁹ (ii) The “beauty that we find in the several productions of art and nature,” which “consists either in the gaiety or variety of colours, in the symmetry and proportion of parts, in the arrangement and disposition of bodies, or in a just mixture and concurrence of all together.”¹⁰ (iii) The beauty of resemblance, which may be the result of a work

of nature resembling a work of art, or a work of art resembling a work of nature; for “the productions of nature rise in value according as they more or less resemble those of art. . . ,” and “artificial works receive a greater advantage from their resemblance of such as are natural”¹¹

Third: What is the optimal state of the perceiver of beauty? What renders him or her most receptive? We enter dangerous territory here. But it is territory that has been explored carefully before, and I am not so much interested in a detailed map as merely the general lie of the land. Briefly, then, there is a doctrine, familiar to philosophers of art, called the doctrine of “aesthetic disinterestedness.” It has existed in various forms, is still alive (but not so well as it used to be), and holds that there is a special attitude of disengagement from practical concerns, which has as its ultimate result the perception of aesthetic “qualities.”¹² There are at least two forms that the doctrine might take as regards what happens when we assume the aesthetic attitude of disinterestedness. It might be that in taking the attitude we make ourselves receptive to aesthetic qualities, or that in taking the attitude we (one way or another) “transform” the ordinary qualities of the world into aesthetic ones. I take it that Addison, and the others with whom we will be concerned here, held the former version of the doctrine, namely, that there is an attitude which renders us receptive to the perception of aesthetic qualities. In Addison's case it is an attitude in which the demands of the understanding are put aside so that the pleasures of taste, which are pleasures of perception, may be experienced unimpeded.¹³ By such means “A man of polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures that the vulgar are not capable of receiving.”¹⁴ The pleasure of beauty is one of this number.

To put these pieces together into a “logic of taste” was not in Addison's nature to do; and to seek it in the *Spectator* would be like looking for a metaphysical treatise in “Talk of the Town”.¹⁵ But two thinkers more systematic than Addison, Francis Hutcheson and David Hume, did fashion a “logic” of aesthetic discourse, the materials of which, I would argue, were waiting to be synthesized in Addison's papers. We have these materials before us. Let us see how they can be manipulated.

Addison begins, as we have seen, with the “test of time”: if we are pleased with what has pleased our ancestors, then our taste is sound. It is an obvious appeal to authority; for, clearly, when Addison talks about what has continued to please since antiquity, he is talking about what has pleased the people worth pleasing. And it takes no Doctor of Subtleties to see that such an argument is not going to satisfy the aesthetic skeptic. If you tell him that he proves his taste by comparing it with someone else's, he will surely want to know how *that* person's taste is to be proved, and we will clearly be in danger of either begging the question or being drawn into an infinite regress.

But with a little jostling, the appeal to authority can become something much more philosophically respectable: the appeal to some kind of ideal observer or normal perceiver. When the oculist tests your eyes, after all, he is proving them against what others have perceived in the past; but it is not an argument from authority: he is not committing an elementary logical fallacy.

Suppose, then, that there are the seeds of an appeal to the normal or ideal aesthetic perceiver in Addison. What more is needed for us to have a reasonably complete perceptual model of aesthetic value judgment? And do we find it in Addison?

Well, besides our oculist having the notion of a normal or ideal perceiver, he has, of course, a rather sophisticated theory of what happens when, for example, his subject sees (or fails to see) the color red. Part of that theory is a specification of what properties cause his subject to perceive colors. And Addison has, as we have seen, a theory about what causes us to feel the pleasure of beauty. Our oculist must also assume that his subject knows the sensation of redness when he has it; and Addison provides us with a description that enables us to identify the pleasure of beauty. (Of course, the sensation of redness, unlike the feeling of beauty in Addison's papers, is simple, and hence no description of it is possible.) But even if there is a red object before my eyes, and I am a normal or ideal perceiver, I may still fail to see the red; sufficient conditions for the perception of color must prevail. And here too we can find an analogue in Addison, in the notion of the aesthetic attitude. It can be seen as the condition under

which the normal aesthetic perceiver will experience the pleasure of beauty when the proper object is being attended to.

So we have, in Addison's *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*, the building blocks for a logic of taste, using, as its model, the logic of perceptual judgments such as "X is red." What is required is the philosophical mortar to assemble them into a viable structure. That mortar was supplied by Hutcheson and Hume who, each in his own way, constructed a perceptual "logic of taste."

(3) Hutcheson and Hume: Taste as Perception

If Addison's *On the Pleasures of the Imagination* marks the beginning of modern aesthetic theory, Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* is the first milestone: the first systematic philosophical treatise.¹⁶ That Hutcheson's logic of taste embodies a perceptual model hardly requires stating. For although he did not coin the phrase "sense of beauty," nor was he the first to make philosophical use of it, he made it so much his own that his age and his century thought of him as the founder of the tradition which it named. But whereas Hutcheson had the logic of sense perception in mind when he explicated the logic of taste, he by no means thought that "X is beautiful" can be analyzed point for point as (for example) "X is red" can. To take the most obvious (but by no means trivial) difference, the oculist can examine my organs of sight for physical defects; but the critic cannot examine my sense of beauty in any closely analogous way. So to say that Hutcheson utilized a perceptual model for his analysis of aesthetic value judgments is to say that he thought of them as crucially similar to perceptual judgments, not that he was foolish enough to think them identical. Our task, then, is to extract Hutcheson's analysis of "X is beautiful," keeping in mind the rough outline of the perceptual model which we distilled from Addison, the main characteristics being (i) an identifiable sensation of the beautiful; (ii) an identifiable cause of the sensation; (iii) an ideal or normal perceiver of the sensation; (iv) the conditions under which the cause of the sensation produces it in the ideal or normal perceiver.

The crucial passage for any analysis of Hutcheson on aesthetic discourse begins: "the word *beauty* is taken for *the idea raised in*

us”¹⁷ We can immediately conclude from this statement that when I assert something is beautiful, I am, to begin with, either *describing* or *expressing* a feeling or idea of beauty. This part of the meaning of “X is beautiful” I call the “feeling moment”; and it is this I first want to isolate.

The content of the feeling moment of “X is beautiful” may have reference either to the speaker's feeling, or to the feeling of some other individual (the ideal observer) or group of individuals (the majority of normal observers). If the first, we would be giving a first-person interpretation of the feeling moment; if the second, a third-person interpretation. The first-person interpretation can be understood either in a cognitive or a noncognitive way. On the cognitive interpretation, “X is beautiful” is thought to describe the state of mind of the speaker, and is true or false, depending upon the accuracy or inaccuracy of the description. On the noncognitivist interpretation, however, “X is beautiful” is thought to express or evince and not describe the state of mind of the speaker, and hence cannot be true or false.

Suppose now, for the sake of argument, that we opt for a first-person interpretation. Are we to choose the cognitive or the noncognitive variety? I shall argue here for a cognitive analysis, on the grounds that it is the only one Hutcheson's underlying commitments would allow. And although this is not the place to raise the question, I think similar considerations rule out recent attempts to prove that Hutcheson was an ethical noncognitivist.¹⁸

In a passage which closely parallels Locke's account of language in Book III of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Hutcheson pretty much closes the door on any noncognitive linguistic expressions. He writes: “we know that by custom words or sounds are made signs of ideas and combinations of words signs of judgments. We know that men generally by words express their sentiments and profess to speak, as far as they know, according to what is matter of fact, so that their profession is to speak the truth.”¹⁹ Bearing in mind that in this context to “express” one's “sentiments” means to express one's opinions, we can summarize Hutcheson's account of language as follows: (i) Words signify ideas. (ii) Sentences (i.e. “combinations of words”) signify judgments. (iii) Judgments are made by men to convey matters of fact

and, hence, are either true or false. There is, then, no room in Hutcheson's account of language for expressions of a noncognitive kind. All linguistic utterances are utterances either of truth or falsity. And what *we* would construe as linguistic expressions of emotion could only be construed by Hutcheson as statements about emotions, true or false as the case might be. If this is a correct characterization of Hutcheson's linguistic views, a noncognitive interpretation of his aesthetics is simply out of the question.

If we opt for a first-person analysis, then, we are committed to a cognitive analysis of the feeling moment of "X is beautiful"; and the next order of business is to decide between a first-person and a third-person analysis. This decision is complicated still more by a further distinction we must make between the idea of beauty as "occurrent" or as "dispositional."²⁰ For when we ascribe the idea of beauty to ourselves or others in the statement "X is beautiful," we may mean that the idea is presently being experienced by ourselves or others, or that we or others have a disposition to experience it under appropriate conditions. I would interpret Hutcheson as giving a first-person analysis since, unlike Hume, he does not suggest that beauty be defined in terms of a consensus of feelings; and I would further suggest that it is a dispositional account, thus allowing for the instances in which Hutcheson is clearly talking about objects being beautiful although unperceived.

The feeling moment of "X is beautiful" can be interpreted, then, as: "I have the feeling of beauty whenever contemplating X." But now two further questions press themselves upon us. For, as in the case of Addison, we will want to know what it is that distinguishes the feeling of beauty from the other pleasurable feelings we might experience in the perception of X. And we will want to know, as well, what else there is to the assertion "X is beautiful" besides the feeling moment.

In answer to the first question, two responses seem plausible on first reflection: that the idea of beauty is identified by its cause, or by its peculiar subjective "feel."

Hutcheson, as is well known, believed that the idea of beauty is raised by a complex quality which he called *uniformity amidst*

variety. Thus the possibility immediately suggests itself that I recognize the idea of beauty by identifying it as a pleasurable feeling caused by *uniformity amidst variety*. This does not, however, seem to be the answer Hutcheson intends. For we can know that *X* is beautiful, on Hutcheson's view, without first knowing that the cause of the feeling of beauty is *uniformity amidst variety*: "We may have the sensation without knowing what is the occasion of it," Hutcheson writes, "as a man's taste may suggest ideas of sweets, acids, bitters, though he be ignorant of the forms of the small bodies, or their motions, which excite these perceptions in him,"²¹ the implication being here, clearly, that we can identify the sensation of beauty without knowing that *uniformity amidst variety* is its cause.

What Hutcheson seems to be maintaining, rather, is that the sensation of beauty is identified by some felt quality of the sensation itself. Thus he writes on one occasion that "this pleasure of beauty . . . is distinct from that *joy* which arises upon prospect of advantage."²² I would suggest the passage be understood in this way. The pleasure of beauty has a distinctly different feel—a different "taste," if you will—from another pleasure, "joy," which is experienced in perceiving objects from the practical point of view, rather than simply for their own sake. This attitude, which is, of course, Hutcheson's version of the attitude of "aesthetic disinterestedness," renders us susceptible of receiving a particular kind of pleasure, namely, the pleasure of beauty, upon perceiving objects with *uniformity amidst variety*—the latter being construed as the cause of the former.

Let us return now to the analysis of "*X* is beautiful," and to the problem of determining what further content besides the feeling moment it reveals. I do not believe it reveals anything further. It is Hutcheson's view that those objects giving rise to the idea of beauty are by and large those in which there is *uniformity amidst variety*, a conclusion, I presume, reached by inductive inference, and stated as a causal law. However, this does not imply that when we assert "*X* is beautiful," we are asserting anything about *uniformity amidst variety*. The connection between the idea of beauty and *uniformity amidst variety* is a contingent one. Just as I can know that fire engines are red without having a theory of

perception, so too I can know that something is beautiful without knowing that the idea of beauty is caused by *uniformity amidst variety*. And the fact that I assert “X is beautiful” when X lacks *uniformity amidst variety* does not mean that I have made a mistake—only that I differ from the normal. There is, to be sure, an elaborate explanation, on Hutcheson's view, as to *why* such deviations occur, relying heavily on the principle of the association of ideas. But the details of this explanation cast no further light on Hutcheson's logic of taste.

The time perhaps is late for a refutation of Hutcheson's aesthetic sense doctrine. For although individual insights of value may remain, no one, I expect, will be tempted to adopt Hutcheson's system as a plausible account of their aesthetic experience. Thus, extended criticism is scarcely needed here. But just as certain of Hutcheson's isolated remarks point in promising directions, so certain of his mistakes prove instructive, both as a warning to contemporary workers in the field, and in helping us understand the advance made by Hume in dealing with the problem of taste. Let me briefly touch on two such mistakes before leaving Hutcheson for his more illustrious contemporary. The two mistakes, as we shall see, are closely related.

Hutcheson's logic of taste, I have argued, is derived from a perceptual model. His emphasis lies heavily on the property which causes us to have the sensation of beauty. And one element of the model, although available to Hutcheson in Addison's seminal reflections, is completely lacking, namely, the notion of an ideal or normal aesthetic perceiver.

The property itself, *uniformity amidst variety*, strikes us, on first reflection, as an entirely relevant one. But the way Hutcheson deals with it seems perverse. For we do not imagine ourselves, I would think, adducing the presence of *uniformity amidst variety* as part of a *causal explanation* of our aesthetic feelings. Rather, its presence is adduced as a *reason* for making a particular aesthetic judgment. When I say “It is beautiful because it has *uniformity amidst variety*,” the “because” is not a causal one (as in “He died because his kidneys failed”) but rather a justificatory one (as in “It is right because it will benefit mankind”). It is not a causal theory that is wanted here. And although Hutcheson has certainly

provided us with *one* of the criteria for aesthetic merit, he has presented it in the completely unacceptable role of a causal property with which we (often unknowingly) interact, rather than an aesthetic feature which we perceive and adduce in defending our aesthetic judgments.

This leads us directly to the second of Hutcheson's mistakes, namely, the lack of a qualified aesthetic observer. For it is this concept that would, in the perceptual model, bear the weight of the standard of correctness and incorrectness that Hutcheson's theory essentially ignores. A causal theory such as Hutcheson is giving can provide criteria of taste only if there is some ideal or normal perceiver to serve as the standard against which our success or failure to causally interact with objects of aesthetic perception can be measured and evaluated. I do not think such a theory will work for aesthetics, even if this missing link is put in; but without it the theory is doomed from the start. In the absence of such a standard, our successes and failures can deviate from the normal but not from the correct.²³ It is this issue that Hume saw far more clearly than did Hutcheson, as is evidenced by the fact that his emphasis was in just the opposite direction: on the qualified observer and away from the possible cause of the sensation of beauty.

Hume, who, by his own admission, found close affinities with Hutcheson, produced in his essay "Of the Standard of Taste" (1757) the most mature aesthetic document to come out of the British Enlightenment, and one of the few real masterpieces of which the philosophy of art can boast. Beneath its mask of easy-going literary charm lies a solid philosophical core that can sustain close and critical scrutiny. The task Hume set himself was to steer a safe course between an out-and-out aesthetic relativism and a rigid aesthetic rationalism, neither of which he thought tenable. The problem is still with us, and Hume's answer still worth the trouble of considering.

It is clear from the way Hume introduces the problem of taste that he cannot accept a straightforward first-person analysis of "X is beautiful." For although he recognizes its *prima-facie* plausibility, as expressed in the old adage that there is no disputing about tastes, he recognizes too that there is a counter-intuition

which balks at the idea of indifference in the choice between pushpin and poetry or *King Lear* and breaking crockery. Thus, although it might seem on first reflection that “the proverb has justly determined it to be fruitless to dispute concerning tastes. . . ,” Hume insists nevertheless that “there is a species of common sense, which opposes it, at least serves to modify and restrain it.”²⁴ Hume was already committed in the *Treatise of Human Nature* to the view that matters of taste are determined by feelings of pleasure, or, to use the more generic term, “sentiment.” The problem he faced in the essay on taste was how to escape what appeared the inevitable but unpalatable conclusion of this view: *de gustibus non est disputandum*.

A classic interpretation of Hume's ethics makes Hume out to be maintaining that there would be general agreement in matters of morals *if* there were agreement in the relevant matters of fact which attend moral decision-making; and that, since all matters of fact are, at least in principle, susceptible of a rational determination, all moral disagreements are also, in principle, resolvable by rational means. I believe that Hume is maintaining something like this sort of thing with regard to aesthetic disputes. In questions concerning beauty and deformity, Hume is arguing, we can “translate” (so to say) matters of sentiment into matters of fact.²⁵

Now the difference between a judgment of sentiment and a “scientific” or “factual” judgment is, as Hume puts it, that in the latter “the mind does nothing but run over its objects, as they are supposed to stand in reality, without adding any thing to them, or diminishing any thing from them,” whereas “In the former case, the mind is not content with merely surveying its objects, as they stand in themselves: it also feels a sentiment of delight or uneasiness, approbation or blame, consequent to that survey; and this sentiment determines it to affix the epithet *beautiful or deformed, desirable or odious*.”²⁶ But although a feeling of delight or uneasiness may of course arise in anyone, and perhaps license anyone, on this basis, to affirm that something *appears* to them beautiful (or deformed), it does not license them to affirm it *is* so. For the standard of taste, according to which the reality is known from the appearance, is not established simply by anyone's

feeling: as Hume remarks, “few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or establish their own sentiment as the standard of beauty.”²⁷

We may, then, analyze “X seems beautiful” in a straightforward subjectivist way as something like “I experience delight in contemplating X.” But when it comes to the assertion “X is beautiful,” it is not my approval, or yours, but the qualified observer’s that decides the case. The correct analysis of “X is beautiful” seems to be something along the lines of “X would give pleasure to the majority of qualified observers.” And the question immediately arises as to how we are to determine who the qualified observers are. But as difficult as this question may be, it is, Hume claims, a more tractable one because it is a question “of fact, not sentiment.” “It is sufficient for our present purpose,” Hume argues, “if we have proved, that the taste of all individuals is not upon equal footing, and that some men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by universal sentiment [i.e. opinion] to have a preference above others.”²⁸

Whether the features that make a qualified aesthetic observer are as universally acknowledged and above controversy as Hume suggests is questionable. In any event, Hume isolates five such features as definitive of the guardians of taste: “*strong sense*, united to *delicate sentiment*, improved by *practice*, perfected by *comparison* [of one art work with another], and *cleared of all prejudice*, can alone entitle critics to this character; and the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty.”²⁹

At this point in Hume’s argument the objection has frequently been made in the past that a vicious circle is being drawn whereby beauty is analyzed in terms of the qualified observer and the qualified observer in terms of the ability to recognize beauty. I shall not rehash this objection here,³⁰ but press Hume on another point, namely, whether an attempt to establish a qualified observer is a plausible strategic move in the game Hume is playing.

If we recall once more the materials which Addison provided for a perceptual logic of taste—a means for identifying the

sensation of beauty, a theory of what it is that causes the sensation, an account of what conditions are most favorable to the arousal of the sensation, and, finally, appeal to the normal or ideal perceiver—we are, I think, impressed not by how *many* of them Hume took up, but, rather, how *few*. Of a “phenomenology” of the sentiment of beauty, there is not a trace, as far as I can make out, in Hume's writings. And although there are some half-hearted attempts, here and there, at isolating the quality (or qualities) in objects that give rise to the sentiment,³¹ there is no real systematic effort, suggesting, I would think, Hume's low opinion of the problem's importance. The notion of “optimal conditions” does indeed play a part; but it has been conflated with the notion of the ideal or normal observer. So what becomes apparent is that Hume has put all of his aesthetic eggs in one basket: the major operator, indeed almost the *only* operator, in Hume's philosophy of taste is the ideal aesthetic observer. The rest, he seems to be implying, does not belong in philosophy at all, and the details of its working out are irrelevant to the logical problem of the beautiful.

I think that Hume's instincts here are correct. For, as I argued previously, it is the ideal or normal observer that, in the perceptual model, transforms a causal theory of what properties generate what sensations into a *standard* which tells us what responses are correct and what mistaken. Having chosen the perceptual model in aesthetics, and realizing that the problem of taste was a problem of *justification*, not *explanation*, Hume had no other choice than to direct his full attention to the ideal or optimal aesthetic observer. And if we can show that the notion of an ideal or normal aesthetic observer will not wash, we will, at a single stroke, have also shown that the logic of taste cannot be accommodated by a perceptual model.

Now I believe there are many indications that the ideal or normal aesthetic observer cannot do for the judgment “X is beautiful” what its non-aesthetic prototype can do for “X is red.” I shall confine myself here to one of these.

In a recent and influential paper called (appropriately enough) “The Logic of Aesthetic Concepts,” Isabel C. Hungerland writes of the notion of the normal aesthetic observer,

“But a rebel from within, or a Philistine from without, may dispute my standards of [aesthetic] ‘normality.’ Time and again the rebel or the Philistine has partly or wholly prevailed. . . . In the end, Sensibility does not function like Sense!”³² What Mrs. Hungerland is driving at here, I think, is that there is, in aesthetic contexts, a kind of basic vulnerability about the (so-called) “normal” or “ideal” perceiver which his counterpart (say) in color perception does not have. We can reasonably dispute about whether an object is red, but not about whether a certain kind of perceiver should or should not count as normal. That is why appealing to the normal perceiver settles the question. But in the aesthetic case we are just as likely to be arguing about what kind of perceiver should be recommended or admired as what kind of object. Should the ideal aesthetic observer be passionate or cold-blooded, emotional or cerebral? Poet or peasant, of the *élite* or the masses? In the ivory tower, or in the ash can? Political or apolitical, moral or immoral? Sensitive to craftsmanship or aesthetic surface, technique or impression? Quick to judge or slow in judgment? All of these are questions that have been part and parcel of the evolution of artistic and aesthetic movements and schools, just as much as have questions about the recommended aesthetic properties of works of art. We need not—and should not—conclude from this that there is no reason-giving in criticism; but what we must conclude is that the reason-giving cannot consist in an appeal to a normal or ideal aesthetic perceiver. Hume was certainly right on the mark in seeing the question of taste as a question of reason-giving. Where he erred was in his choice of a reason-giving model. In this Mrs. Hungerland is correct. Sensibility does not function like Sense.

(4) Kames and Gerard: Taste as Science

In 1759, Alexander Gerard published one of the more important and interesting aesthetic treatises of the British Enlightenment, *An Essay on Taste*. The third edition of the work (1780) contained an extended disquisition called, not very surprisingly, “Of the Standard of Taste.”³³ As we have seen, Hutcheson

and Hume, each in his own way, represents a development of the perceptual model of taste adumbrated by Addison. Gerard introduces a new model: the inductive one. But its seeds are already present in Addison, in his empirical predispositions; and in Hutcheson and Hume it exists as an implied part of the perceptual logic.

The pleasures of taste, according to Gerard, cannot be distinguished from one another subjectively: that is, we cannot tell simply by the felt quality of the pleasure whether it is (say) the pleasure of beauty or the pleasure of grandeur, or whatever. "The gratifications of taste agree in this, that they are all pleasant; they are likewise analogous in other respects." But there are, he maintains, certain groups of qualities that produce pleasure; and an object, depending upon which group it might contain, is called "beautiful," or "grand," and so on. "If the object which pleases us, possess uniformity, variety, and proportion, we are sure that it is beautiful. If it possess amplitude along with simplicity, we know that it is grand."³⁴

Now we discover which groups of qualities please by induction: from our own experience and "from the general experience of mankind . . ."³⁵ Thus: "All objects which produce the same species of pleasure however different in other respects, have some qualities in common. It is by means of these qualities, that they produce this pleasure. It belongs to criticism to investigate and ascertain these qualities."³⁶ And it is the discovery of these qualities that provides us with a standard of taste: "principles for deciding between discordant appretiations."

We can imagine the inductive process going something like this: Objects *A*, *B*, *C*, and *D* all cause Mr. Smith, Mr. Jones, Ms. Doe, and Ms. Roe to be pleased and to pronounce the objects beautiful. Objects *E*, *F*, *G*, and *H* all cause Mr. Smith, Mr. Jones, Ms. Doe, and Ms. Roe to be pleased and to pronounce the objects grand. We discover, on closer scrutiny, that objects *A*, *B*, *C*, and *D* have in common uniformity, variety, and proportion, and only those; and we find that objects *E*, *F*, *G*, and *H* have in common amplitude and simplicity, and only those. We conclude by the method of sameness that the conjunction of uniformity, variety, and proportion causes the pleasure of beauty, and that

the conjunction of amplitude and simplicity causes the pleasure of grandeur.³⁷

It is possible at this point to enunciate two principles of taste, in the form of hypothetical imperatives: (i) To cause the pleasure of beauty, make an object with uniformity, variety, and proportion. (ii) To cause the pleasure of grandeur, make an object with amplitude and simplicity.

There are, to be sure, very obvious difficulties with these two induction-based imperatives. It is certain that they are not valid; and it is doubtful that any valid ones very much like them could ever be established. But let us put these scruples aside, accept the imperatives with all their crimes broad blown, and see what logical model they yield for judgments of taste.

Clearly, these practical imperatives are directed to the makers of art, not to the perceivers. And *if* such imperatives were possible, they would indeed provide a standard of “correct” and “incorrect” judgment for *them*. If, for example, the physician accepts the “end” of the hypothetical imperative, “To calm a hysteric, administer a tranquilizer,” and adopts as his means the administering of caffeine, he has made a mistake. Likewise, given the validity of the practical imperative “To raise the pleasure of beauty, make objects with uniformity, variety, and proportion,” I would be making a mistake if I accepted the end and adopted as my means the fashioning of objects with amplitude and simplicity, but without uniformity, variety, and proportion.

But we are equally, if not *more* interested in the other party to taste: the perceiver of the object. And here our troubles really start. For suppose the physician administers valium to the hysteric and he fails to respond. Would we say that the hysteric has “made a mistake” by ignoring the valid practical imperative? No more, then, would we say that the Philistine has “made a mistake” by not responding with the pleasure of beauty when he is confronted with uniformity, variety, and proportion. If our induction is a good one, and the imperative valid, he has reacted *abnormally* —but not *incorrectly*. We believe, to be sure, that aesthetic reactions are more in our power to change than our reactions to drugs. And so we might say to the Philistine: “If you want to be *normal*, take steps to react the way we do to ‘beautiful’ objects.”

But the Philistine may not accept the end of normality as a particularly desirable one; and there our argument with him terminates. Normality, after all, is not, like health and happiness, an end we have a right to expect all of us share.

Lord Kames must have been well aware of this problem when he posed to himself the question, “doth it not seem whimsical, and perhaps absurd, to assert, that a man *ought not* be pleased when he is, or that he *ought* to be pleased when he is not?”³⁸ And as Lord Kames, by Gerard's own admission,³⁹ was espousing a very similar view to his own with regard to the logic of taste, it is not inappropriate to conclude these remarks on Gerard with Kames's strikingly Humean answer to his own question. (I say strikingly Humean because it is reminiscent of Hume's “retreat to psychology,” best exemplified by the celebrated treatment of causality.)

Kames essentially admits that there is no rational justification for calling deviations from the normal aesthetic response “incorrect.” It is indeed “whimsical” and “absurd” to do so. But we have a psychological compulsion to do so, nevertheless, just as, according to Hume, we have a psychological compulsion to expect events in the future to follow those they have followed in the past, although there is no “rational” justification for it. So, says Kames, “my disgust is raised . . . by differing from what I judge to be the common standard [i.e. the normal]”;⁴⁰ that is to say, I am psychologically repelled by the abnormal, in myself as well as in anyone else: “Every remarkable deviation from the standard [i.e. the normal] is disagreeable, and raises in us a painful emotion: monstrous births, exciting the curiosity of a philosopher, fail not at the same time to excite a sort of horror.”⁴¹ And we are left, then, with a psychological explanation for why we condemn aberrant tastes as mistaken: it is to rid ourselves of a psychological irritant by negative reinforcement. But we remain without the sought-after rational justification for doing so. The inductive model, like the perceptual one, fails to reveal a proper “logic of taste,” but leads, rather, to a Humean skepticism.

Where, then, do we go from here? We can, of course, accept the skeptical conclusion and give up the quest. Or we can, in the face of Feyerabend's warning, widen our notion of rationality to

encompass other “logical” models. The latter alternative is today being vigorously exploited. Whether success lies in that direction is yet to be determined.

XIV Hutcheson's Idea of Beauty: Simple or Complex?

With the appearance of “Lockean Aesthetics,”¹ Dabney Townsend begins to emerge as the leading philosophical authority around, these days, on eighteenth-century British aesthetics. It is therefore with some feeling of trepidation that I venture to disagree with him on a point of Hutchesonian interpretation. But disagree I must; for it is an important point, and I cannot leave it uncorrected.

In what has become a rather familiar passage in Enlightenment aesthetics, Hutcheson writes, in the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*. “Let it be observed that in the following papers the word *beauty* is taken for *the idea raised in us* and a *sense* of beauty for *our power of receiving this idea*.”² Within the Lockean framework, in which Hutcheson's philosophy is set, it then becomes appropriate to ask if this idea, for which “the word *beauty* is taken,” is a “complex” or a “simple” one. I have suggested elsewhere that the idea of beauty is simple, because a special sense is required to produce it. But Townsend thinks it must be complex, and quotes a passage which would seem, on first reflection, absolutely and unequivocally to clinch the matter in his favor. The passage reads: “The only pleasure of sense which many philosophers seem to consider is that which accompanies the simple ideas of sensation. But there are far greater pleasures in those complex ideas of objects which obtain the names of *beautiful, regular, harmonious*.”³ Does not this passage clearly imply that beauty is a complex idea? For it states that there are “complex of ideas

of objects” which “obtain” the name of “beautiful.” What more need be said? The notion that the idea of beauty is, for Hutcheson, a simple idea, seems by this passage to have been roundly refuted. But has it?

One curious thing to notice, straightaway, is that complex ideas “obtain” the name of *beauty*. Why does Hutcheson use that word “obtain”? It sounds rather as if he were suggesting a *process*. Complex ideas, he seems to be saying, come eventually to be called “beautiful,” where they hadn't been at first. They *obtain* the name, eventually, as a soldier obtains a higher rank. But to determine if this is the right construction to put on the passage in question, and to appreciate what the significance of such a construction might be, we will have to have a sketch before us of Hutcheson's basic position, and where it comes from (at least as I see things).

According to Hutcheson, the idea of beauty is caused to arise in us by the effect of what he calls *uniformity amidst variety* upon our sense of beauty. But *uniformity amidst variety*, at least as it affects our sense of beauty, is not a property of physical objects in our world: it is a property, as the above quoted passage puts it, of “complex ideas of objects.” In other words, the sense of beauty is what Hutcheson called an “internal” sense, later, a “reflex” or “subsequent” sense, not reactive to physical matter, as the external senses are, but to ideas already produced by the external (or other internal) senses. Thus, to use the closest Lockean paradigm, just as a certain arrangement of the primary qualities of matter causes the healthy eye to produce the sensation or idea of redness, so a certain arrangement of complex ideas, namely, *uniformity amidst variety*, causes the sense of beauty to produce the idea or sensation of the beautiful.

Confusion enters because, whereas in the case of Lockean secondary qualities, the idea of redness is produced by a non-idea, namely, the primary qualities of matter, in the case of Hutcheson's idea of beauty, the idea of beauty is caused by another *idea*, the complex idea in which *uniformity amidst variety* inheres. And *that* idea, Hutcheson says, “obtains” the name of “beauty.” So which is *the* idea of beauty, the simple idea that the sense of beauty produces, or the complex idea that causes the

sense of beauty to produce it? The word “beauty” is “taken” for the former, Hutcheson says; but the latter “obtains” the name. Does this tell us the answer? I think it does if we go back, for enlightenment, to what Locke says about secondary qualities.

Locke says, in a crucial characterization of the secondary qualities: “Take away the Sensation of them; let not the Eyes see Light, or Colours, nor the Ears hear Sounds; let the Palate not Taste, nor the Nose Smell, and all Colours, Tastes, Odors, and Sounds, as they are such particular *Ideas*, vanish and cease, and are reduced to their Causes, *i.e.* Bulk, Figure, and Motion of Parts.”⁴ I take this passage to be saying that if we had no sense receptor (say) for redness, we would never have the word “red” in our vocabularies at all, since we never would have had the sensation, the idea which is the occasion for its use. There would indeed still be in the “Bulk, Figure, and Motion of [material] Parts,” that unknown arrangement of them, that “power”—call it *pqr*—that causes the sensation of redness in the receptor of a being who might possess it; but a being without the receptor would have neither the idea nor the word for “red.” In short, initially, at least, “red” can be the word for the sensation and nothing more.

But, Locke goes on, ordinary people are not so fastidious as to observe the philosopher's distinction: and though the secondary qualities “*are Powers barely*, and nothing but Powers. . . ,” by the vulgar they “*are looked upon as real Qualities, in the things* thus affecting us. . . ,”⁵ the reason for this being that:

because the *Ideas* we have of distinct Colours, Sounds, *etc.* containing nothing at all in them, of Bulk, Figure, or Motion, we are not apt to think them the Effects of these primary Qualities, which appear not to our Senses to operate in their Production; and with which, they have not any apparent Congruity, or conceivable Connexion. Hence it is, that we [the vulgar] are so forward to imagine, that those *Ideas* are the resemblances of something really existing in the Objects themselves. . . .⁶

It would appear, then, that although the word “red” is taken, by Locke, for the idea raised in us, the unknown power in matter, *pqr*, which produces it in our sense receptors, obtains the name of “red” because we see no apparent connection between

the Bulk, Figure, and Motion of matter and the sensations of secondary qualities which it produces. This is, indeed, a fairly ubiquitous claim among Lockean empiricists.

A similar process can now be seen to be going on in Hutcheson's account of beauty, except that whereas the cause of our idea of redness, *pqr*, is an unknown property of matter, the cause of our idea of beauty Hutcheson claims to know, and calls *uniformity amidst variety*. Had we no sense of beauty, we would have no idea of beauty and, hence, the word "beauty" would not be in our vocabularies at all, even though our complex ideas would, of course, still possess *uniformity amidst variety*. But once we have the idea of beauty, we tend, like users of the word "red," to call the "object" that causes the idea "beautiful" too. So the complex ideas which cause the idea of beauty in us "obtain" the name of "beautiful," as the "power" to cause the sensation of redness, the Lockeans tell us, obtains the name of red.

Which is *the* idea of beauty, then, the complex idea that has the power to cause the simple idea of beauty, or the simple idea itself? There wouldn't be a question at all if they weren't both *ideas*. There is no question about which is *the* idea (or sensation) of redness, the "power," or the idea it causes, because there *is* only one idea in the picture, the "power" being a property of matter. What confuses people in Hutcheson's scheme is that the "power" to cause the idea is also an idea—a complex idea. But just so long as we keep our "causal metaphysics" straight, the question of which is the idea of beauty in Hutcheson's scheme has as obvious an answer as the question which is the idea of redness in Locke's scheme. The answer has to be, the idea is what is caused by the "power," not the "power" itself, even though it too may be an idea. It is simply irrelevant that, in the case of Hutcheson, the "power" also happens to be an idea (or possessed by an idea).

With this confusion out of the way, let me briefly conclude by trying to clear up another, related confusion in Townsend's account. Townsend writes: "Unity and variety require comparison; hence more than one idea. The idea that corresponds to them causally can hardly be a simple idea therefore."⁷ The argument seems to be this: *Uniformity amidst variety* "causes" the idea of

beauty to arise in us. How does it do that? Townsend seems to think, I gather from the above quotation, that, on Hutcheson's view, we perceive that something has *uniformity amidst variety*, which, of course, requires the comparison of parts; and, having done that, we now have *another* idea, as a result of this comparison, which is *the* idea of beauty, and which Townsend claims, must itself be complex (presumably because it "corresponds" to a complex entity). In this way our idea of beauty has been "caused" by *uniformity amidst variety*.

Now there are two things drastically wrong with this account. First of all, I think Townsend is contradicting himself. He starts out by quoting Hutcheson to the effect that complex ideas which possess *uniformity amidst variety* "obtain" the name of beauty, and using this as evidence that the idea of beauty is complex. But now he is claiming that the idea of beauty is a complex idea we get through perceiving that, finding out that, upon examination, "something" has *uniformity amidst variety*. What is that "something"? It must be the complex idea that possesses *uniformity amidst variety*, that "obtains" the name of beauty, and that Townsend, I thought, was calling *the* idea of beauty. Now we have two complex ideas, both of which, apparently, he wants to call the idea of beauty. But he can't have it both ways. Or has he forgotten, at this point, that for Hutcheson, the sense of beauty is reactive only to *ideas*, not to physical objects? For if that were not the case, there would be no point in calling the sense of beauty "internal," or (later) "reflex" and "subsequent."

But, secondly, Townsend has completely misconstrued the nature of the causal relationship between *uniformity amidst variety* and the idea of beauty. The former does not cause the latter in the sense that I am "caused" to write a check to the telephone company by perceiving that I owe the rascals \$67.95, but in the sense that I am "caused" to have a stomach ache by an inflamed colon, or, more to the present point, in the sense that I am "caused" to have the sensation of redness by the unknown power in matter that I called previously *pqr*. And Hutcheson is so clear on this point as to make it absolutely beyond dispute. He writes: "the pleasant sensation [of beauty] arises only from objects in which there is *uniformity amidst variety*. We may have the sensation

without knowing what is the occasion of it, as a man's taste may suggest ideas of sweets, acids, bitters, though he be ignorant of the forms of the small bodies, or their motions, which excite these perceptions in him.”⁸

We do not perceive that an object has *pqr* and then, because of that, have the sensation of redness. No more do we, on Hutcheson's view, perceive that an object possesses *uniformity amidst variety*, and then, because of that, have the sensation (or idea) of beauty. We are caused to have the sensation of beauty “without knowing what is the occasion of it,” as we are caused to have the sensations of the secondary qualities “though . . . ignorant of the small bodies, or their motions, which excite these perceptions.” There is no point on which Hutcheson is clearer, or more unequivocal. And the only reason people misread him on this point, I suspect, is that his view here is completely implausible. When he wrote the *Inquiry*, however, of course it seemed both plausible and at the cutting edge—but that is another story for another occasion.

In sum, then, Hutcheson believed that the word “beauty” refers to a simple, pleasurable sensation or idea, which is produced in us by an “internal” or (in later writings) “reflex” or “subsequent” sense. The “objects” which stimulate this sense to produce the simple idea or sensation are complex objects—complex ideas, in fact—which possess *uniformity amidst variety*, the Lockean “power” that produces the sensation of beauty, the way the powers of primary qualities produce ideas of the secondary ones. Most of us do not know what power it is in “objects” that causes our sensations of the beautiful, any more than we know what “power” causes our sensations of redness. And just as the “powers” to produce sensations of the secondary qualities tend to “obtain” their names, so the complex idea that causes our idea of beauty tends to “obtain” its name. That is the basic doctrine, plausible or not. I have never found any other account of Hutcheson that better fits *all* of the passages, nor any passage that is incompatible with this account.

XV The “Sense” Of Beauty and the Sense of “Art”: Hutcheson's Place in the History and Practice of Aesthetics

It is generally agreed upon that it was in the first half of the eighteenth century that our conception of the “fine arts,” what Paul O. Kristeller felicitously called, in a seminal article of the same name, “The Modern System of the Arts,” first came into being. With it, doubtless partly because of it, there arose the branch of philosophy usually described in job advertisements and publishers' catalogues as “Aesthetics.”

Three early eighteenth-century works are competitors for the distinction of being the first separate, single-purposed treatise to pursue the new discipline of aesthetics. In chronological order, they are Joseph Addison's *Spectator* papers called “The Pleasures of the Imagination” (1712), the Abbe DuBos's *Critical Reflections on Poetry, Painting and Music* (1719), translated into English in 1748, and Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* (1725), which went through four editions during the author's lifetime. I shall not try to adjudicate between the conflicting claims of these authors to priority here. I doubt if the question has either a clear or an interesting answer. Suffice it to say that even if Hutcheson were awarded only third place, the originality, penetration, and influence of his early contribution to the field would fully justify its serious consideration on the tricentennial of his birth. It is such a consideration that I would like to undertake here.

In particular, I want to do three things in this paper. First, it is necessary to cover some old ground with which most of my readers will be familiar, namely, Hutcheson's general account of what beauty is and how it is perceived. Second, I want to look at the lesser known, perhaps even neglected topic of how Hutcheson's general account of beauty is used by him in understanding our appreciation of the fine arts. And third, I want to assess Hutcheson's place and importance in the history of the discipline he was so instrumental in both forming and forwarding. So, to begin with, here follows a sketch, as brief as I decently can make it, of Hutcheson's general account of beauty and its perception.

(1) I make two initial assumptions: that my reader is thoroughly familiar with Locke's account of perception; and that, notwithstanding his generous praise of Shaftesbury, in the Preface to the *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Hutcheson's theory of aesthetic perception is to a large extent Lockean. With these two (I hope) uncontentious assumptions in hand, I can go on straightaway, without elaborate preliminaries, to those aspects of Hutcheson's theory of beauty and its perception most germane to my concerns.

Hutcheson's basic premise is formulated early on. "Let it be observed that in the following Papers, the Word *Beauty* is taken for *the idea rais'd in us*, and a *Sense* of Beauty for *our Power of receiving this idea*."¹ The first, eminently Lockean question that immediately arises, in response to this initial premise, is: What kind of idea, in Lockean terms, is this idea of beauty?

The idea of beauty is, we must assume, although Hutcheson never explicitly says so, a *simple* as opposed to a complex idea. "When two Perceptions are intirely different from each other," he writes, "or agree in nothing but the general Idea of *Sensation*, we call the Powers of receiving those different Perceptions, *different Senses*."² His examples, here, of simple ideas are colors and sounds, of which he writes: "And altho' Colours have great Differences among themselves, as also have Sounds; yet there is a greater Agreement among the most opposite Colours, than between any Colour and a Sound: Hence we call all Colours

Perceptions of the same Sense.”³ It is a sure indication, then, that a certain kind of idea is simple, on Hutcheson's view, that a “sense” must be postulated for its reception. Hutcheson postulates a sense of beauty for the reception of the idea of beauty; so it directly follows that, on Hutcheson's view, ideas of beauty are simple ideas. I *argue* for this point not because I am in doubt about it but because a scholar whom I respect has recently called it into doubt.⁴ In a moment we shall see why he did so and why he need not have done.

The next Lockean question with regard to the kind of idea the idea of beauty is would naturally be: Is it of a primary or of a secondary quality? Hutcheson is reasonably clear on this point. The idea of beauty is constantly explicated by analogy, not by identification (because there *are* differences), with the ideas of secondary qualities. Thus: “For Beauty, like other Names of sensible Ideas, properly denotes the *Perception* of some Mind; so *Cold, Hot, Sweet, Bitter*, denote the Sensations in our Minds, to which perhaps there is no Resemblance in the objects, which excite these Ideas in us, however we generally imagine otherwise.”⁵ Hutcheson usually refers to the idea of beauty as a *pleasure* of a certain kind; and so we will understand it here, with the proviso that Hutcheson understood the relation between pleasure and the idea of beauty in something like the way Berkeley understood the relation of pain to the idea of intense heat, as expressed in the *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, to wit: “this same simple idea is both the intense heat immediately perceived, and the pain; and consequently . . . the intense heat immediately perceived, is nothing distinct from a particular sort of pain.”⁶ Substitute “beauty” for “intense heat,” in this passage, and “pleasure” for “pain,” and you will capture, I suggest, the essence of Hutcheson's thought here, even though it was never expressed with Berkeley's clarity or precision. (Indeed, he never explicitly expressed it at all.)

To pursue the Lockean model further we need next to ask what causes the idea of beauty to be generated in the perceiving mind. Hutcheson's well-known answer is that it is the property of *uniformity amidst variety*. “But what we call Beautiful in Objects, to speak in the Mathematical Style, seems to be in a compound

Ratio of Uniformity and Variety: so that where the *Uniformity* of Bodys is equal, the Beauty is as the *Variety*; and where the *Variety* is equal, the Beauty is as the *Uniformity*.”⁷

What sort of “objects” are we talking about here, which possess *uniformity amidst variety*, and the perception of which, by the sense of beauty, gives rise to the idea? Hutcheson refers above to “Bodys”; and earlier he speaks of “The Ideas of Beauty and Harmony being excited upon our *Perception* of some *primary Quality*”⁸ Both are misleading because they suggest that, as the sensation of redness is produced by the primary qualities of matter, so too the sensation of beauty. But this would make the sense of beauty an external sense, with the primary qualities causally interacting directly with it, not, as Hutcheson describes it in the *Inquiry*, an “internal” one. An internal or “reflex” sense has, for its objects, not the external world of primary qualities but the internal world of ideas. Hutcheson becomes clearer in his expression of this important point as the *Inquiry* proceeds, and in later writings such as *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (1747), where he classifies the sense of beauty as one of “these senses we call *reflex* or subsequent, by which certain new forms or perceptions are received, in consequence of others previously observed by our external or internal senses”⁹

The “object,” then, of the sense of beauty, and possessor of the relational quality of *uniformity amidst variety*, the efficient cause of the idea of beauty, is a complex idea of primary qualities, or primary and secondary qualities together, which serves the sense of beauty in a way analogous to the way in which material bodies and their microstructure serve the external ones in the production of the ideas of secondary qualities. And just as we can be caused by the microstructure of matter to have (say) the sensation of redness, without knowing how or even that the microstructure is causing the sensation, so too, apparently, we are caused to have the idea of beauty without knowing that we now have *uniformity amidst variety* before us, or that that is what causes our idea. I will refer to this as Hutcheson's “non-epistemic” theory of aesthetic perception, and will have more to say about it later on. Its clearest, but not by any means only statement

comes in Hutcheson's summary statement at the close of Section II of the first *Inquiry*, where he writes:

But in all these instances of *Beauty* let it be observ'd, That the Pleasure is communicated to those who never reflected on this general Foundation; and that all here alleg'd is this, "That the pleasant Sensation arises only from objects, in which there is *Uniformity amidst Variety*." We have the Sensation without knowing what is the Occasion of it; as a Man's *Taste* may suggest Ideas of Sweets, Acids, Bitters, tho' he be ignorant of the *Forms* of the small Bodys, or their Motions, which excite these Perceptions in him.¹⁰

We are now, I think, in a position to understand why what I see as obvious, that the idea of beauty for Hutcheson *must* be a simple idea, has been called into question. The *objects* of the sense of beauty, which give rise to the idea of beauty, are *also* ideas: *complex ideas*. Furthermore, it is in the empiricist tradition, from Locke through Reid, to call not only (say) the sensation of redness "red" but also the congeries of primary qualities which causes it, which is to speak with the vulgar. So, for example, Reid on color: "By colour, all men, who have not been tutored by modern philosophy, understand not a sensation of the mind, which can have no existence when it is not perceived, but a quality or modification of bodies, which continues to be the same whether it is seen or not."¹¹

With these considerations before our minds, we can now look at the passage in Hutcheson that might suggest, contrary, I think, to the whole thrust of his internal sense doctrine, that Hutcheson believes the idea of beauty to be a complex rather than a simple idea. The troublesome passage goes: "The only Pleasure of Sense, which many Philosophers seem to consider, is that which accompanys the simple Ideas of Sensation: But there are far greater Pleasures in those complex Ideas of objects, which obtain the Names of *Beautiful, Regular, Harmonious*."¹²

The obvious first question is: What things "obtain the Names of *Beautiful, Regular, Harmonious*"? The "Pleasures" or the "complex Ideas of Objects"? If the former—if the grammatical antecedent of "which" is the "Pleasures"—then we have no problem at all. For the "Pleasures" are simple ideas; and so Hutcheson

would be saying that these simple ideas, these "Pleasures," are what we call beautiful.

But to my ear the syntax of this passage is also compatible with "those complex Ideas of objects" being the grammatical antecedent of "which." And if that is the case, then Hutcheson could seem to be saying that the idea of beauty is a complex idea. And so the passage has been understood by at least one commentator.

I think the whole thrust of Hutcheson's argument militates against ascribing to him the belief that the idea of beauty is a complex idea. And the first reading of the above passage is the simplest, most direct way to bring it into conformity with that belief. But let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Hutcheson *is* saying the "complex Ideas . . . obtain the Names of *Beautiful, Regular, Harmonious*." What then?

Well, then the idea of beauty is complex after all. But is it? Let's return to the sensation of redness. Being a secondary quality, redness is attributed by us to the external world by virtue of a complex congeries of primary qualities causing us to experience the sensation of redness. The vulgar, the "untutored", as Reid would say, in modern philosophy, naturally call the cause of the sensation "red." You might say, to use Hutcheson's term, that this complex congeries of primary qualities "obtains" the name of "red" in virtue of our having the sensation. And Locke himself, after all, "talks with the vulgar" throughout the *Essay*, as, for example, where he says: "whilst I write this, I have by the Paper affecting my Eyes, that Idea produced in my Mind which, whatever Object causes, I call *White* . . ." ¹³

But that is exactly what Hutcheson is saying about beauty in the passage just quoted. We would never have had occasion to call anything in the world "beautiful" but for the internal sense of beauty which gives rise to the simple idea of beauty. However, as in the case of redness, we tend to give the name to the cause of the idea: it "obtains" the name of "beauty." The confusion results from the fact that in the case of beauty, in contrast to that of redness, the cause of the idea is *itself* an idea: a complex idea of primary and secondary qualities possessing the property of *uniformity amidst variety*. So there are, in the case of beauty, two ideas:

the complex idea which causes the simple idea of beauty, and obtains thereby the name of “beauty,” and the simple idea, perceived by the sense of beauty, without which nothing in the world would be “beautiful.” It is the latter that Hutcheson is talking about when he tells us that “the Word *Beauty* is taken for *the Idea rais'd in us*. . .”: a simple idea, therefore requiring postulation of a sense to perceive it. From this conclusion, I think, there is no escape.¹⁴

There is a great deal more that could be said about Hutcheson's basic epistemology and metaphysics of aesthetic perception; and I have dealt with some of that elsewhere.¹⁵ But my principal subject here is what I consider to be Hutcheson's neglected philosophy of the fine arts. We now have enough of Hutcheson's general account of beauty to deal with that; so I move on to it directly.

(2) Even the casual reader of Hutcheson's first *Inquiry* will know that in presenting Hutcheson's basic ideas about beauty I have talked only about what the author calls *absolute beauty*. This is, no doubt, that aspect of the work which was most commented upon in the eighteenth century, and which wielded the greatest influence. But it is what Hutcheson calls *relative beauty* that plays the major role in his philosophy of art. So we must have the concept before us before we can proceed. And, in brief, it is this: “*Comparative or Relative Beauty* is that which we perceive in objects, commonly considered as *Imitations or Resemblances* of something else.”¹⁶ Thus what we have, not surprisingly, is the Platonic and Aristotelian *mimesis*, which, throughout the eighteenth century, defined the newly formed system of the fine arts: what Batteux called, at mid-century, their *même principe*.¹⁷

What must strike one as surprising, or at least a little bit odd, is the way in which Hutcheson tries to account for relative beauty: in particular, account for how representation or *mimesis* manages to arouse the idea of beauty in the internal sense. He appeals, quite *implausibly*, one is bound to feel, to that self-same *uniformity amidst variety* by which absolute beauty has been explained previously. As Hutcheson puts his point: “And this

Beauty is founded on a *Conformity*, or a kind of *Unity* between the original and the Copy.”¹⁸ (I shall return to this puzzling assertion in a moment.)

It seems fair to say, although Hutcheson does not put it in so many words, that for him the defining property of art works—that is to say, the fine arts—is representation: relative beauty. But this in no way implies that Hutcheson thought art works did not possess absolute beauty also, as part of their allure. On the contrary, he makes a special point of asserting it, although the assertion occurs in a footnote, and, for the most part, not surprisingly, considering the times in which he lived, representation is what dominates the discussion of art. In the footnote that I allude to, which is no afterthought, but already in the first edition of the *Inquiry*, Hutcheson writes: “for most of the following Instances of relative Beauty have also absolute beauty”¹⁹ So we may conclude that, for Hutcheson, the effect of an art work is a compound of its absolute and relative beauty, with representation the defining property, and both kinds of beauty founded on *uniformity amidst variety*.

The arts that Hutcheson mentions in his discussion are painting, sculpture, poetry, music, architecture, and landscape gardening, the latter two, for Hutcheson, not being representational arts,²⁰ music, as we shall presently see, being in a somewhat ambiguous position, but, arguably a representational art in Hutcheson's scheme. Putting aside for present purposes the non-representational arts of architecture and gardening, we may say then that poetry, painting, and sculpture arouse ideas of beauty in their audiences both by their *absolute beauty* and by their *relative beauty*; and that in both instances of beauty the arousal of the idea of beauty is caused by the property of *uniformity amidst variety*. Now what of the special case of music?

Music is, for Hutcheson, as for Kant and so many others, a paradigm of formal, absolute beauty; and the beauty of harmony is one of the central cases, for Hutcheson, where he outlines the concept of absolute beauty in Section II of the first *Inquiry*. “Under *Original Beauty*,” he says, “we may include *Harmony*, or *Beauty of Sound*.”²¹ But what we would call formal beauty is not, on Hutcheson's view, all there is to music. He writes:

There is also another Charm in *Music* to various Persons, which is distinct from *Harmony*, and is occasion'd by its raising agreeable Passions. The *human Voice* is obviously vary'd by all the stronger Passions; now, when our *Ear* discerns any Resemblance between the *Air* of a *Tune*, whether sung or play'd on an Instrument, either in its *Time* or *Modulation*, or any other Circumstance, to the sound of the *human Voice*, in any Passion, we shall be touch'd by it in a very sensible manner, and have *Melancholy*, *Joy*, *Gravity*, *Thoughtfulness*, excited in us by a sort of *Sympathy* or *Contagion*.²²

Thus music appears to have, for Hutcheson, a representational part: the imitation of the passionate tones of the human voice—an ancient and perennial claim. But does music possess relative—which is to say representational—*beauty*? Here the answer is not so clear. There does not seem to be anything in the nature of the case why Hutcheson could not have treated representation in music as representation in the other arts: raising the pleasurable idea of beauty through *uniformity amidst variety*. Indeed, it does not seem as if being representation it could fail to do so. But Hutcheson, instead, cashes out musical representation in terms of its arousing what might be called the garden-variety emotions: joy, melancholy, and the like—which, as another ancient and perennial doctrine has it, is a way music has of both moving and pleasuring us. Strictly speaking, therefore, this passage does not attribute relative *beauty* to music; for it is not the arousal of the idea of beauty, but the arousal of the garden-variety emotions which constitutes, as Hutcheson puts it, the “charm” in music that its representational part contributes.

Music, then, is a marginal case, if any at all, of relative beauty, and having said as much as I now have about it in that regard, I will temporarily put it aside, to return to it very briefly, in another context, later on. It is the central cases of representation in the fine arts, in painting, poetry, and sculpture, that raise serious questions for Hutcheson's account of relative beauty. And to these we must now turn.

To begin with there is the question of what it could possibly mean to ascribe *uniformity amidst variety* to cases of representation qua representation. Wherein is the *variety*, wherein the *uniformity*?

Consider the following simple example, not unlike those Hutcheson adduces: a melody of eight measures, all in the same rhythm; dotted quarter note, eighth note, and quarter note, but each measure consisting of a different combination of tones. It possesses *uniformity* in virtue of the uniform rhythm, *variety* in virtue of the different tones and intervals. I suppose one might say that the *uniformity* is to the *variety* as one to eight.

Consider now a pencil drawing of a dog. There is a dog, and there is a drawing. It appears what Hutcheson must be saying is that here *uniformity* is to *variety* as one to two: one "object," namely, "dog" (under two different descriptions, real dog, and picture of dog), but two physical objects, namely, one dog and one piece of paper with black marks on it. If this is something like what Hutcheson has in mind, it has the bizarre result of making *every* recognizable representation of equal relative beauty, no matter how well or badly drawn, since each possesses *uniformity amidst variety* in the same ratio of one to two. But I will pass this over to get to a more important question. This one to two *uniformity amidst variety* is supposed to raise the idea of beauty in us as is the *uniformity amidst variety* of pure design or musical harmony. How can that be?

I ask that question because I characterized Hutcheson's account of aesthetic perception, earlier, as what I called "non-epistemic." Hutcheson was not, in other words, saying we consciously perceive that there is *uniformity amidst variety* in an object, and then enjoy it through our savoring of that quality. Rather, as the microstructure of matter causes the sensation of redness to be aroused in us without our ever being consciously aware of the microstructure, so the aesthetic microstructure as it were, the *uniformity amidst variety*, causes the pleasurable idea of beauty to be aroused in us, we know not how. Can that really be how *uniformity amidst variety* works in the case of relative beauty? Can our perception of representation in the fine arts possibly be non-epistemic? Can it even be non-epistemic where formal, absolute beauty is concerned?

What should be observed, straightaway, in fairness to Hutcheson, is that when he first introduces us to his concept of absolute beauty, in Section II, his examples are almost all very

simple ones: pebbles, geometrical figures, natural beauties, where it does seem plausible to claim that we are immediately struck by beauty or prettiness, these perceptions caused by proportions in objects or figures of which we are not at all aware. And his only real example from the fine arts is, not surprisingly, that of musical harmony, where, again, it seems plausible to claim that the pleasure of beauty is caused by relations between sounds of which we are completely ignorant and unaware. For Hutcheson is not speaking here of the larger perceptible musical forms or relations but of Pythagorean matters, as where he writes: “And yet the Foundation of this Pleasure is known to be a sort of *Uniformity*. When the several Vibrations of one Note regularly coincide with the Vibrations of another, they make an agreeable Composition; and such Notes are called *Concords*.”²³ (Unlike Kant, Hutcheson obviously thought we are perceptually unaware of sonic vibrations.²⁴)

Thus initially the non-epistemic character of Hutcheson's theory of aesthetic perception is not in itself objectionable. Whatever one may think of his putting the whole weight of the thing on the (ultimately) overextended property of *uniformity amidst variety*, the notion that in some instances our aesthetic reactions are to properties of objects hidden from our conscious awareness is not an implausible one; and the examples Hutcheson chooses at first are not implausible examples. But when we get to the more complex formal properties of art works, and their representational content, a non-epistemic account begins to seem very implausible indeed. We eventually perceive *that* the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is unified by the famous opening motive, and varied by its harmonic and thematic development; and it is in the awareness of this *uniformity amidst variety*, not in its hidden causal powers, that our aesthetic pleasure lies. We perceive *that* a painting before us is a representation of sunflowers, and that the representation is executed in a certain distinctive way; and it is in the awareness of what is represented, and in the awareness of the representational medium itself, not in some secret causal powers of the representation-cum-medium, that our aesthetic pleasure lies. So it is just when Hutcheson gets to the examples most of us are interested

in, works of art, that his theory begins to falter badly, because of its non-epistemic foundations.

But perhaps we were too hasty in concluding that Hutcheson's theory is non-epistemic across the board. For in the crucial passage quoted early on, where Hutcheson analogizes *uniformity amidst variety* to the microstructure of matter, the idea of beauty to sensations of bitter, sweet, and the like, what he says is: "We *may* [emphasis mine] have the Sensation without knowing what is the Occasion of it . . ."; *may*, not *must*. And this leaves open at least the possibility that Hutcheson might have recognized epistemic as well as non-epistemic modes of aesthetic perception: cases where we perceive *that* objects have *uniformity amidst variety* as well as cases where *uniformity amidst variety* simply interacts non-epistemically with our internal sense the way the microstructure of matter does with the external senses. It would, one assumes, be principally in the cases of the more complex works of art that epistemic perception would predominate.

That this is at least not a wildly anachronistic interpretation of Hutcheson's position on this regard is confirmed by noticing that Reid, shortly after a serious discussion of Hutcheson on the perception of beauty in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* comes up with just such a dual theory of his own. "Some objects strike us at once, and appear beautiful at first sight, without any reflection, without our being able to say why we call them beautiful, or being able to specify any perfection which justifies our judgment." Reid remarks. "But," he adds later on, "there are judgments of beauty that may be called rational, being grounded on some agreeable quality of the object which is distinctly conceived, and may be specified."²⁵

Two considerations militate against such an interpretation of Hutcheson, however, as enticing as it may be. To begin with, he never says anything about it, never makes any explicit reference that I know of to such a dual theory of aesthetic perception. Second, he says specifically, in one of his most spirited evocations of the internal sense doctrine: "we are struck at the first with the Beauty: nor does the most accurate *Knowledge* increase this Pleasure of Beauty . . ."²⁶ I find it very difficult to square this blanket rejection of knowledge as possibly contributing to our

pleasure in beauty with an epistemic account of the role of *uniformity amidst variety* in our experience and appreciation of the beautiful. If knowledge, *sans phrase*, cannot increase our aesthetic pleasure, then how could my coming to perceive *that* the opening movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony possesses *uniformity amidst variety* possibly play a role in my appreciation of it? Hutcheson here seems to have painted himself into a non-epistemic corner from which it is impossible to rescue him without painting anew.

This brings us again to the role of *uniformity amidst variety* in the perception of relative beauty—in particular the beauty of representation. Why is it needed at all?

The obvious answer would seem to be twofold. Of course the reduction of both absolute and relative beauty to the same causal property fills out a parsimonious formal scheme. But, furthermore, even though the relation between an idea's being the idea of beauty, and its being caused by *uniformity amidst variety* must be a contingent one, there is, built into Hutcheson's scheme, the notion that the causal relation must in part define the aesthetically “normal” perceiver. So were *uniformity amidst variety* not the efficient cause of the idea of relative beauty, relative beauty would have to be “beauty” in scare quotes—something other than what the normal aesthetic perceiver senses under normal conditions—and would be in need of another accounting. It is a problem similar to the one that plagued Kant's aesthetics when he introduced the notion of “dependent beauty” in § 16 of the *Critique of Judgment*.

However, suggesting that relative beauty has its ground in *uniformity amidst variety*, while it avoids one horn of a dilemma, impales Hutcheson straightaway on the other. For within the Lockean perceptual model with which Hutcheson is working, the property of *uniformity amidst variety*, as we have seen, functions as the aesthetic counterpart of the microstructure of matter, and, thus, as the non-epistemic cause of the idea of beauty. The result is a non-epistemic account of representational beauty, which is even more implausible than a non-epistemic account of the more complex instances of formal beauty in art and elsewhere. On that rather pessimistic note we now must pass on to some sort of reasoned

judgment as to Hutcheson's significance to the history of philosophical aesthetics.

(3) I ended the previous section in a negative vein. In general, I passed a rather harsh judgment on Hutcheson's causal, non-epistemic model of aesthetic perception; and in particular I singled out the role of *uniformity amidst variety* in the account of relative beauty as especially pernicious in making the appreciation of artistic representation a non-epistemic affair as well. In a moment I shall return to the latter judgment to see if we might here at least snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. But suppose the generally negative view of the viability of Hutcheson's philosophical aesthetics should remain wholly intact. What evaluation *then* should be placed on his contribution to the history of the subject?

I think we should have to say, even given the failure of Hutcheson's conclusions, that he is a towering figure: his contribution to the philosophical study of the arts of the first magnitude. Hutcheson represents a "first," a very significant "first." And if *what* he did was a failure, *how* he did it was an unqualified success, at least as success is measured by the standards of the Anglo-American philosophical tradition.

Hutcheson, let me suggest, was the first *philosopher* of distinction—the first philosopher, for that matter, of any rank, that I know about—to write a clearly recognizable, extended, and selfcontained work on what we would now call aesthetics or the philosophy of art. That in itself would be important, although not overwhelming. But what makes Hutcheson's achievement of such significance and importance for the future of the then infant discipline was that he allied himself with the state-of-the-art philosophy of his day. By putting his aesthetic speculations in a Lockean framework, Hutcheson decreed that *it* be philosophy at the cutting edge. Whenever it has faltered as a discipline, it has been because Hutcheson's example has been temporarily lost sight of; and whenever it has thrived, which it presently is doing, it is because that example has been heeded and philosophy kept at the heart of the matter. When aesthetics ceases to be good philosophy, it ceases to be any good at all. Hutcheson was the

first to understand this, I think; and for that initiating insight we justly admire him.

Were I to end on that upbeat note, I think I might feel I had at least done my minimal duty to Hutcheson on the 300th anniversary of his birth. But I would feel a little cheap if I could not do something more. So, in conclusion, let me return to what I felt to be the least successful of Hutcheson's positive doctrines: the reduction of representation to *uniformity amidst variety*. Perhaps a closer look will reveal a hidden virtue.

What was behind Hutcheson's ascription of the beauty of representation to that very strange incarnation of *uniformity amidst variety* discussed above? A penchant for architectonic and sheer necessity were what I initially suggested as obvious motives. Let me now suggest a more noble, insightful one.

Perhaps some recall, as I do, a time when we were first disabused, probably by a teacher of English literature, of what was no doubt referred to as our "naïve" belief that a literary work could be neatly divided into a form and a content. What we were told, at least if my own experience is representative, was that in *literature*, at least in *great* literature, no such distinction could be made out; and this could be generalized, so the story went, to all great art. As A. C. Bradley famously put the doctrine, in the *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, "this identity of content and form . . . is of the essence of poetry in so far as it is poetry, and of all art in so far as it is art."²⁷ The great artist so thoroughly fuses form and content that they can no longer be prised apart. That, anyway, is what we were told, no doubt with Bradley's imprimatur. Whether it is true is a question that would require a separate hearing.

It is a very easy doctrine to mouth; but, as we know, a very difficult one to put into a form that will withstand philosophical scrutiny. I am not prepared to say just when this doctrine of the fusion of form and content first engaged the attention of philosophers; but, at least as I read the third *Critique*, that is just what is behind Kant's difficult notion of the "aesthetic ideas." For what Kant is doing, as I see it, is trying to show how an art work's "content," properly construed as the ineffable aesthetic idea (not the easily articulated manifest content), can engage the free play of

the cognitive faculties, just that very free play that is, of course, on Kant's view, the source of our aesthetic pleasure in the perception of pure, formal beauty, in the pure judgment of taste. Kant, then, is attempting here to fuse form with content by showing how our aesthetic pleasure in both arises from the same source: the imagination and understanding in free play; the *sensus communis*.

What I mean to suggest now is that Hutcheson, in his reduction of representational beauty to *uniformity amidst variety*, is stalking the same quarry: attempting to give a philosophical foundation to the doctrine of aesthetic fusion of form and content. I suggest, further, that his attempt is more daring and more radical than is Kant's. For whereas Kant is trying to show merely that aesthetic form and aesthetic content, though different in kind, have the source of their pleasure in common, Hutcheson is trying to show that, *au fond*, aesthetic form and aesthetic content are one thing, *uniformity amidst variety*, and so have the source of their pleasure in common because of that. It is the more thoroughgoing and audacious "formalism," if that is the right name for either.

Since the word "formalism" has reared its head, it might be well to distinguish Hutcheson's "formalism" from two well-known and notorious versions of the thing, what might be called "normative formalism," which I would ascribe to Clive Bell and Roger Fry, and what might be called "eliminative formalism," which I would ascribe to some of the followers of Eduard Hanslick, but not perhaps to Hanslick himself. The former I take to be the view that although great art may possess "content," that content is completely irrelevant to its being art or its being great art. The latter is the view that the "content" of an art work just *is* its "form," or vice versa. Normative formalism I take to be a palpable nonstarter, false on the very face of it, eliminative formalism, where it applies at all, as in absolute music or some forms of abstract painting, simply an empty play on words. It is a compliment to Hutcheson's brand of formalism that it falls into neither of these two categories.

Of course I do not mean to suggest that Hutcheson has successfully solved the problem of aesthetic fusion of form and

content, if indeed it *is* a genuine problem. I do suggest that he made an early, prescient, and daring attempt. On that positive note, and without further comment, I will close.²⁸

XVI Hume's Neighbour's Wife: An Essay on the Evolution of Hume's Aesthetics

It is my purpose here to lay bare the changes—the progress, if you will—in the “aesthetic sentiment” theory, from Francis Hutcheson's basically non-epistemic account of aesthetic perception to the more concept-laden one of Hume. One of the principal forces at work, I shall argue, in driving Hume to a more satisfactory mix of knowledge (or belief) with “sentiment” in aesthetic perception was the beneficial effect of moral theory which, in the nature of the case, had to provide a prominent place for belief in moral perception, even when it was insisted, as Hume did, that moral distinctions issue from a moral “sense.” Hutcheson and Hume both claimed that, in one way or another, the same theory served for both moral and aesthetic distinctions. That being the case, a reciprocal influence was set in motion which, I believe, was from the aesthetic to the moral in Hutcheson's early work, but which moved in just the opposite way—from the moral to the aesthetic—in Hume. It is this general theme that I would like to pursue.

(1) I will begin where I believe the discipline of philosophical aesthetics begins, at least as I understand that discipline: with Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, the first of the two treatises that comprise his *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* of 1725.

Hutcheson, it will be recalled, thought that the term “beautiful” has reference to a Lockean “idea” of perception: “the word

beauty,” he wrote, “is taken for *the idea raised in us*, and a *sense* of beauty for *our power of receiving this idea*.”¹ And the property in objects which causes us, upon perceiving them, to have this idea, Hutcheson believed, by induction, to be what he called most of the time *uniformity amidst variety*: “The figures that excite in us the ideas of beauty seem to be those in which there is *uniformity amidst variety*. . . [W]here the uniformity of bodies is equal, the beauty is as the variety; and where the variety is equal, the beauty is as the uniformity.”²

It is abundantly clear, I think, that Hutcheson's model for aesthetic perception, at least in the first edition of his first *Inquiry*, is to be found in Locke, and, particularly, in Locke's account of secondary qualities. The idea of beauty might be thought to correspond (say) to the sensation of redness, while *uniformity amidst variety* would find its analogue in the microstructure of matter which, under the appropriate conditions, produces the sensation in a normal observer. The disanalogy, of course, aside from the obvious one, that *uniformity amidst variety* is *not* microstructure, lies in the fact that Hutcheson thought he knew what it was in objects responsible for the arousal of the idea of beauty, whereas the Lockean was ignorant—permanently so, some thought—as to what it might be in the microstructure of matter responsible for the arousal of color sensations in general, or the sensation of redness in particular. I have spent some time elsewhere explaining how this disanalogy wreaked havoc with Hutcheson's way of formulating his theory.³ But, happily, this is irrelevant to my present concerns. What I do want to underscore is that Hutcheson is easily misunderstood here in one particular way—was, in fact, by his rationalist critics—and this misunderstanding must be avoided if we are to get straight what advance Hume made on Hutcheson's aesthetic theory.

There is nothing inherently implausible about citing *uniformity amidst variety* as at least one beautiful or aesthetic feature of objects, if not the only one. But what one naturally assumes is happening with regard to it is something along the following lines. I perceive an object. I perceive *that* it possesses *uniformity amidst variety*. And if there is a sentiment or idea of beauty in the case at all, it is the *enjoyment* I get out of knowingly, consciously

savoring the feature of *uniformity amidst variety* which I have come to perceive in the object. This surely must have been something like what John Balguy, for example, made of Hutcheson's account of beauty when he insisted, *contra* Hutcheson, that knowing an object possesses *uniformity amidst variety*, or possesses any other system of parts in relation to one another, is a function of reasoning as well as sensing.

The ingenious Author of the *Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* . . . fixed Beauty on such a Foundation, as seems to me entirely inconsistent with his own Notion. For are not *Uniformity* and *Variety* real *Relations* belonging to the *Objects* themselves? . . . However Sense may convey to us the Ideas of external *Objects*, yet the *Relations* between them no *Sense* can reach.⁴

But surely such criticism is based on a misreading of Hutcheson. Whatever he *should* have said about *uniformity amidst variety*, and its relation to the beautiful, what he *did* say is that *uniformity amidst variety* causes the idea of beauty to arise in us much in the way the Lockean would say the microstructure of matter causes the sensation of redness to arise. And I no more need know that an object possesses *uniformity amidst variety* to have the idea aroused by it, than I need know, *per impossibile* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that an object has microstructure *xyz*, to have the sensation of redness aroused, nor need I even know that matter has a microstructure at all, or that if it does, it has anything to do with color perception. This (and only this) is what I mean to assert when I say that Hutcheson's was a non-epistemic theory of aesthetic perception. In recent years, philosophers of perception have, in some circles anyway, divided themselves up into those who assert that if someone perceives something or other, he or she necessarily thereby or therein acquires some belief or other, and those who assert that there is at least some basic perceiving not necessarily involving the acquisition of beliefs or knowledge. The former view has been denominated "epistemic," and the latter "non-epistemic"; and this is the source of my contrast between Hutcheson and Hume as regards the perception of beauty. But, I hasten to add, by describing Hutcheson's theory as non-epistemic, I do not mean to say

that it is non-epistemic altogether: that is to say, I do not mean to suggest or imply that, on Hutcheson's view, I can perceive beauty without acquiring any beliefs or knowledge at all.

It should also be borne in mind, in this regard, that in describing Hutcheson's theory of aesthetic perception as non-epistemic, I have reference only to the perception of what he calls "absolute" beauty. "Relative" beauty, the beauty of "imitation," is something else again, although Hutcheson's teaching here is murky. Certainly we must, Hutcheson implies, know that *X* is an imitation of *Y* in order to have the idea of beauty aroused by *X qua* imitation. But even here there is a subliminal causal nexus at work, since on Hutcheson's view, the idea of beauty, even in the case of the relative kind, is aroused by a kind of *uniformity amidst variety*: "what we call *relative* [beauty] is that which is apprehended in any object commonly considered as an *imitation* of some original. And this beauty is founded on a conformity, or a kind of unity between the original and the copy."⁵ Thus, even in the case of the beauty of representation, what arouses the idea of beauty is not, directly, my perceiving that *X* is a representation of *Y*, although that is a necessary condition. Rather, the idea is aroused, just as in the case of absolute beauty, by a "quality" of all imitations, lying, as it were, beneath the surface—"a conformity, or a kind of unity"—of which the perceiver may very well not be aware. And in any case, what was always remembered, understood, and sometimes misunderstood (as we have just seen) by Hutcheson's contemporaries and intellectual progeny as his theory of beauty was his doctrine of *absolute* beauty: that is the doctrine that stuck to his name, that influenced his age, and that was always in one's mind when one mentioned Hutcheson's aesthetic teaching. So whatever the vagaries of his notion of relative beauty may be, and however it may muddy the non-epistemic waters, the doctrine that counted—the doctrine of absolute beauty—was unequivocally non-epistemic in the way outlined above. *That* was the theory that, I shall claim, Hume had to escape.

Having, then, laid out what, in the above sense, is Hutcheson's *non-epistemic* theory of aesthetic perception, let me turn now to Hume's *Treatise* for the purpose of seeing what of this theory survives

in that place, and what has undergone change in the direction of a more epistemic account.

(2) It is palpably obvious, to start with, but not unworthy of mention, that Hutcheson begins his *Inquiry into . . . Beauty and Virtue* with a treatise on aesthetics, and moves on from there to the one on moral theory. This is neither an accident of publication nor merely a record of the order of discovery, but the order which, on Hutcheson's view, reflects the nature of the case. Aesthetics is epistemologically prior to moral theory: from a consideration of beauty we come to see that the right and the good have a similar foundation.

Equally obvious, and no less worthy of note, is that Hume's *Treatise* contains no extended treatment of aesthetics at all, either before, after, or in any other relation to his moral theory. It is certainly true that Hume's moral talk, like Hutcheson's, is permeated with aesthetic terms and images, of which I shall have more to say in a moment. But in general, this is rather the background noise left by Hutcheson's "big bang" than the direction in which Hume's thought is moving in moral theory or aesthetics. Most of the remarks on aesthetic topics occur in two very distinct contexts: (i) to clarify some point being made in moral theory; or (ii) to sketchily indicate, much in the manner of recent emotivist ethics, how the system being touted can, if one had the time or inclination, be made to accommodate aesthetic distinctions as well as moral ones without any alteration in principle. And in both these contexts the weight and sheer bulk of the moral argumentation is such as to bend the aesthetic theory quite into its own shape. In the *Treatise*, unlike Hutcheson's *Inquiry into . . . Beauty and Virtue*, aesthetics is being "moralized," rather than the other way round—an important point to remember being, however, that it is a morality already "aestheticized" by Hume's esteemed predecessor.

If one comes from Hutcheson's first *Inquiry* to the *Treatise*, a casual reading of Book III will immediately suggest that Hume was seeing moral perception in a distinctly aesthetic way; for, as I remarked above, his language in this regard is suffused with aesthetic terms and images. Consider, for example, the following

statement of Hume's oft-repeated claim that sense, not reason, is the source of moral distinctions. Hume writes: "The approbation of moral qualities most certainly is not deriv'd from reason, or any comparison of ideas; but proceeds entirely from a moral taste, and from certain sentiments of pleasure or disgust, which arise upon the contemplation and view of particular qualities or characters."⁶ The reference to moral *taste*, rather than (say) to a moral sense, is obvious enough to require no further comment. What is far more important is the image of moral perception as a kind of aesthetic "contemplation" or "viewing," as if Hume had in mind the way I might stand before a scenic overlook, contemplating the vista aesthetically, taking in the view, and being moved to aesthetic rapture by the grandeur of what is before me. And so, likewise, I "view" or "contemplate" the human scene, while "certain sentiments of pleasure or disgust . . . arise upon the contemplation or view . . ."

I say that a *casual* reading of Hume might suggest this to one coming to him from Hutcheson's first *Inquiry*. But, of course, this is hardly what Hume has in mind, or means to convey with such seemingly "aesthetic" terms as "contemplate" or "view." It is not some enraptured, non-epistemic, Hutchesonian aesthetic perception that Hume is talking about; on the contrary, the moral context always makes clear that to "view" or to "contemplate" a character or action in the moral way is to scrutinize and meditate over what one sees. A person, Hume remarks, in his discussion of Wollaston, "who thro' a window sees any lewd behaviour of mine with my neighbour's wife, may be so simple as to imagine she is certainly my own."⁷ Simple or not, however, the voyeur must engage in some hypothesizing or other to make any moral judgment at all: which is to say, to experience a moral sentiment of approval or disapproval. One cannot simply experience Hume's behavior as an aesthetic play of visual sensations. The moral question is not whether Hume's behavior is well choreographed, but whether it is wicked; and that, of course, requires knowing, or believing whether or not Hume is married to his female companion.

What, then, of Hume's views on aesthetic perception, as revealed here and there in the *Treatise*? We are told often enough

that the beautiful is determined much in the same way as the moral; and that in itself should suggest that on Hume's view aesthetic perception cannot, as on Hutcheson's, be non-epistemic. There is, indeed, a clear analogy between Hume's aesthetic theory and Hutcheson's. Like Hutcheson, Hume thinks that beauty is taken for the idea (sentiment) raised in us, and he is not disinclined, at times, to refer to a sense of beauty. And, like Hutcheson, Hume believes that there is a "quality" in objects which is the cause of our aesthetic sentiments. But here the analogy abruptly ends; for the "quality" Hume picks, to conform with his moral theory, pretty much closes the door right from the start on a Hutchesonian, non-epistemic theory of aesthetic perception. The "quality," of course, is *utility*, which, in concert with sympathy, produces the sentiment of beauty. Hume writes, in a passage that is both representative and unusually replete:

Our sense of beauty depends very much on this principle [of sympathy]; and where any object has a tendency to produce pleasure in its possessor, it is always regarded as beautiful; as every object, that has a tendency to produce pain, is disagreeable and deform'd. Thus the conveniency of a house, the fertility of a field, the strength of a horse, the capacity, security, and swift-sailing of a vessel, form the principal beauty of these several objects. Here the object which is denominated beautiful, pleases only by its tendency to produce a certain effect. The effect is the pleasure or advantage of some other person. Now the pleasure of a stranger, for whom we have no friendship, pleases us only by sympathy. To this principle, therefore, is owing the beauty, which we find in every thing that is useful. How considerable a part this is of beauty will easily appear upon reflection. Wherever an object has a tendency to produce pleasure in the possessor, or in other words, is the proper *cause* of pleasure, it is sure to please the spectator, by a delicate sympathy with the possessor. Most of the works of art are esteem'd beautiful, in proportion to their fitness for the use of man, and even many of the productions of nature derive their beauty from that source. Handsome and beautiful, on most occasions, is not an absolute but a relative quality, and pleases us by nothing but its tendency to produce an end that is agreeable.⁸

Usefulness, needless to say, is hardly well suited, as *uniformity amidst variety* might plausibly be thought to be, at least on first reflection, for an aesthetic analogue of the microstructure of

matter which, quite unknown to the perceiver, produces the sensation of redness when the fire engine goes by. For to appreciate the utility of anything, one would think, one must first come to see that it is useful; or at least come to believe so. And in any case, whether or not usefulness can function as *uniformity amidst variety* might seem to do, in a non-epistemic, causal theory of aesthetic perception, it certainly does not seem to so function in Hume's account. For Hume, it appears to me, makes it very plain that we come to know, in a quite conscious and calculating way, that things are useful, or have parts well adapted to their ends, as necessary prologue to the arousal of the sentiment of beauty. Thus: "A fertile soil, and a happy climate, delight us by a reflexion on the happiness which they would afford the inhabitants, tho' at present the country be desert and uninhabited."⁹ Or again: In "Most kinds of beauty . . . tho' our first object [of perception] be some senseless inanimate piece of matter, 'tis seldom we rest here, and carry not our view to its influence on sensible and rational creatures."¹⁰ Or, finally: "In judging of the beauty of animal bodies, we always carry in our eye the oeconomy of a certain species; and where the limbs and features observe that proportion, which is common to the species, we pronounce them handsome and beautiful."¹¹ In all these passages, and many more I could have quoted from the *Treatise*, Hume not only resolves the cause of the sentiment of beauty into the useful, and the pleasure it would provide its owner, but makes it quite clear, I think, that utility functions not as the unconscious, unknown cause of the sentiment; rather, that we must, one way or another, come to know that the object in question is useful, and (therefore) pleasure-giving, for the sentiment to be aroused. It is in this sense that Hume's theory of aesthetic perception, under the influence of his moral theory, is heavily epistemic, and quite unlike Hutcheson's in that respect.

Here I must make three important points, the last of which will take me to the concluding section of my chapter.

The first point is this. Clearly, Hume means to show, in Book III of the *Treatise* (and in the second *Enquiry* as well) that morals and aesthetics have the same principle of *utility* in common. But, at least as it seems to me now, the principle functions in crucially

different ways in those two areas. In morals it is, so to say, the principle of last resort. The curious observer of Hume's amorous activities need not have any beliefs at all about the usefulness of the virtue of chastity to decide that Hume's attentions to the lady are moral or immoral (as the case may be). Beliefs about their relationship to one another, and various other background beliefs, are all that is required. It is only when the philosopher comes along to explain and defend the whole system of morality, or law, or the natural virtues, and their motivating principles, that appeal to utility need be made. But in our perception of the beautiful, if I read Hume correctly here, where utility is relevant at all — which is most of the time, apparently — it must figure, as it does not in morals, on the everyday, case by case level.

This brings me to my second point. How wide a swath does the principle of utility cut in our perceptions of beauty and deformity? Certainly Hume thought it was considerable, although the qualifying adjectives vary from passage to passage. But he insisted, both in the *Treatise* and in the second *Enquiry*, that there was another source of the sentiment of beauty as well. Thus he writes in the *Treatise* that “the beauty of all visible objects causes a pleasure pretty much the same, tho' it be sometimes deriv'd from the mere *species* and appearance of the objects; sometimes from sympathy, and an idea of their utility.”¹² This immediate pleasure we may take in the appearance of an object, apart from its utility, seems to be more of a non-epistemic kind of perception, a vestige of Hutcheson's theory that, as we shall see, Hume never quite divested himself of.

Another vestige of Hutcheson — and this is my third and transitional point about the *Treatise* — is the almost total lack of interest, on Hume's part, in works of art. Where he discusses beauty in the *Treatise*, it is almost without exception the beauty of nature: fields, horses, human beings. And where works of “art” are referred to, as in one of the passages quoted above, it is “artefacts” that Hume means: houses and ships, not poems and pictures. The *Treatise* is almost bereft of reference to works of the fine arts.

(3) What turned Hume's thinking to taste and the arts of the imagination? I do not know. But the *turning point* is clear: it is

the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Here, as in Book III of the *Treatise*, discussion of beauty serves either to clarify some point in moral theory, or to indicate how what Hume is saying about it can, *pari passu*, be applied to aesthetics. But what is quite markedly different is that whereas in the earlier place examples of natural beauty and useful artefacts predominate, in the later work it is just the other way around: it is the fine arts that provide most of Hume's examples of the beautiful. Indeed, Hume has come to believe, apparently, that it is art, not nature, that best exemplifies the epistemic in aesthetic perception; and since moral perception cannot help but be that, it is the perception of the fine arts that now serves Hume's purposes in explicating the nature of moral perception.

One passage at the very outset of the second *Inquiry* brings out all this in bold relief, and is worth quoting at a little length. Hume writes:

The final sentence, it is probable, which pronounces characters and actions amiable or odious, praiseworthy or blamable; that which stamps on them the mark of honor or infamy, approbation or censure; that which renders morality an active principle and constitutes virtue our happiness, and vice our misery — it is probable, I say, that this final sentence depends on some internal sense or feeling which nature has made universal in the whole species. For what else can have an influence of this nature? But in order to pave the way for such a sentiment and give a proper discernment of its object, it is often necessary, we find, that much reasoning should precede, that nice distinctions be made, just conclusions drawn, distant comparisons formed, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained. Some species of beauty, especially the natural kinds, on their first appearance command our affection and approbation; and where they fail of this effect, it is impossible for any reasoning to redress their influence or adapt them better to our taste and sentiment. But in many orders of beauty, particularly those of the finer arts, it is requisite to employ much reasoning in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection. There are just grounds to conclude that moral beauty partakes much of this latter species and demands the assistance of our intellectual faculties in order to give it a suitable influence on the human mind.¹³

This passage, I believe, reveals in a quite obvious way the direction which Hume's thinking about aesthetics had taken from the *Treatise* to the second *Inquiry*. Hutcheson's non-epistemic, causal theory of aesthetic perception was, it would seem, never a real option for Hume. For, under the influence of his own moral theory, which had dictated the substitution of *utility* for *uniformity amidst variety*, the aesthetic was, right from the start, an epistemic one. What remained of Hutcheson, besides the general outline, was the preoccupation with natural beauty and the useful arts. But in formulating a basically epistemic account of aesthetic perception, Hume had laid the necessary groundwork for a critique of the arts of taste. Hutcheson, with his unabashed non-epistemic aesthetic, could deal nicely with the beauty of triangles and pebbles, but could do little with Horace and Homer. Hume put thought back into the aesthetic of sentiment, thus paving the way for his future preoccupation with poems rather than pebbles. The passage in hand seems to represent the stage in Hume's thought about these matters where he came to realize that an epistemic theory of aesthetic perception not only makes the fine arts the paradigm instances of beauty, but, as Kant would put it, makes them susceptible of a critique. That critique Hume soon provided in his elegant dissertation, "Of the Standard of Taste."

I have written, at various times, on various aspects of this deceptively simple work.¹⁴ I have no desire to rehearse those remarks here; nor is this the place to attempt a thorough analysis of Hume's only extended venture into aesthetics and the philosophy of art. What is appropriate is to carry my theme of a developing epistemic theory of aesthetic perception through its final phase in Hume's thought. I can do this only briefly and sketchily — a more ambitious effort in this regard must be postponed for another occasion.

Hume saw the problem of taste much as Kant was to see it some years later, as the resolution of a dilemma which had, on one of its horns, the commonsensical notion that about taste there is no disputing, and on the other the (to Hume) equally self-evident precept that, as he put it, "where objects so disproportioned are compared together," for example, Milton's poetry

and Ogilby's, "The principle of the natural equality of tastes is then totally forgot" ¹⁵

Since each individual's judgment of any given work of art is a matter of "sentiment," that is to say "emotion" rather than "thought," the resolution of the "antinomy" of taste, for Hume, becomes an affair of reducing matters of sentiment to matters of "fact"; for if there were no "facts" to adjudicate, on which we all could at least potentially agree, the "principle of the natural equality of tastes," i.e. *de gustibus non disputandum est*, must remain unchallenged. The "facts" which Hume settled on, for reasons that I will not go into here, were, naturally enough, facts about whose sentiments were to be trusted in matters of critical judgment. ¹⁶ The problem of what are the good works of art became, then, the problem of who are the good critics; and although the latter was not, Hume recognized, an easy question to answer, it was, "if we consider the matter aright," a question "of fact, not of sentiment," ¹⁷ so in principle, if not always in practice, a question possible to answer.

Hume thought that there were five infirmities under which "the generality of men labour . . ." in their aesthetic judgments, and five corresponding perfections characterizing "a true judge in the finer arts": he concluded that "*strong sense*, united to *delicate sentiment*, improved by *practice*, perfected by *comparison*, and cleared of all *prejudice*, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character; and the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty." ¹⁸ It is here that I want to take up the tale anew, and examine, in the light of the distinction between epistemic and non-epistemic theories of aesthetic perception, the characteristics of the "true judge" which Hume has enumerated.

It will be apparent even on casual inspection that Hume's characteristics immediately divide themselves into two groups: "faculties," and "conditions" which develop or render them optimal. The faculties are *good* (or *strong*) *sense* and *delicacy of sentiment* (or *taste*), the conditions which improve, develop, or render them optimally functional, *practice* in making judgments of taste, *comparisons* of the objects of taste with one another, and an *unprejudiced* frame of mind overall. I shall have nothing to say here about

practice and use of *comparisons*, as they are obvious enough to require no extended examination. Rather, I would like to concentrate on the faculties of taste, particularly, *good sense*, and, secondarily, on lack of *prejudice* — a far more subtle and wide-ranging concept than its name might suggest.

Let me propose, to start with, that the existence of *two* faculties of taste in Hume's dissertation still reflects the distinction already explicit in the *Treatise*, and never quite given up, between an epistemic and a non-epistemic kind of aesthetic perception, delicacy of taste embodying the non-epistemic kind, with close affinities to Hutcheson's sense of beauty, *good sense* suggesting, on the other hand, the rational making out of ends and means, purposes and functions, that so clearly characterizes the dominant strain in Hume's aesthetic theory, as outlined here and there in the *Treatise*, second *Enquiry*, and elsewhere.

If, however, *good sense* plays the leading *epistemic* role in Hume's dissertation, it is vital, for present purposes, to argue that it is the hero of the piece as well. It would hardly be a favorable indication for an epistemic account of Hume's aesthetic theory that the major epistemic faculty of taste was only a bit player. Unfortunately, Hume introduces the faculty of *good sense* in a way that, at least on a cursory reading, is not altogether favorable to such an interpretation, and, indeed, seems to suggest that of the two faculties, *delicacy of taste* is the more important. He writes of *good sense* that “if not an essential part of taste, [it] is at least requisite to the operations of this latter faculty,”¹⁹ the “if” clause clearly implying that it is *not* essential. *Good sense*, it would seem, is not, then, a necessary condition for the true judge.

I believe this *is* a correct reading of Hume. But if properly understood, it need not imply, except in a harmless way, that *good sense* is a less important faculty than *delicacy*, or that it does not play the major role in Hume's theory of taste which an epistemic interpretation of Hume requires. Imagine a person who lacked *good sense* but not *delicacy*. Such a person would indeed possess *taste*, but only a most primitive, childlike version of it. He would, one supposes, derive pleasure from simple patterns, colored pebbles, seashells, Hutcheson's geometrical shapes (which figure so prominently in his work as examples of *uniformity amidst variety*),

and, perhaps, the most trivial literary works, folk songs, and pictures. But anything like mature, not to say exalted taste would be quite beyond him. *That* requires *good sense*, because the objects of such taste are meritorious just on account of their purposes, and the subtle functional relations of their parts to one another: i.e. all those properties that require epistemic perception.

In all the nobler productions of genius, there is a mutual relation and correspondence of parts; nor can either the beauties or blemishes be perceived by him whose thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all those parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the consistence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art has also a certain end or purpose for which it is calculated; and is to be deemed more or less perfect, as it is more or less fitted to attain this end.²⁰

Consider, on the other hand, a person who lacked *delicacy* but not *good sense*. Such a person would indeed be able to perceive all those qualities of function and purpose that on Hume's view constitute the merit of great literary works (and perhaps all other works of art as well). What he would lack would be any perception of their *beauty*. He would, I suggest, lack the faculty from which the *sentiment* of beauty issues. And since the sentiment is what really makes a purposive or functional property something beyond merely purposive or functional, that is to say, *beautiful*, a person who could not have that sentiment aroused in him would be *completely* without taste, for all his ability to discern those properties in the exalted objects of taste which exalt them.

We can now see why *delicacy* but not *good sense* is a necessary condition for taste; and why, nevertheless, *good sense* might still be the dominant faculty. For *delicacy* is a necessary condition of having any taste at all; but without *good sense*, it is the taste of a child or a rustic that *delicacy* provides: simply the bare minimum. It is *good sense* that provides taste with its epistemic component, and thus the wherewithal to perceive all that is cultivated, sophisticated, in a word, civilized in its objects. That Hume describes *good sense*, then, as “not an essential part of taste . . .” hardly implies that he has relegated it to a minor role. It *could* still be in the forefront. But is it?

Hume, I think, leaves us in no real doubt that *good sense* is the principle on which most of the weight of his aesthetic theory rests. For if it is not a *sine qua non* for taste *simpliciter* (and it is not), it is, surely, a *sine qua non* of the good critic, the “true judge” on whose sentiment the standard of taste is formed, and a *sine qua non* for the appreciation of all those objects of taste that really mattered in Hume's world: in other words, it is a *sine qua non* for *good* taste. “Where good sense is wanting,” Hume writes, “he [i.e. the would-be true judge] is not qualified to discern the beauties of design and reasoning, *which are the highest and most excellent*.”²¹ It is *good sense*, then, that transforms Hutcheson's sense of beauty, with its simple geometrical objects, into the full-blooded taste of a cultivated man of the Enlightenment, whose idea of immaturity in such matters seems to have been a predilection for Ovid over Horace or Tacitus past the age of 40.²²

Can we say any more about *good sense* and its objects? A great deal, I would think, in a more extended account of Hume's dissertation. For the nonce, however, I will content myself with two further observations which will help, perhaps, to put this faculty and its objects into slightly better focus, and also serve to place them in a more understandable relation to Hume's philosophical development from the *Treatise* to “Of the Standard of Taste.”

My first observation has to do with the relationship of *good sense* to the condition Hume calls, somewhat narrowly, lack of *prejudice*. Hume thought that the relationship was a specially direct one. Indeed, the introduction of *good sense* into his argument occurs immediately after the account of *prejudice*, and is meant to show how lack of *prejudice* is to be achieved. “It is well known, that, in all questions submitted to the understanding, prejudice is destructive of sound judgment, and perverts all operations of the intellectual faculties: it is no less contrary to good taste; nor has it less influence to corrupt our sentiment of beauty. It belongs to *good sense* to check its influence in both cases”²³

What *is* lack of *prejudice*? It is, in its simplest form, just that: to be unbiased and thus not to judge too favorably of a work whose author you like or too unfavorably of one whose author you detest. But it is more than that, which is why, I think, it is

somewhat misleading for Hume to introduce *good sense* as the necessary condition of lack of *prejudice*; rather, the relation is reciprocal.

What, then, is the deeper sense of lack of *prejudice*? It is akin, I would suggest, both to what has been called the “disinterested spectator” in Hume’s (and others’) moral theory, and what a later age called, in aesthetic theory, the “attitude of aesthetic disinterestedness” (though, needless to say, these concepts employ *related*, not *identical* senses of “disinterestedness”). In general, Hume supposes the author of any given work has a purpose for that work in mind, and a particular audience to which the means of attaining that purpose must be finely adjusted. The character of that audience and, therefore, the means the author must employ to attain the end of his work, are determined by two variables: the period in which the author and audience flourished, and their country or geographical region. And if, as will frequently be the case, a reader of the text (or, we may add, the observer of a painting and, perhaps, the auditor of a score, if Hume thought music one of the fine arts) happens to be of a different age, or different region from the author and audience, or both, he must make some imaginative adjustment in the form of an effort to put himself in the place of that audience and author, temporally and geographically.

We may observe, that every work of art, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, must be surveyed in a certain point of view, and cannot be fully relished by persons whose situation, real or imaginary, is not conformable to that which is required by the performance. An orator addresses himself to a particular audience, and must have a regard to their particular genius, interests, opinions, passions, and prejudices; otherwise he hopes in vain to govern their resolutions, and inflame their affections. . . . A critic of a different age or nation, who should peruse this discourse, must have all these circumstances in his eye, and must place himself in the same situation as the audience, in order to form a true judgment of the oration.²⁴

We are now in a better position, I think, to see what sort of thing a work of art is, for Hume, or, to put it another way, what sort of artistic properties are the critically relevant ones. A work

of art has a purpose, the artist's end in view relative to an audience of some specific time and place. And it consists of parts with complex functional relations to one another which (one must suppose) are designed to achieve the overall end or purpose of the work. Because, of course, these intermediate functional properties, as well as the overarching purpose of the work, were adjusted by the artist to a particular audience, we cannot perceive them properly without either *being* that audience, or, failing that, as most of the world must, trying, by imaginative projection to put ourselves in that audience's place. But the point to underscore, for present purposes, is that the properties we so laboriously make out, *are* functional ones: ends and purposes of works of art and their parts.

This brings me to my second, and final remark. Hume began, in the *Treatise*, as we have seen, with an epistemic theory of aesthetic perception more or less informed by his moral views. An integral part of it was the contention, at least as old as the *Greater Hippias*,²⁵ that beauty lies in utility. Not surprisingly, the examples of beauty that Hume adduced in the *Treatise* were, for the most part, natural objects useful to men, and functional artefacts.

In the second *Inquiry* Hume's examples of the beautiful were of quite another stripe, being here drawn largely from art works. But we can now see that his basic principles, an epistemic aesthetic perception, with utility as its object, were adhered to to the last. For in "Of the Standard of Taste" he gives us at least the bare bones of a theory of art works as functional objects with functional parts, consistent with the notion of beauty as utility made out in the *Treatise*, and demanding, as well, an epistemic perceptual apparatus.

It should be a source of deep regret to philosophers of art that Hume never worked these intriguing beginnings (as I think he might have done) into a more elaborate philosophical system. For although I think the attempt to conceive of works of art solely in functional terms must fail, the power of Hume's mind, even employed in the service of a hopeless cause, would have given the young discipline of "aesthetics" the firm philosophical footing it required in the English-speaking world, something we have

only just now belatedly achieved, some two hundred years later. But Hume only did what he did; and we should at least be grateful for that.²⁶

XVII Hume's "Sentiments" In the Essay on Taste

In Section 11 of the *Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Hume remarks that "philosophy . . . chiefly flourishes from the free opposition of sentiments and argumentation"¹ In the essay, "That Politics May Be Reduced to a Science," he refers to "the sentiment of envy"² It seems abundantly clear that in the former quotation, the term "sentiment" is being used in the sense of "opinion" or "belief," and in the latter, in the sense of "emotion" or "subjective feeling" of some kind or other.

In what turns out to be (at least for me) a crucial passage in the essay, "Of the Standard of Taste," Hume writes: "It is sufficient for our present purpose, if we have proved, that the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that some men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by universal sentiment to have a preference above others."³ And because this passage is crucial, it becomes crucial as well to determine which (if either) of the two senses of "sentiment," distinguished above, Hume is employing in his reference, in this crucial passage, to the "universal *sentiment*" which is to determine the superiority or inferiority of individuals' taste.

It is my specific purpose, in this chapter, to at least suggest how that determination might reasonably go. It is my general purpose to at least suggest what going in that way might reveal about the overall strategy of Hume's perennially intriguing account of taste.

(1) As most of my readers will know, Hume states the problem of taste in the form of a dilemma. On the one hand, it would

appear that there can be no standard of beauty or taste, no correct and incorrect in these matters, because: "Beauty is no quality in things themselves: it exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty." Yet, on the other hand, it would seem that there must be a standard of beauty or taste, a correct and incorrect, because: "Whoever would assert an equality of genius and elegance between Ogilby and Milton, or Bunyan and Addison, would be thought to defend no less an extravagance, than if he had maintained a mole-hill to be as high as Teneriffe, or a pond as extensive as the ocean."⁴

That Tenerife is larger than a molehill and the ocean more extensive than a pond are matters of fact and the province of "judgment." But that Addison and Milton are more elegant than Bunyan and Ogilby are matters of "sentiment." And, Hume asserts:

The difference, it is said, is very wide between judgment and sentiment. All sentiment is right; because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself, and is always real, whenever a man is conscious of it. But all determinations of the understanding are not right; because they have a reference to something beyond themselves, to wit, real matter of fact; and are not always conformable to that standard.⁵

Hume, clearly, is using the term "sentiment" *here* in the sense of something subjective, "feeling" or "emotion," *not* in the sense of "opinion" or "belief." It is because matters of taste are, apparently, decided by subjective feeling, not judgment, which is to say, right (or wrong) opinion, that there is a problem about a standard of taste, since all subjective feelings are on an equal footing, all "right," and therefore lacking the standard of judgment, which is *correspondence to the facts*.

Hume introduces the discussion I have just laid out with the statement: "It is natural for us to seek a *Standard of Taste*; a rule by which the various sentiments of men may be reconciled; at least a decision afforded confirming one sentiment, and condemning another."⁶ We need a standard of taste, Hume is obviously telling us, so we can distinguish those sentiments felt

towards works of art that are valid, acceptable ones, from those that are off the wall, like a preference for Ogilby over Milton. And right after that he tells us what he has in mind when he speaks of a "standard": it is the standard of *correspondence to the facts* (or lack thereof) that decides between correct and incorrect judgment. The passage is important enough for my argument to quote (in part) again: "But all determinations of the understanding are not right; because they have a reference to something beyond themselves, to wit, real matter of fact; and are not always conformable to that *standard*."

If, therefore, Hume wants to find a standard of taste, "a rule by which the various sentiments of men may be reconciled," it must be, one is compelled to believe, the standard of *correspondence to the facts* — the standard he clearly has in mind, and explicitly formulates in proposing a search for the standard of taste. One might, then, describe Hume's project, in "Of the Standard of Taste," the way I did some years ago, as "the translation of . . . judgments of sentiment to judgments of reason . . .";⁷ or, to remain closer to Hume's terminology, the translation of "sentiment" to "judgment": matters of value to matters of fact.

(2) That Hume saw his strategy in the essay on taste as one of moving the question from "sentiment" to "fact" is apparent not only in the place where the project is proposed, but in the place where the climax of the argument is reached, and (at least to Hume's satisfaction) the project completed.

Hume's first step, most of my readers will recall, in the journey from sentiment to judgment, is to point out that even though there are regularities in taste — which is to say, human beings are generally pleased and displeased by the same sorts of things in works of art — there are numerous infirmities of mind that may perturb these normal aesthetic reactions, which, as Hume points out, are "of a tender and delicate nature . . ." Thus: "The least exterior hindrance to such small springs, or the least internal disorder, disturbs their motion, and confounds the operations of the whole machine."⁸

But we do know, Hume insists, the nature of the healthy aesthetic organ in some particularity: "strong sense, united to

delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison [of one beauty with another], and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character . . . ” of “a true judge in the finer arts.” And, Hume concludes: “the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty.”⁹

Have we made any progress in the problem of taste? Hume raises a doubt in that regard only to reassure us in the end that the problem has been solved, the passage from sentiment to fact successfully negotiated. First the doubt: “But where are such critics to be found? By what marks are they to be known? How distinguish them from pretenders? These questions are embarrassing; and seem to throw us back into the same uncertainty from which, during the course of this essay, we have endeavoured to extricate ourselves.” But now the reassurance: “But if we consider the matter aright, these are questions of fact, not of sentiment.”¹⁰

We can see, now, that our hypothesis concerning Hume's strategy in the essay on taste is quite conclusively confirmed in this climactic assertion. Hume's doubts about whether the argument has succeeded are quelled forthwith by the assurance that the questions he has ended up with are “questions of fact, not of sentiment.” And that, we surmised at the outset, was the result at which he was aiming.

(3) But now arise some doubts of our own. For if Hume's project was to go from sentiment to fact, then what are we to make of his summation, quoted at the outset of my paper: “It is sufficient for our present purpose, if we have proved, that the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that some men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by universal *sentiment* to have a preference above others”? Are we not thrown “back into the same uncertainty from which, during the course of this essay, we have endeavoured to extricate ourselves”? Are we not thrown right back on sentiment again?

I have suggested previously, in a couple of places, that we read “sentiment” here as “opinion” rather than “emotion” or “feeling”

(in the psychological sense).¹¹ Doing this, we can dispel what I took to be the *apparent* regress in the argument, since if "sentiment" is understood as "opinion," then Hume is seen as simply reiterating the theme that he has progressed from matters of "sentiment" (in the sense of "feeling" or "emotion") to matters of opinion about matters of fact. To this suggestion, Theodore A. Gracyk has responded in a recent article: "Kivy proposes that 'universal sentiment' means 'opinion' here, but given that this is an opinion of preference and approbation, it must be grounded in reflective judgment or 'sentiment' in Hume's technical sense."¹²

On the two previous occasions when I made the bare suggestion that 'sentiment' be read as "opinion," I mashed together two questions that are, at least *prima facie*, distinct: the question of whether or not someone possesses the five characteristics of Hume's 'true judge' and the question of whether or not such a personage should "have a preference above others," should, that is to say, constitute a standard of taste. It is the former question that Hume specifically calls a question "of fact, not of sentiment." And it is an affirmative answer to the latter that he specifically says is founded on "universal sentiment."

I think Gracyk is right in calling me out on this point. But whether he is right about what I am wrong about is not, as we shall see, altogether clear.

(4) It is Gracyk's view, as we have seen, that the question of whether Hume's "true judge" is to be preferred in matters of taste, is a question of "sentiment" in the sense of feeling or emotion, not opinion. For it is, he insists, a value question; and he goes on to argue, very persuasively, that it is, at heart, a *moral* question, as "one's taste is as much a part of one's character as generosity or courage"¹³

Gracyk's article, which I very much admire, has the obvious virtue of inclusiveness. The author has made commendable use of a wide range of Hume's writings, from the *Treatise* and the early essays of that period, to the later essays and the two *Inquiries*. His is an attempt to present a Humean aesthetic consistent with the whole body of Hume's work. And it is this attempt that

drives his moral reading of Hume's standard of taste, at least as I see it.

I am somewhat uneasy with Gracyk's general approach because where Gracyk sees a consistent Humean aesthetic, from the *Treatise* and early essays to "Of the Standard of Taste," I see an evolving one;¹⁴ and thus the virtue of inclusiveness turns out for me to be a vice. In particular, it is vital to Gracyk's way of construing the standard of taste as *moral* that the most important characteristic of the true judge be delicacy of taste, which Hume does seem to treat very like a moral quality of character in the early essays, especially in "Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion" (1742). Indeed, as to its rival for dominance, "strong (or good) sense," Gracyk points out that in "Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion," Hume describes the former as "inseparable" from the latter.¹⁵ In fact, Hume's claim is even stronger, for they are said not merely to be "inseparable" but identical: "a fine taste is, in some measure, the same with strong sense"¹⁶ (But it is a nice question whether good sense is being turned into delicacy of taste or, as I suspect, vice versa.)

But it is my considered opinion that by the time "Of the Standard of Taste" was published, in 1757, Hume's views had matured, and "good sense" had taken on a role both separate from and *at least* as important as that of "delicacy of taste."¹⁷ And so the treatment of "Of the Standard of Taste" as consistent in this regard with "Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion" cuts no ice with me. As far as I am concerned, the latter is "pre-critical."

But I am not come to refute Gracyk's moral interpretation of the standard of taste. Rather, because I am uneasy about it, not convinced that it is dead wrong, I wish merely to offer an alternative. And to that I now turn my attention.

(5) If I am correct in describing Hume's project, in the essay on taste, as the translation of matters of sentiment to matters of judgment about fact, and if Gracyk is right that the final arbiter of taste, for Hume, is moral sentiment, then Hume has failed in his project: in his *stated* project, as I read the essay. This is not to say that the "reduction" of aesthetic questions to moral ones would not be an interesting result. Many have thought it worthwhile

enough to try. But it does not seem to me to be what Hume was trying to do, or else he would not have seen the project, as he did, as going from value to fact. So what is the alternative?

Now it was standard practice with Hutcheson, Hume, and the whole moral sense movement to introduce both moral and aesthetic theories with analogies to Lockean secondary qualities. This was supposed to establish, initially, the "subjective," nonrational character of moral and aesthetic "properties." It was common coin of the "sentiment" school of moral theory in the Enlightenment. And Hume does not disappoint us in that regard in "Of the Standard of Taste." For where he is presenting the "subjective" side of the "dilemma" of taste, he says: "To seek the real beauty, or real deformity is as fruitless an inquiry, as to pretend to ascertain the real sweet or real bitter."¹⁸

But we must remember that where the analogy to secondary qualities is being employed to the initial purpose of establishing the "thesis" of aesthetic "subjectivity," Hume is rhetorically exaggerating the case of "subjectivity," before he pulls the string by completing the "antinomy" with its antithesis. Nor is it Hume's own view that seeking the real sweet or the real bitter or the real beauty is "fruitless." On the contrary, where he ceases to be the Devil's Advocate for extreme aesthetic relativity, and begins to outline the answer to his dilemma, the analogy to secondary qualities is introduced again, this time in defense of a kind of aesthetic *realism*.

How is the real beauty or deformity of an object or art work to be determined? Hume says, "in the like manner as the appearance of objects in sunlight, to the eye of a man in health, is denominated their true and real colour, even while colour is allowed to be merely a phantasm of the senses."¹⁹

I suggest that we take this analogy very seriously; indeed, as the *crucial* analogy. Granted, it is a nice question in Humean interpretation whether Hume subscribes to the primary-secondary quality distinction at all, or if he does, whether he is entitled to it, given his other beliefs. However, to a certain extent he is talking with the "vulgar" in the essay on taste, or, rather, as someone who is sophisticated enough to be a Lockean in regard to the

primary and secondary qualities but vulgar enough not yet to be a Berkeleian (or Humean?) in regard to them.

What I want to suggest, then, is that the “universal sentiment” that acknowledges the true aesthetic judge “to have a preference above others” is the same *kind* of sentiment that acknowledges “the eye of a man in health,” viewing “objects in day-light” as the standard of what is *really* red or green or whatever, not the moral sentiment that universally approves the courageous and condemns the craven. But what kind of sentiment is that? This brings us, in conclusion, to the question with which we began.

(6) Hume says, in the passage which I took just now to be crucial, that even though color is “merely a phantasm of the senses,” nevertheless there is a “true and real colour.” I take it, therefore, that at least within the universe of discourse of the essay on taste, whether an object is (say) red or not is a matter of fact, and an object of the judgment. But it is a complex fact that includes, among other things, the primacy of a healthy eye in sunlight. And, presumably, that the healthy eye in sunlight determines whether an object is red or not is acknowledged, one might say, in Humean lingo, by “universal sentiment.”

Now it would be very odd, I think, to claim that the “sentiment” which determines the healthy eye in sunlight to be the true judge of color can be very much like the moral sentiment, even though the moral sentiment itself is characterized as a “calm passion,” not a “passion” in the ordinary sense. Do I feel a sentiment of approval upon disinterestedly perceiving a healthy eye doing its thing in sunlight?²⁰

But nor does such a universal sentiment sound *exactly* like opinion either (although there may be a closer match here). The judgment may lead us to opine that Mars moves in an elliptical orbit; and that it so moves is a fact. However the judgment does not create the fact; it discovers it. And create the fact is exactly what the “universal sentiment” does in determining the “standard” of color perception: healthy eye in sunlight. That really being red is seeming red to the healthy eye in sunlight is a “created” fact. It is a stipulation: not of course something that was stipulated at a specific time and place, by an anointed authority,

like the Declaration of Independence. It came to be over time, no doubt, and by gradual, implicit consent. Yet it exists now *as if* it were "officially" stipulated. And it is so stipulated by "universal sentiment," which is to say, universal consent.

So is the universal sentiment that prescribes the healthy eye in sunlight as the standard of color "sentiment" in the emotion or the opinion sense? The scrupulously circumspect answer, I suppose, should be "neither." But *that* an object is red is, in the essay on taste, as paradigmatic a "fact" as that Mars is a sphere or that it moves in an elliptical orbit. And the universal sentiment is so deeply implicated in that fact and its surrounding judgments to be closer to judgment itself than to an emotion, even Hume's "calm passion."

Furthermore, that a poem is beautiful, I am suggesting, is for Hume analogous to just such a fact as that an object is red, the true judge in criticism, by consequence, analogous to the healthy eye in sunlight. So by parity of reasoning, it would seem that the universal sentiment which gives preferment to the true judge in criticism must be, like its analogue, which gives its imprimatur to the healthy eye in sunlight, judgment-like if not judgment itself.

Viewed in this way, Hume's stated goal, to move, in aesthetics, from sentiment to fact, is entirely consistent with his conclusion that the superiority of the true judge, as he defines that personage, "will be acknowledged by universal sentiment to have a preference above others." For the conclusion no more turns the standard back onto "sentiment" in the psychological sense than does the fact that the real red is determined by the healthy eye in sunlight, with the concurrence of "universal sentiment," make determinations of redness matters of "sentiment" in the psychological sense.

Moreover, "common sense" today, as then, would concur, I believe, that if someone were to show determinations of the beautiful to be on a par with determinations of color, that person would have shown, *ipso facto*, that, in a very canonical sense, matters of beauty are matters of fact. That this now seems a hopeless, misdirected project is another matter. (Is it so?) Nor does it seem any the less hopeless or misdirected to try to go from the aesthetic to the moral, as Gracyk would have Hume doing. But

the plausibility of Hume's project in "Of the Standard of Taste" is not a point at issue between us.

What is at issue is Hume's general strategy. Gracyk has given a very plausible account of Hume as ultimately grounding the standard of taste in the moral sentiment. I have tried to give an alternative, plausible too, I hope, that grounds it in something like a secondary-quality model. Which, if either, turns out to be the right approach must wait upon further work. But what strikes me once again, in this, my most recent rethinking of the essay on taste, is how rich a work it is, and how perennially fascinating it remains. No philosopher in modern times was more peculiarly suited both by talent and inclination than David Hume to understand the problem of taste. It is one of the misfortunes of philosophy that he did not do more in that direction, but certainly fortunate for us that he did what he did.

XVIII The Logic of Taste: Reid and the Second Fifty Years

(1) From Addison to Reid

When Edmund Burke coined the phrase “the logic of taste,” in 1758,¹ the philosophical baby that he baptized, in so contemporary-sounding a way, was already nearly fifty years old. The discipline of aesthetics, as we understand that word, begins, at least in the empirical tradition, with Joseph Addison's series of *Spectator* papers of 1712, which he called *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*. Here begins, too, as part of that tradition, a self-conscious effort to understand what the truth-conditions are of the kinds of judgments we would now call “aesthetic,” and what the conditions are for our being justified in accepting such judgments (to the extent that these were distinguished from one another). It is this, I think, that Burke may have had in mind when he spoke of the logic of taste. Thomas Reid's contribution to the enterprise is the subject of this chapter.

But we cannot comprehend fully what Reid had to say about the logic of taste without examining it as part of the tradition which begins with the *Pleasures of the Imagination*. For as one of Reid's nineteenth-century admirers, James McCosh, correctly observed,² “his works, though expository throughout, have all along a polemical front. . . . We cannot understand his philosophy, and we cannot appreciate his originality, unless we bear this circumstance in mind”

Addison provided the materials for two more systematic treatments of taste than his own, which are closely related: those of

Hutcheson and Hume. Alexander Gerard, following suggestions in Hume, Lord Kames, and others, struck out in another direction. Reid, I will argue, was attempting to find yet a third alternative. It is his struggle to carve out a new logic of taste, different from his predecessors' versions, and less liable to skeptical incursions, that produced, I would suggest, views which have a spark of real originality in them, and (hence) a significance out of proportion to their rather modest place in Reid's philosophical corpus. As briefly as possible, then, let us look at the logical models which were reared upon, or at least occasioned by Addison's reflections, and which forced upon Reid the task of finding an alternative.³

In the paper which he called "On Taste," and which he prefixed to the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, Addison characterized taste as "that faculty of the soul, which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike."⁴ Here, as elsewhere in the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, Addison broadly hinted at a "perceptual" logic of taste. And when first Hutcheson, and later Hume, took up the tale it was to the concept of sense-perception that they both turned for their model.

Two features of perception stand out as having influenced Hutcheson and Hume, respectively. For Hutcheson it was the causal nexus; for Hume the notion of the ideal or normal perceiver. This difference in emphasis produced markedly different perceptual models, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

Francis Hutcheson is famous (or perhaps infamous) for his use (or abuse) of the notion of inner senses. And it was in aesthetics that he inaugurated the doctrine which was to be pursued even more doggedly in moral theory. It needs no ghost, then, to tell us that Hutcheson inclined towards a perceptual logic of taste. But it is his emphasis that is all important.

Hutcheson tells us in the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty* (1725) that "the word *beauty* is taken for *the idea raised in us . . .*,"⁵ and goes on to argue that the property in objects which causes us to have this idea (and which he also at times calls *beauty*) is a compound of *unity amidst variety*. Although some very persuasive arguments have been offered in recent years for regarding Hutcheson as an ethical noncognitivist, and, by consequence, one must presume,

an aesthetic noncognitivist as well, I am skeptical, on the grounds that Hutcheson (following Locke) does not seem to allow for nondescriptive expressions in his theory of language.⁶ Thus when Hutcheson tells us that “the word beauty is taken for the idea raised in us,” I should think he meant to say that aesthetic judgments like “*X* is beautiful” are not noncognitive expressions of attitude or emotion but, rather, descriptions of the states of mind of their utterers. Yet I doubt if Hutcheson was implying that I can only truthfully utter “*X* is beautiful” when I am in the process of experiencing the idea of beauty in the contemplation of *X*. Rather, I am justified in asserting “*X* is beautiful” if I have evidence that *X* has the tendency to produce the idea of beauty in me. So a rough explication of “*X* is beautiful” would be: “*X* produces the idea of beauty in me when contemplated.” And I am justified in asserting this by my having experienced the idea of beauty in contemplating *X*, or by other good inductive evidence that I would experience the idea of beauty if I contemplated *X*.

But what of the claim which Hutcheson makes that the property of *unity amidst variety* causes the idea of beauty to arise in the perceiver? It suggests that at least one of the truth-conditions of “*X* is beautiful” is *X*'s having *unity amidst variety*. This, however, does not seem to be the case. For there is nothing in Hutcheson's account which in any way explicitly connects *unity amidst variety* with the notions of correctness or justification: merely with *normality*. Someone who calls *X* beautiful, in spite of the fact that *X* does not possess *unity amidst variety*, may be abnormal — but not mistaken. Having *unity amidst variety* may be good evidence of *X*'s being beautiful, but is neither the necessary nor sufficient condition for its being so.

What immediately strikes one as odd and unsatisfactory about Hutcheson's analysis is just this lack of a notion of justification. The claim that *X* has *unity amidst variety* is, indeed, the sort of claim that would qualify as justification for the further claim that *X* is beautiful. But for Hutcheson that is not the role it plays (or can play). *Unity amidst variety* is a reason in the causal (i.e. explanatory) but not the justificatory sense. And to the extent that the logic of taste is the logic of justification, of aesthetic reason-giving, Hutcheson has quite missed the point.

In this respect Hume comes off far better than his predecessor. For Hume sees clearly that the problem of taste is a problem of justification: an answer to skepticism. This is evidenced by his almost total disregard for the causal question, and his single-minded concern with the notion of an ideal or normal aesthetic observer, the “good critic,” as he calls this fictive creature in his major foray into aesthetics, the essay “Of the Standard of Taste” (1757). For it is the notion of the ideal or normal perceiver that bears the burden of justification, that distinguishes the correct from the incorrect perceptual response (rather than the normal from the abnormal). It is not that Hume thought there was no identifiable cause, in perceptual objects, of the “sentiment” of beauty, but, rather, I imagine, that he simply thought it was of no particular importance to the philosophy of criticism.⁷

For Hume the problem of taste was the problem of universalizing sentiment. Like Hutcheson before him, he believed that judgments of the beautiful are judgments about human feelings. But like Kant after him, he saw that in contrast to garden-variety feeling-judgments, the judgment of the beautiful is one made in the expectation of agreement. In other words, for Hume, as for Kant, judgments of the beautiful are subjectively universal; and so the problem of the logic of taste is to make that seeming contradiction intelligible.

Judgments of the beautiful, then, are judgments of “sentiment.” And judgments of sentiment, unlike judgments of fact, seem to lack a universal standard. For whereas in the latter, “the mind does nothing but run over its objects, as they are supposed to stand in reality, without adding any thing to them, or diminishing any thing from them,” “[i]n the former case, the mind is not content with merely surveying its objects, as they stand in themselves: it also feels a sentiment of delight or uneasiness, approbation or blame, consequent to that survey; and this sentiment determines it to affix the epithet *beautiful or deformed, desirable or odious*.”⁸

I would be justified, one supposes, in asserting “X seems beautiful,” if I felt the appropriate “sentiment of delight” and “X seems deformed” if the appropriate “sentiment of uneasiness.”

But the truth-conditions of “X is beautiful” (or “X is deformed”) are not merely subjective conditions; for “few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or establish their own sentiment as the standard of beauty.” The sentiment of beauty is universalized — made “objective” — by appeal to the sentiment of the qualified or ideal observer, though it is not clear whether Hume thinks of this creature as a logical fiction or whether he actually has in mind a statistical standard of taste, based on a real sample. In any case, Hume concludes: “It is sufficient for our present purpose if we have proved that the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that some men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by universal sentiment [i.e. opinion] to have a preference above others.”¹⁰ The truth-condition, then, for critical judgments, is the approval of the good critic, or ideal aesthetic observer, whose qualities can indeed, Hume thinks, be specified in some detail: “strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison [of one art work with another], and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to this character; and the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty.”¹¹

There is no doubt, I think, that Hume saw with great clarity the problem the logic of taste poses, which is a problem of justification — reason-giving in criticism. And it is this insight that makes his “literary” essays, modest in scope though they are in comparison with Hutcheson’s more worked out *Inquiry*, of greater philosophical penetration. But seeing a problem is not solving it; and for all its ingenuity, Hume’s solution will not do. For however we construe the concept of the Humean ideal aesthetic observer, it does not give us a plausible aesthetic logic. It is simply clear straightaway that appeal to an ideal observer will not settle any arguments in criticism. It will merely be taken as an appeal to authority, or a palpable begging of the question. This alone should tell us that there is nothing in the aesthetic dimension which functions the way the normal perceiver does in sense-perception. For the absurdity of accusing your oculist of appealing to authority or begging a question in pronouncing you color-blind or far-sighted is as obvious as the emptiness of a

music-lover's "argument" that the late Beethoven quartets are fine because Tovey says so.

This, then, was what Alexander Gerard had before his mind when he came to consider the logic of taste for himself in the 1750s:¹² two well worked-out analyses, along perceptual lines, the one a causal theory of taste, explaining rather than justifying it, the other an account of aesthetic reason-giving in terms of an ideal or normal perceiver. He opted for neither, but was true to the basic orientation of both, already quite explicit in Addison, that the logic of taste is an empirical logic and not, as Hume put it, one of "reasonings *a priori*," or "abstract conclusions of the understanding, from comparing those habitudes and relations of ideas which are eternal and immutable."¹³

What Gerard gives us is an inductive model. We discover, according to him, which qualities in objects cause which aesthetic sensations (beauty, or grandeur, or whatever) the way we discover which virus causes which disease, and which specific causes which cure. "All the objects which produce the same species of pleasure however different in other respects, have some qualities in common. It is by means of these qualities, that they produce this pleasure. It belongs to criticism to investigate and ascertain these qualities."¹⁴ The theory of criticism consists, as the above quotation suggests, in deriving aesthetic "laws" by induction. By introspection, and by making note of the reports of others, we correlate our experiences with the qualities in objects that accompany them, and so formulate such causal laws as that *uniformity*, *variety*, and *proportion* together produce the sensation of the beautiful, *amplitude* and *simplicity* together the sensation of the grand (or sublime), and so on. Practical criticism can now take over on two fronts: advising the artist how to produce his intended effects, and, according to Gerard, correcting the responses of the artist's audiences (since, he believes, induction provides us with "principles for deciding between discordant appretiations"¹⁵).

On the first front, the critic can formulate such practical aesthetic imperatives as: "To make a beautiful painting, give it *uniformity*, *variety*, and *proportion*"; or, "To make a sublime chorus, give it *amplitude* along with *simplicity*. It seems doubtful whether

such imperatives are of any real value; but less vacuous ones are in everyday use in the teaching of art. Where a logical problem does arise, however, not surprisingly, is on the second front, where the critic is supposed to “correct” the response of the perceiver. By what logical licence am I justified in accusing you of being mistaken if you do not get the feeling of beauty when contemplating an object with *uniformity*, *variety*, and *proportion*? One does not, after all, willfully *disobey* causal laws. One is simply an exception to them. As Gerard's illustrious contemporary Lord Kames remarked, with just this kind of theory obviously in mind, “doth it not seem whimsical, and perhaps absurd, to assert, that a man *ought not* to be pleased when he is, or that he *ought* to be pleased when he is not?” — assuming, of course, that these are aesthetic “oughts” and “ought nots,” not moral ones.¹⁶ Gerard has confounded standards of correctness with standards of normality, seeking, like Hume, to make a foundation for the one, while, like Hutcheson, providing a theory that can only accommodate the other.

At this point, I would like to suggest, Reid enters the arena. He has before him three alternative models for a logic of taste, each with its obvious defects.¹⁷ His task is to provide an account of aesthetic reasoning that avoids the pitfalls of Hutcheson's, Hume's, and Gerard's, and yet remains true to the basic orientation of empiricism, which means staying clear of the critical apriorism that the British in the eighteenth century, perhaps in some cases mistakenly, saw in the Renaissance Aristotelians and the seventeenth-century French critics and their followers. He comes closer to success than one has any right to expect, considering the philosophical constraints under which he works. To succeed fully he would have had, I think, to invent the twentieth century.

(2) Reid's Logic of Taste: The Moral Analogy

Reid meant his aesthetic theory to be viewed as part of his theory of perception. Failure to do so must lead to an underestimation of Reid's contribution to the philosophy of art. Read by themselves, the last of the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*

(“On Taste”), and the manuscript *Lectures on the Fine Arts* appear to be eighteenth-century platitudes. For their message is that aesthetic perception is sense-perception, their language the language of the inner sense school; and by the last quarter of the eighteenth century this was old hat.¹⁸ Only when we see how Reid departed from his empiricist predecessors in his overall account of perception can we realize the originality lurking in the cliché.¹⁹

So it is to Reid's account of perception that we will have to turn in explaining his aesthetics. But to avoid oversimplification of the former, it will be best to make appeal to it only as needed, and not attempt a preliminary exposition of Reid's theory of perception that could only be cursory and unsatisfactory.

I want to begin by examining a kind of false trail laid down in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, which strongly suggests a logic of taste far different from the one I take to be Reid's real and original contribution. I am not saying that it is necessarily inconsistent with the other — only that the former suggests one way of telling whether something is beautiful, or sublime, and the latter suggests quite a different way. And were the former all Reid had to say on the subject, he could be summarily dismissed as a throwback in the philosophy of art with nothing to offer of interest to contemporary aesthetics.

Reid distinguishes, in Essay VI of the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers* (“Of Judgment in General”), between necessary and contingent truths: those “whose contrary is impossible,” and those “depending upon some effect of will and power, which had a beginning, and may have an end.”²⁰ Both necessary and contingent truths can be divided into “first principles” and deductions from them: thus there are contingent first principles as well as necessary ones; and all are the same in that they are

propositions which are no sooner understood than they are believed. The judgment follows the apprehension of them necessarily, and both are equally the work of nature, and the result of our original powers. There is no searching for evidence; no weighing of arguments; the proposition is not deduced or inferred from another; it has the light of truth in itself, and has no occasion to borrow it from another.²¹

There are, Reid thought, six kinds of necessary first principles (or axioms): (1) grammatical; (2) logical; (3) mathematical; (4) axioms of taste; (5) moral; (6) metaphysical. That there should be necessary, self-evident principles of taste and the fine arts Reid anticipated would be surprising, if not downright unacceptable to his readers; for he presented the notion with a certain diffidence, thus: "I think there are [necessary] axioms, even in matters of *taste*";²² and, again, "Notwithstanding the variety found among men, in taste, there are, I apprehend, some common [first] principles, even in matters of this kind."²³

How are such aesthetic axioms apprehended? Reid draws an analogy here to the case of moral reasoning. "The first principles of morals," he writes in the *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, "are the immediate dictates of the moral faculty."²⁴ And, he argues, if sense-perception is construed in the way he — Reid — construes it, "our moral faculty may, I think, without impropriety, be called the *Moral Sense*."²⁵ He makes it quite explicit, too, in talking about aesthetic and moral first principles in Essay VI of the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, that the perception of aesthetic and moral axioms are on the same footing: "... They are grounded upon the constitution of that faculty which we call taste, and of that which we call the moral sense or conscience"²⁶

From the parallel which Reid draws between taste and morals, we can now extract a logic of taste: a schema for aesthetic reasoning. All moral reasoning, Reid tells us, rests "upon one or more first principles of morals, whose truth is immediately perceived without reasoning, by all men come to years of understanding."²⁷ And "From such self-evident principles, conclusions may be drawn synthetically with regard to the moral conduct of life; and particular duties or virtues may be traced back to such principles, analytically."²⁸ Thus every moral argument must have at least one moral axiom or first principle. And we may think of moral reasoning as of two kinds: *synthetic*, where I sit down (say) with a moral first principle and see what specific duties or courses of action I can deduce from it; or *analytic*, where, given a particular course of action, past or contemplated, I defend it by showing how it follows from a moral first principle. A very simple moral argument might have the form, then:

- (1) All actions of kind \mathcal{A} are right;
- (2) Action X is of kind \mathcal{A} ;
- Therefore, action X is right

where (1) is a self-evident moral axiom, apprehended by the moral sense, (2) a premise known empirically. The analogous aesthetic argument would go:

- (1) All objects of kind \mathcal{A} are beautiful;
- (2) Object X is of kind \mathcal{A} ;
- Therefore, object X is beautiful

where (1) is an a priori axiom of taste, apprehended by the sense of beauty, (2) an empirical premise, known, one surmises, in contemplating a work of art or other aesthetic object. Taste, or the sense of beauty, it should be remarked, is construed here not as a faculty of aesthetic appreciation, with works of art and nature as its objects, but, rather, a faculty which apprehends the truth or falsity of aesthetic propositions. This is in contrast not only to the way it is understood by Reid's predecessors and contemporaries, but the way it is understood by Reid himself later in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, as we shall see.

Now such a logic of taste is, I think, of little philosophical interest; and were it all Reid had to say on the matter, we could conclude that there is nothing of any real interest for the philosophy of art in his writings. For at our stage of the game, if one is tempted to say that the relation between aesthetic judgments and the reasons given for them is one of implication at all, it will be, as Michael Scriven suggests, a weaker kind of implication than that of strict logical entailment.²⁹ And even when these remarks of Reid's were penned, such a priori critical theory must have seemed an anachronism: a throwback to the "dark ages" of Aristotelianism which Addison, Hutcheson, Hume, Gerard, and Burke had banished forever. However, Reid did have more to say; and it is, I will argue, prophetic of the twentieth century rather than reminiscent of the sixteenth and seventeenth.

(3) Reid's Logic of Taste: The Perceptual Analogy

I will go on now to the two places where Reid presents in a reasonably complete and self-contained way what I take to be his “other” logic of taste. These are the essay “Of Taste,” which concludes the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, and the manuscript *Lectures on the Fine Arts*, which seems to have served as a draft for the former, although it contains additional material as well. Without trying to make these of a piece with the remarks on the axioms of taste in Essay VI (although I am not suggesting it cannot be done), I shall outline the main points of Reid's theory as there set out, from which, with the aid of allusions to his general account of perception, the “second” aesthetic logic can be extracted.

(i) *The faculty of taste is a “sense.”*

I come now to consider the power of mind which we call taste. This word is analogical; it is supposed to have some analogy to that sense to which we give the same name.³⁰

The external sense of taste, by which we distinguish and relish the various kinds of food, has given occasion to a metaphorical application of its name to this internal power of the mind, by which we perceive what is beautiful and what is deformed or defective in the various objects we contemplate.³¹

In thinking of taste as a kind of sense, and aesthetic perception (therefore) as a kind of sense-perception, Reid placed himself squarely in a tradition that for all intents and purposes began with Hutcheson. For although Hutcheson was not the first philosopher to use such phrases as “moral sense,” and “sense of beauty,” nor the first to make philosophical points with them, having the example of Shaftesbury, for one, before his mind, he was the first, I think, to take these phrases seriously enough to build an elaborate theory of morals and aesthetics out of them. Shaftesbury, after all, was a hidebound rationalist, for all his talk of “senses.”

In throwing himself on the side of the moral sense and sense of beauty, Reid at the same time projected himself into a long-standing dispute, with rationalists such as John Balguy and

Richard Price arrayed on one side, Hutcheson and Hume on the other. But although Reid did make the moral and aesthetic sense doctrine his own, he also succeeded in putting into that view a tincture of rationalism which served to bring the two closer together. This emerges as one gets an idea of what Reid was saying when he said something was a case of sense-perception, and how this differs from Locke and Hutcheson when they said the same thing.

One thing, however, is quite clear from the outset, and that is that the sense of beauty plays a far different role for Reid in "On Taste" and the *Lectures on the Fine Arts* from the one it seems to in Essay VI of the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*. The fact that aesthetic sensibility is being compared to the palate itself implies that its objects are aesthetic objects and not aesthetic or critical statements; for the objects of which the palate judges are soufflés and sardines, not precepts in cookbooks.

(ii) *There is a pleasurable sensation in every perception of beauty (or grandeur)*

Men have been apt to consider a kind of relation or analogy between that pleasure which arises from the consideration of the beauties of the objects of this power and [those] which arise from the palate.³²

These obvious analogies between external and internal taste, have led men, in all ages, and in all or most polished languages, to give the name of the external sense to this power of discerning what is beautiful with pleasure, and what is ugly and faulty in its kind with disgust.³³

The perception of beauty and grandeur, like all other perception, Reid claims, involves sensations. And, Reid insists, there is nothing to a sensation but the having of it. There are no sensations apart from acts of sensing. In other words, there can be no unsensed sensations; and this appears to be a logical impossibility.

Now two ways suggest themselves of understanding the claim that there cannot (logically) be sensations without acts of sensing. We might want to say that as we cannot (logically) have a valley without a mountain, so we cannot (logically) have a sensation

without a sensing, although as we can distinguish the valley from the mountain, we can, likewise, distinguish the sensation from the sensing. Or we might want to say (more economically) that the relation between sensations and acts of sensing is simply that of identity; that we cannot (logically) have sensations without sensings because sensations just are sensings and nothing else. The latter doctrine is what Reid explicitly expounds; but the former way of talking is easily fallen into; and Reid does fall into it at times, because it is difficult to avoid reifying sensations. Thus near the beginning of the *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, in discussing sensation, memory, and imagination, Reid argues that the object of memory when I remember smelling a rose, is the sensation of its fragrance, the object of imagination, when I imagine smelling a rose, the sensation of its fragrance; and, he goes on to say, “the object of my sensation, memory, and imagination, be in this case the same . . . ,”³⁴ the implication being that the object of the act of sensing is *a* sensation. Yet the view which Reid openly avows, both in the *Inquiry* and the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, is that sensation is without an object: is an act and nothing more. Thus: “*Sensation* is a name given by philosophers to an act of mind, which may be distinguished from all others by this, that it hath no object distinct from the act itself.”³⁵ I take this to be Reid’s mature, considered view of the matter. And we can conclude, therefore, that in the perception of beauty or grandeur, there is a pleasurable sensation which has no existence apart from its sensing, because it is its sensing. To have a pleasurable sensation of beauty is to sense pleasurable in a certain way, as “*feeling a pain* signifies no more than *being pained*.”³⁶

(iii) *There is in every perception of beauty (or grandeur) a quality in objects which causes the sensation in us.*

[W]e are led to distinguish that quality in a piece of music which excites the agreeable sensation from the sensation itself. In the same manner, in a piece of poetry or eloquence there is a distinction between the quality in it [which] pleases us and the sensation itself.³⁷

When a beautiful object is before us, we may distinguish the agreeable emotion it produces in us, from the quality of the object which causes the emotion.³⁸

When Reid says that in every perception of beauty there is a quality which causes the sensation, we must understand, to begin with, that he has already assumed the term “beauty” to refer to the quality, and the term “beautiful” to the object; neither to the sensation. We must also take him to be using the term “perception” in the sense in which it could only be true to say that *S* perceived beauty if there were indeed beauty there for *S* to perceive. In this sense of perceive Don Quixote did not perceive giants. “*S* perceives the φ of *X*,” then, implies there is an *X*, and it is φ ; in the special case, “*S* perceives the beauty of *X*” implies there is an *X* and that it is beautiful.

What is implied by “*S* is having a sensation of φ ,” or in the special case, “*S* is having a sensation of beauty (or grandeur)”? Presumably, one can be said to have a sensation of φ , where φ is a primary or secondary quality, without there being anything in the perceptual field that is φ : as, for example, when I see stars after being struck on the head. Now if the perception of beauty is treated, epistemically, in the manner of perception in general, as Reid insists it should be, then it should be correct to say “*S* has a sensation of beauty” without there being anything beautiful for *S* to perceive. Sometimes the eighteenth-century British aestheticians seem to suggest that φ is a sensation of beauty if and only if it is caused by the appropriate quality.³⁹ But if the logic of beauty is the logic of redness, this cannot be right; and I will take Reid at his word when he says that beauty is a quality, and that the plain man treats it as such.

(iv) *Beauty (and grandeur) are not in the eye of the beholder: they are properties of the objective and not the subjective world.*

[G]randeur in objects is not a feeling of the mind but a quality in these objects and our sensation is totally different from this quality.⁴⁰

The common judgment of mankind in this matter sufficiently appears in the language of all nations, which uniformly ascribes excellence, grandeur, and beauty to the object, and not to the mind that perceives it. And I believe in this, as in most other things, we shall find the common judgment of mankind and true philosophy not to be at variance.⁴¹

We have already been going under the assumption that for Reid beauty is a quality of the external world. Let us spell this out more fully.

There is a certain sense in which nearly every British writer on aesthetics in the eighteenth century thought that beauty is “subjective”; and a sense too in which they thought it was not. The sense in which Hutcheson, and Hume, and Gerard agreed that beauty is “subjective” is simply this: they all believed that at least one of the truth-conditions of “*X* is beautiful” involves someone-or-other's feelings or sensations. But both Hume and Gerard denied that beauty is subjective in that they thought “*X* is beautiful” is not true simply in virtue of its utterer's experiencing a certain feeling or sensation; and Hutcheson thought it was not “subjective” at least in the sense that the idea of beauty is governed in its occurrences by “objective” causal laws, and is not merely a random phenomenon, depending upon purely personal and fortuitous circumstances. (Hutcheson also thought that there was a theological explanation, in terms of final causes, for the connection between the sensation of beauty and *unity amidst variety*; but that need not concern us here.)

The logic of “*X* is beautiful” is, for Hume, as we have seen, somewhat analogous to that of such perceptual judgments as “*X* is red.” But the truth condition of “*X* is beautiful” is, for him, merely the sum of the feelings (actual or possible) of certain people; and it is purely a contingent matter of fact that those *X*s that do tend to incite these feelings happen to have this or that quality. For Hume, one must assume, an *X* that lacked a quality which normally arouses the sentiment of beauty in the normal or ideal perceiver but nevertheless did arouse it, would be beautiful for all of its abnormality; and the same would be the case for Hutcheson. For Reid, however, causing the sensation of beauty, even if the conditions are optimal and the perceiver normal, cannot of itself constitute beauty in the object. That is the cash value of Reid's insistence that when I say “*X* is beautiful,” I am making a statement about *X* and not a disguised statement about feelings or sensations, my own or those of some statistical or ideal group; the significance of his insistence that beauty and grandeur are “qualities.” It is what separates him from Hume's “objective

sensationism” as well as Hutcheson's “subjective” variety. For Hume, “ X is beautiful” is not merely a statement about the utterer's feelings — but it is a statement about feelings. For Reid, in contrast, it is exactly what it appears to be: a statement about X . X is red if and only if it has the property of redness; and X is beautiful if and only if it has the property of beauty. And that property is not just a causal one: beauty is not just the “property” of causing a certain sensation. It does cause a certain sensation; but its “propertyhood” (if you will forgive the barbarism) is independent of the fact that it causes the sensation in the following sense. I can assert “ X appears beautiful . . .” and fill in the blank as fully as I wish with statements about normal perceivers and conditions; yet I will still be able to deny that X is beautiful without contradicting myself.

(v) *There is in every aesthetic perception a judgment (that some object is beautiful or sublime or the like).*

[I]n every operation of taste there is an act of the judgment. . . . there is a judgment implied in every one of our perceptions. It is the same with regard to our taste. . . . In the perception of beauty, for instance, there is not only a sensation of pleasure but a real judgment concerning the excellence of the object. It is the same in poetry, painting, eloquence, and music, &c.⁴²

[A judgment] is implied in every perception of our external senses. There is an immediate conviction and belief of the existence of the quality perceived, whether it be a colour, or sound, or figure; and the same thing holds in the perception of beauty or deformity.⁴³

It has been argued that at least in the central cases of perception, the following obtains: if S perceives X , and X is an A , then S perceives an A . Of course S need not know that X is an A to be truthfully said to be perceiving an A , nor would he need to know that he is perceiving X . The verb “to see” — a paradigm perception-verb — seems to be very much like, in this respect, the verb “to kick,” G. J. Warnock argues: “so that, just as if A kicks X , he therein kicks whatever X is, so he sees whatever X is, if he sees X .”⁴⁴ This may be the case, Warnock conjectures, because

one should say that the truth or falsehood of “ A sees X ” is quite independent of the question of how, or even whether, A himself is

able, or prepared, or inclined to specify, or identify, or describe what he sees — so that, if it is true that he sees X , we can obtain, without any further reference to him or his views, further truths, by replacing X with any expressions at all that are in fact true of X .⁴⁴

But as Reid construes perception, when he says that in every perception of beauty there is a judgment and a belief that some object is beautiful, the above does not hold. The phrase “perception of φ ” might be applicable to the case in which I perceive X and in fact X is φ , although I have no idea whatever that it is; as, if I see Brutus, it might be characterized as the perception of a conspirator, even though I am out of the secret. Reid, however, uses the phrase “perception of beauty” in such a way that S seeing X is a case of the perception of beauty if and only if there is an X , and it is beautiful, and S takes it to be beautiful. When Reid says that in every perception there is a judgment, he is interpreting perception as “perception that.” He is giving an analysis of perception in terms of belief; for Reid, whenever it is true to say that S perceives φ , it is true to say that S believes something is φ . In this respect Reid's theory of perception is an “epistemic” one that “attempts to analyse seeing (or perception generally) in terms of belief (or knowledge) or the acquisition of beliefs.”⁴⁵ (Not every epistemic theory, however, says, as Reid does, that perceiving φ must involve acquiring a belief that something is φ — merely that the acquiring of *some* belief or other is involved.) Thus it is that Reid says there is a judgment “implied” in every perception of beauty; for I cannot be correctly said to have perceived a beautiful X without having judged X to be beautiful; that is, without belief in or knowledge of its beauty.

It is this epistemic construal of perception that, I think, makes Reid's theory of taste a departure from the traditional aesthetic sense doctrine rather than a return to it; and it is this too which, at the same time, smooths over the differences between the school of Hutcheson and its rationalist critics. It at least partly justifies Reid's claim on the attentions of intellectual historians as an innovator in Enlightenment aesthetics, appearances notwithstanding to the contrary. John Balguy had, early on, criticized the notion of taste as a “sense” by arguing that beauty is a

relation, perhaps even Hutcheson's *unity amidst variety*, but that relations cannot be perceived by senses. "However Sense may convey to us the Ideas of external *Objects*, yet the relations between them no *Sense* can reach."⁴⁶ But Balguy's conception of sense was not Reid's. And Reid might well have replied that on Balguy's view of perception, objects cannot be perceived either, for they, as well as relations, require for their perception just what Balguy denies to the senses, namely, *judgment*; whereas on the epistemic view, the very thing that makes perception in general possible makes the perception of relations possible as well: that is, analysis of perception in terms of the acquiring of beliefs or knowledge. Whatever account of perception is adequate to the perception of objects must, *ipso facto*, be adequate to the perception of relations such as *unity amidst variety* into the bargain. What such rationalist critics as Balguy succeeded in doing, through the agency of Reid, was not to discredit the aesthetic sense doctrine, but, more important, to lay bare the theory of perception which lay behind it, and to provide an alternative.

(vi) *There is disputing about taste.*

[T]hose who have advanced [the theory that] there is no standard of taste are evidently wrong. The same reasoning may extend to justice, truth, &c. The arg[uments] on both kinds are the same, and if the one is overthrown, the foundation of the other is not very certain. The differences of taste depend on custom, &c. The qualities in the object of taste are still the same.⁴⁷

Those who conceive that there is no standard in nature by which taste may be regulated, and that the common proverb, "That there ought to be no dispute about taste," is to be taken in the utmost latitude, go upon slender and insufficient ground. The same arguments might be used with equal force against any standard of truth.⁴⁸

Reid apparently believed that the existence of aesthetic reasoning and a "standard of taste" are dependent upon beauty and grandeur being "qualities" (or "properties") in a nontrivial sense: that is, not merely in the sense in which if X is φ , then it is true (although perhaps not idiomatic) to say that X has the quality (or property) of φ -ness, whatever φ may be. At least the argument for beauty and grandeur being qualities is presented, in

one of its forms, as an argument for a standard of taste, an affirmation of the possibility of reason-giving in criticism. That there is a standard of taste follows directly, Reid thinks, from the fact of beauty and grandeur being (nontrivially) “qualities” of aesthetic objects. For taste that has the pleasurable sensation of beauty or grandeur in the absence of the qualities is bad taste, as is taste that fails to have it in their presence; just as eyes are bad if they have sensations of redness in the absence of red things, or fail to have them in their presence: “our internal taste ought to be accounted most just and perfect, when we are pleased with things that are most excellent in their kind, and displeased with the contrary.”⁴⁹ But the question now arises of how we are to know when taste and object are properly engaged. We know the truth condition: *X* is beautiful if and only if it possesses the quality of beauty. But what are the acceptance conditions? Under what circumstances am I justified in concluding that *X* does have the property of beauty (or grandeur, or whatever)?

Reid maintains that the sensation of φ is a “sign” of the quality φ , and that in perception, the sensation, as sign, produces in the perceiver the belief in the existence of the quality. I want to suggest that in using the sign concept in the way he does, Reid is groping for a relationship between sensation and quality familiar to twentieth-century ears.

Reid distinguishes between “artificial” and “natural” signs. The former may be illustrated by the relationship between language and the world, the latter by relationships in nature (for example, cherry blossoms being a “sign” of Spring). Natural signs Reid further subdivides into “learned” and “unlearned” ones. Unlearned natural signs are “those which, though we never before had any notion or conception of the thing signified, do suggest it, or conjure it up, as it were, by a natural kind of magic, and at once give us a conception and create a belief of it.” One large class of these signs is the class of behavioral signs which, Reid believes, lead us to know the existence of other minds and their states; another of them is our sensations. “The notion of hardness in bodies, as well as the belief of it, are got in a similar manner; being, by an original principle of our nature, annexed to that sensation which we have when we feel a hard body.”⁵⁰

Let us ask ourselves now why Reid chose to call a sensation a “sign” of a quality in the first place. He said that qualities *cause* sensations (in a qualified, Humean sense of “cause”). Why did he not just leave it at that? A quality causes a sensation as fire causes smoke; and as smoke is a symptom of fire, sensations are symptoms of qualities. He did not do this, I would suggest, because he wanted to emphasize that there is some kind of *conceptual* relationship between sensations and qualities; and this is conveyed by the semantic connotations of the word “sign,” for a sign, unlike a mere effect, has meaning. Reid did not want to fall back on the Lockean paradigm of qualities simply as causes of sensations, because, for the familiar reasons, that leads to unanswerable skepticism about the external world, there being no way of inferring the qualities from the sensations.

But the relation of sensation to quality cannot, Reid thought, be conventional in the same sense in which human language is. Hence sensations cannot be “artificial” signs like words or icons. They must be “natural” in some sense or other. But the kind of thing that this immediately brings to mind is, again, the notion of causality. We have empirical evidence that smoke is caused by fire, the causal connection of course being a “natural” one; and we then infer fire when we smell smoke. However, Reid is at great pains to insist that perception is *not* a mode of *inference*. Thus “it is not by a train of reasoning and argumentation that we come to be convinced of the existence of what we perceive; we ask no argument for the existence of the object, but that we perceive it; perception commands our belief upon its own authority, and disdains to rest its authority upon any reasoning whatsoever.”⁵¹ One cannot be reasoned into belief in the external world, because reasoning is from the more certain to the less; and there is nothing more certain than that we perceive an external world. Perception may be the beginning of an argument, but never its conclusion. When Reid says that sensations are natural signs of qualities, then, it is not the sense in which they are traces from which, by dint of thought, we can deduce conclusions not apparent on the face of things.

So Reid was, at least implicitly, suggesting a conceptual relationship between sensation and quality by calling the former a “sign”

and playing on its semantic connotations. But what does he construe this conceptual relationship to be? Let us understand “having a sensation” as “being appeared to,” in the sense in which whenever I perceive anything, something is appearing to me in some way or other, confining ourselves to the cases in which there is something which is appearing. So we will examine a case in which *S* is having (say) a sensation of beauty; and we will understand it to be a case in which *something* is appearing beautiful to *S* (thus avoiding cases like after-images and hallucinations, where it is not obvious what, if anything, is doing the appearing). Now for Reid, it is clear, the relationship between appearing and being beautiful cannot be that of analyticity. The meaning of “*X* is beautiful” is not, as we have seen, exhausted by any conjunction of statements about how *X* appears. Reid detects and vigorously rejects in Berkeley and others that kind of phenomenalism, deriding it as “a custom with modern philos[ophers] to resolve everything into feelings; as that there is not heat in the fire but in the mind”⁵²

But what would a conceptual relationship be like, that was not analytic, yet nevertheless was *conceptual*? Reid tells us that skepticism with regard to the existence of the external world is “absurd.” Well, one obvious meaning of “absurd” is “necessarily false.” And this is certainly one of the things Reid means by it. However, skepticism vis-à-vis the external world is not necessarily false, so this cannot be the kind of absurdity which characterizes it. And it is not the only kind of absurdity Reid recognizes, for he states: “We may observe that opinions which contradict first principles, are distinguished, from other errors, by this: — That they are not only false but absurd”⁵³ And since some first principles are contingent, it follows that not all absurdities are necessarily false. Such absurdities — of which skepticism with regard to perception is a prime example — are what Reid characterizes as sins against “the common sense of mankind.” “If there are certain principles, as I think there are, which the constitution of our nature leads us to believe, and which we are under a necessity to take for granted in the common concerns of life, without being able to give a reason for them — these are what we call the principles of common sense; and what is manifestly contrary to them, is what we call absurd.”⁵⁴

Reid is knocking at the door, here, of that third kind of truth — neither empirical nor analytic — which the Wittgensteinian would call *criteriological*. But he does not have the real key. What he is very near to, I want to suggest, and what his criticism of Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Hutcheson points to, is the notion that the conditions for accepting the perceptual judgment “ X is φ ,” which include X appearing φ to the normal perceiver under normal conditions, etc., are conceptually related to the meaning of “ X is φ ” without the relationship being analytic, and yet without it being contingent either.⁵⁵ Because the relationship is conceptual, we are justified in wondering whether someone understands “ X is φ ” while asserting that X appears φ to the normal observer under normal conditions, etc., and denying that X is φ . But because the relationship is not analytic, there is no logical contradiction. This, I suggest, is the position Reid came very near to bringing forth some two hundred years before its time. I would like to underscore *very near to*, however, to emphasize that he never really got there. Reid was unable to find the concept to accommodate his intuition, and so clothed it in such nativistic garb as “instinct,” “the constitution of our nature,” “under a necessity to take for granted in the common concerns of life,” and so on — all of which points in a far less promising direction, and certainly not in the direction of criteria. What Reid needed was a connection stronger than contingency and weaker than strict logical entailment. He had to settle for a strange alliance of the “sign” notion and the notion of “innateness.” The intended offspring was, of course, meant to be a hybrid; that it turned out to be something of sterile monstrosity as well was due, unfortunately, to the incompatibility of the only two available parents.

Viewed in this light, the statements which support aesthetic judgments are seen to be criteriological: the relationship of justification to judgment being conceptual without at the same time being analytic. In choosing a perceptual model with which to work, I think Reid made a serious mistake. For a perceptual logic of taste, even as Reid construes perception, is open to the same objections that were levelers previously against Hume's earlier attempt along these lines. But in attempting, however haltingly, to produce an alternative to the inductive and deductive models

of aesthetic reasoning, Reid was moving aesthetics in what has turned out to be a fruitful direction, regardless of whether you think the notion of criteria will provide the final answer or not.

Reid, then, was struggling, I suggest, to extricate the logic of taste from the toils of Hutcheson, Hume, and Gerard. He never quite succeeds in giving the new direction to aesthetics that it needed; but he comes closer than we have any right to expect. Norman Malcolm has observed⁵⁶ that Locke was apparently trying to find a third way between the analytic and the contingent in Book IV of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, where he described our “knowledge” of the external world as neither intuitive nor demonstrative, yet “going beyond bare probability”⁵⁷ In his own distinctive way, Reid was reacting to the same epistemological need in his theory of aesthetic perception. But it was an idea whose time had not yet come.

(4) A Disappointing Conclusion

I should like to have concluded with the preceding expression of enthusiasm for Reid's forward-looking contribution to the logic of taste. But to do so would have conveyed a false impression; and, unfortunately, the correcting of that impression tarnishes somewhat the lustre of Reid's accomplishment in the philosophy of art.

When one is told that a philosopher has given an analysis of such statements as “X is beautiful,” or “X is sublime,” one supposes (and rightly so) that the analysis will tell us something about what we are doing when we say such ordinary things as: “The sunset is really sublime tonight,” or “What a beautiful face she has,” or “The sextet is really the only truly beautiful thing in *Lucia*,” and so on. And it is with such judgments before our minds that we are struck by the forward-looking character of Reid's logic of taste. But the disappointing truth is that Reid had no such judgments in *his* mind when he offered his analysis. For Reid, it appears, “X is beautiful (or sublime)” can only be *literally* true where X is a mind, and Reid's analysis has nothing whatever to do with the beauty of faces and sextets, or the sublimity of sunsets. The kind of judgment Reid has been exercised over

can much more appropriately be called “moral” than “aesthetic.” Reid puts it “that it is in the moral and intellectual perfections of mind, and its active powers, that beauty originally dwells; and that from this as the fountain, all the beauty which we perceive in the visible world is derived.”⁵⁸ And again: “It consists then, I apprehend, in those actions & qualities of mind which command our admiration and esteem.”⁵⁹ Beauty, and sublimity, in the sense we have laboriously explicated, are moral properties of minds; and all the things we normally think of as beautiful or sublime — sunsets, and faces, and sextets — are not only not beautiful or sublime in the sense explicated, but are not literally beautiful or sublime at all. “Beauty in material objects arises from those actions & qualities of mind which excite our esteem, in a secondary manner, as signs.”⁶⁰ The sunset is a “sign” of wisdom in the Creator; but it is the Creator that is sublime. The face gives evidence of the amiable qualities of mind that animate it; but it is the mind that is beautiful. The sextet suggests the musical ingenuity and inventiveness of its composer; but it is Donizetti's mind, not the sextet from *Lucia*, that is beautiful.

There is no need to dwell at length on the logical problems of this view: its obvious inadequacies in dealing with our perfectly ordinary and familiar experiences of beauty and sublimity in the world around us; the fact that it runs counter to all our intuitions about what it is we ascribe aesthetic qualities to and perceive them in.⁶¹ Suffice it to say, it suffers from all the ills of those aesthetic theories that have refused to locate aesthetic qualities where we all seem to perceive them to be, almost always under the baleful influence of some metaphysical taboo or other. What the keenly analytic neo-empiricist has given the philosophy of art with one hand, the Neoplatonic metaphysician has clumsily knocked away with the other. It is certainly true, as Timothy J. Duggan observes, that Reid's “discussion of grandeur and beauty in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers* deserves the close attention of contemporary writers in aesthetics”⁶² — but, one is tempted to add, not too close. It comes off best when read at a distance, and slightly misconstrued.

XIX Seeing (And So Forth) Is Believing (Among Other Things): On the Significance of Reid in the History of Aesthetics

(1) Although it may seem self-serving to say so, I think it altogether appropriate that a discussion of Thomas Reid's significance in the history of aesthetics be included in a conference commemorating the bicentenary of the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*. Because Reid, I shall argue, represents a very important “first” in the history of aesthetics; and it is in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers* that that “first” is first achieved.

Philosophers since Plato have talked about art (or some of the arts) with their philosophical hats on. But no philosopher of the first rank made the philosophy of art a substantial part of his system, with the possible exception of Plato (if Plato can be thought to have had the concept of art at all), until Reid: more specifically, until Reid included, as the final essay of the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, an essay “Of Taste.”

In modern times, Leibniz and Descartes wrote, here and there, about art; but neither made art a central or systematic concern. If Hume can correctly be described as having a system, the philosophy of art was not a substantial part of it, although Hume wrote small works on aesthetics, and philosophical remarks on art are scattered throughout the *Treatise*, both *Inquiries*, and the essays. Francis Hutcheson wrote a treatise devoted exclusively to the subject: perhaps the first. But Hutcheson, as good as he was, was not a philosopher of the first rank. Nor was Alexander Baumgarten,

although he *was* a systematic philosopher and wrote an extended treatise on aesthetics as part of that system. Berkeley, a philosopher of the first rank, made some very perceptive remarks on beauty in *Alciphron*. But even if Berkeley could correctly be described as having a system, which he cannot, these remarks could not be seen as constituting a part of it.

The fact is, I believe, that the first philosopher of the first rank to make the philosophy of art a part of a philosophical system, or, if you prefer, a part of an extended chain of philosophical reasoning, is Thomas Reid; and that is my theme.

But I would hardly have agreed to speak here if all I had to commemorate was the fact that Reid did something *first*. I doubt if I would feel inclined to memorialize the first anti-Semite, or the first person to fly across the Atlantic ocean upside down. For a first, clearly, to be a memorable first, it must be something worthwhile. Reid might well have been the first philosopher of rank to include aesthetics in his system, but have had, in the event, nothing of philosophical interest to say about it. Such, however, is not the case. What Reid said was original, and valuable, amounting to something like the culmination of a major trend in Enlightenment philosophy of art.

But I think something further must be the case for me to feel it appropriate to commemorate Reid's accomplishment in the philosophy of art *both* for its priority *and* its importance. I see no reason for calling attention to the fact that Reid was the first philosopher of rank to make aesthetics part of an extended philosophical system, even if it was a valuable piece of work, if its being a part of the system had nothing to do with its content and value. Why bother to mention the former at all, except perhaps in passing? Why not just commemorate the fact that Reid said something of value for the history of aesthetics and talk about *that*? The reason I wish to talk about, and commemorate *both* must be, of course, because I think there is an important philosophical connection between them: that, in other words, the inclusion of aesthetics in his philosophical system had the result of making it the valuable contribution that it turned out to be. To be more specific, philosophical insights that Reid had in the philosophy of perception spilled over into the essay "Of Taste," broadening and deepening it.

My theme, then, is more than just that Reid was the first philosopher of the first rank to include aesthetics in his system. It is also that that was in part what made it valuable and original. But before I can make this out, some extended preliminary considerations must be put forward, with regard to Reid's most important predecessors in the philosophy of art, Francis Hutcheson and David Hume. For Reid's accomplishment is the final fruition of their work, and not possible without it. It is not some product of solitary genius: that was not the stuff of which Reid's intellect was made.

(2) I begin with a distinction of very recent vintage, which I hope will help to illuminate what I take to be the general evolution of theories of aesthetic perception in Britain, starting with Hutcheson and culminating, so I shall argue, in Reid. In a paper called "Analysing Seeing" Frank Sibley wrote, a few years ago:

Certain accounts of perception, particularly some recent ones, may be seen by an admitted simplification as developing or defending one or other of two opposing positions. . . .

These opposing accounts both concern not what is seen but seeing itself. . . . The accounts may conveniently, if not very accurately, be labelled respectively "epistemic" and "non-epistemic." The former attempts to analyse seeing (or perception generally) in terms of belief (or knowledge) or the acquisition of beliefs. According to it, an analysis of seeing things or events necessarily involves reference to believing-that, or to seeing-that, which in turn is analysed, partially at least, in terms of believing-that. It is not held, generally, that seeing-that can occur without seeing things or events; but it is held that the former notion is the fundamental one.

The opposing account holds that there is some basic seeing (or perceiving) that is "non-epistemic," i.e. does not necessarily involve acquisition of beliefs (or knowledge) and can be adequately analysed without reference to the concept of belief at all.¹

Without imagining that this distinction between epistemic and non-epistemic perception can be applied with anything but an approximate fit to the theories I will be discussing here, it nevertheless serves to mark out an important respect in which Francis Hutcheson's view of how beauty is perceived, at least as presented in the first edition of the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*,

differed from the view of Reid, as formulated in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, and it serves also to mark out the steps that intervened. In effect, my thesis is that a gradual evolution can be discerned, from the basically non-epistemic theory of Hutcheson, to the unqualifiedly epistemic theory of Reid, with Hume as the intermediary. And, I shall argue, it was Reid's systematic treatment of perception in general that enabled him to make philosophically explicit and unequivocal what, even in the most mature reflections of Hume, remained for the most part unspoken and to be inferred. In that sense, Reid put the capstone on eighteenth-century British aesthetic theory, at least in so far as it was a theory of *perception*.

(3) Hutcheson's view, at least in 1725, as I see it, was something like this. Beauty, as he put it, "is taken for *the idea raised in us*, and a *sense* of beauty for *our power of receiving this idea*."² The idea of beauty, which he sometimes characterized as something like the Lockean idea of a secondary quality, and sometimes as a pleasure, was caused to be aroused, he thought, by a quality of objects that he called *uniformity amidst variety*. And he made it unmistakably clear, at least in his earliest, and most influential statement of the view, that the connection between the quality and the idea is completely untainted by knowledge or belief; that is to say, the idea of beauty is caused to arise without the observer either having to know or to believe that the object being perceived possesses the quality or that such a quality has any relation to beauty, or even that such a quality exists. As Hutcheson expressed this crucial point:

But in all these instances of beauty let it be observed that the pleasure is communicated to those who never reflected on this general foundation, and that all here alleged is this, that the pleasant sensation arises only from objects in which there is *uniformity amidst variety*. We may have the sensation without knowing what is the occasion of it, as a man's taste may suggest ideas of sweets, acids, bitters, though he may be ignorant of the forms of the small bodies, or their motions, which excite these perceptions in him.³

In this sense, then, Hutcheson's theory of the perception of beauty is a non-epistemic one. The quality in objects that causes

the idea is in his view analogous to the microstructure of matter — “the forms of the small bodies, or their motions” — that cause, without, of course, our necessarily knowing of or believing in their existence and causal efficacy, such sensations as those of the sweet, the sour, and the bitter.

What must first strike us about this representation of the matter, and, indeed, must even have struck Hutcheson in later years, is how counter-intuitive the *non-epistemic* aspect really is. It certainly does not sound wildly implausible to claim that the perception of the beautiful is at least in part the experience of the pleasurable, and that *uniformity amidst variety* is at least one of the qualities in objects giving rise to that kind of pleasure. But what we take to be happening is that we become aware of the quality and enjoy our experience of it. We take the object to have this or that relation of parts, and find enjoyment in it. This is even more apparent when the object is not some simple kind of thing, like a colored pebble or geometrical figure, but a poem, or a painting, or a musical composition. The perception of beauty, we are forced to believe, is deeply epistemic, at least where the objects of perception are works of art, or things of comparable complexity.

I have said that Hutcheson himself must later have perceived this defect in his theory, and have emphasized that what I am giving here is to be taken only as a reading of the first edition of the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, because there is evidence, in his later works, and even, to a very small degree, in later editions of the *Inquiry*, of a shift towards a more plausible epistemic view. I wish I had time to go into this matter more deeply here; but we have other fish to fry. Yet I cannot leave it completely unexplored, for it is germane to my thesis.

In a recent article on Hutcheson's theory of aesthetic perception, distinguished both for its thoroughness and its acuity, Emily Michael has given an analysis at variance, in certain crucial respects, with the one I have given above, and from ones I have given elsewhere.⁴ For present purposes, it is important to note only that her account implies, although she does not herself draw the inference explicitly, an epistemic construal of Hutcheson's theory. Thus she writes in one place: “Hutcheson repeatedly tells

us that the particular regularity which excites a sensible idea of beauty in our minds is an apprehension of uniformity; aesthetic pleasure is perceived upon finding uniformity among sensible qualities that were previously received and compared.”⁵ I take it that “apprehend” and “find” must be understood here epistemically: that is to say, to apprehend or to find *uniformity amidst variety* in something is to come to know, or at least come to believe that the *uniformity amidst variety*, under some relevant description or other, is there. And so, on Michael's interpretation, the *uniformity amidst variety* does not *cause* aesthetic pleasure in us the way light of a certain wavelength, reflected off an object with a particular microstructure, *causes* the sensation of redness, but more like the way my perceiving *that* you are angry at me might *cause* me to be afraid. It is, indeed, a much more sensible view of the matter. But is it Hutcheson's view, as expressed in the first edition of the first *Inquiry*?

My answer must be “no.” There is no way that that work can be interpreted epistemically; and, indeed, I do not find a single passage in it that suggests anything but a non-epistemic account of the perception of beauty. And this claim is fully supported by the fact that all the passages Michael adduces, suggesting to me an epistemic position, are from Hutcheson's *later* works, beginning with the *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* of 1728.

There are two ways one can treat a philosopher's texts: as all of a piece, expressing one integrated point of view; or as evincing some sort of intellectual development. Michael has treated Hutcheson's philosophical works in the former way; I believe they must be treated in the latter, for I can see no way of bringing the early *Inquiry Concerning Beauty* into conformity with the later works on the question of whether the perception of beauty is epistemic or non-epistemic: the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty* clearly presents us with a non-epistemic theory, while the later works (quite sensibly) seem to be moving towards an epistemic one. This neither surprises nor disappoints me. For as I read the history of aesthetics in eighteenth-century Britain, the direction of thought was obviously from the non-epistemic to the epistemic, on quite reasonable grounds; and Hutcheson, who was a reasonable

man, must no doubt have come to see the problem with the non-epistemic view, both in his self-critical moments, as well as under the critical influence of Balguy, Price, Berkeley, and Hume. I cannot go into this evolution of Hutcheson's own thought fully here.⁶ But I must go on to say something about Hume, who, I believe, brought matters to the point where Reid could put the very important finishing touches on the developing epistemic theory of aesthetic perception.⁷

(4) I shall distinguish three stages in the evolution of Hume's theory of aesthetic perception, each a step away from the non-epistemic theory of Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*. They are: Book III of the *Treatise* (1740); the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1752); and "Of the Standard of Taste" (1757).

We can, at a certain level of abstraction, characterize Hume's view of the perception of beauty, in the *Treatise*, as Hutcheson's pretty much all over again. Hutcheson said that the word "beauty" is taken for the idea raised in us; Hume would have said that the word "beauty" is taken for the sentiment raised in us. Hutcheson said that this idea was caused to be raised in us by a specific quality in objects known to him; Hume said that this sentiment was caused to be raised in us by a particular quality in objects known to him.

But as soon as we compare the quality Hutcheson thought arouses the idea of beauty with the one that Hume thought arouses the sentiment, we see directly that their theories, for all of their surface similarity, are already diverging. Hutcheson's quality is *uniformity amidst variety*, which looks, on first reflection, as if it might plausibly "cause" the idea of beauty to be aroused, in the sense in which a certain wavelength of light, reflected off the surface of an object with a particular microstructure, causes me to have the sensation of redness. At least before we think carefully about it, a non-epistemic account seems possible with this kind of quality as the cause of the idea. Hume, however, thinks the quality which causes the sentiment is *utility*: the use which an object might have, and the sympathetic identification one might have with the pleasure its usefulness would bring to the person who possessed it. And it is impossible to think, even

in the most unreflective moment, that such a quality could arouse the appropriate sentiment in us the way poison ivy makes us itch. We must *perceive that* an object has a certain utility before we can be pleased by it. Nor does Hume leave this inference for us to draw; he makes it quite explicit himself, where he says, for example: “A fertile soil, and a happy climate, delight us by a reflexion on the happiness they would afford the inhabitants . . .”; or, again, in “Most kinds of beauty . . . tho' our first object [of perception] be some senseless inanimate piece of matter, 'tis seldom we rest here, and carry not our view to its influence on sensible and rational creatures.”⁸ Can there be any real doubt that “reflexion” and “carry . . . our view to” are epistemic: that they imply we must come to know or believe something is useful, and what its use is, before that supposed use can give rise to the sentiment of beauty? In spite, then, of his general agreement with Hutcheson, Hume is already committed, in the *Treatise*, to an epistemic theory of how we perceive the beautiful.

What is noticeably lacking in Book III of the *Treatise* is any discussion at all of works of the fine arts, the more surprising in Hume than in Hutcheson, where such discussion is hardly extensive, although not totally lacking, because works of art provide a fertile field for an epistemic account of aesthetic perception, while being recalcitrant to a non-epistemic one. This obviously became apparent to Hume later on, for in the second *Inquiry* we begin to get examples drawn from the fine arts, rather than from nature or human artefacts, to illustrate the perception of the beautiful. And it is of particular significance for my argument that what Hume is at pains to emphasize, when he talks about art in the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, is the role of reason in perceiving it. Thus he writes in one place:

Some species of beauty, especially the natural kinds, in their first appearance, command our affection and approbation; and where they fail of this effect, it is impossible for any reasoning to redress their influence, or adapt them better to our taste and sentiment. But in many orders of beauty, particularly those of the finer arts, it is requisite to employ much reasoning, in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by arguments and reflection.⁹

Hume maintained, in the *Treatise*, as well as in the second *Inquiry*, a distinction between beauty that speaks immediately to the senses, for no apparent reason, and beauty which, as he says in the passage just quoted, requires “much reasoning” for its perception.¹⁰ The “immediate” beauty may well be a lingering vestige of Hutcheson's influence: a similar distinction still survives in Reid. But it is the epistemic perception of the beautiful that becomes the center of philosophical interest for Hume; and that, it seems to me, more than anything else, sets the stage for Reid's attempt to make the perception of the beautiful (and the sublime) part of a general theory of perception explicitly epistemic in character.

Hume tells us in the second *Inquiry*, as we have just seen, that “much reasoning” is requisite for the perception of beauty in “the finer arts.” What do we reason *about*? We must turn to Hume's dissertation, “Of the Standard of Taste,” to get at the few hints of an answer that, alas, are all Hume left us.

What we are calling the “epistemic” perception of beauty Hume maintained in the *Treatise* to be the arousing of a sentiment upon the apprehension of *utility*. It should come as no surprise, then, that in “Of the Standard of Taste” Hume at least suggested that it is *functional* properties of works of art that we must apprehend in the perception of artistic beauty, about which we acquire knowledge or belief. These functional properties are of two kinds: the parts of a work of art having specific functions within the work, that contribute to its overall effect; and the overall effect itself, that the art work is intended to achieve — that is to say, *its* overall function. So, for example, the parts of a tragedy have their individual functions within the work, all contributing to the function of the work as a whole, which, let us say for the sake of argument, is the arousal and katharsis of pity and fear. As Hume sketchily expresses the view in one place:¹¹

In all the nobler productions of genius, there is a mutual relation and correspondence of parts; nor can either the beauties or blemishes be perceived by him whose thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all those parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the consistence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art also has a certain end or purpose for which it is

calculated; and is to be deemed more or less perfect, as it is more or less fitted to attain this end.

If there were any lingering doubts that Hume, in spite of his choice of *utility* as the operative quality in the perception of beauty, was giving, in the *Treatise*, an epistemic account of aesthetic perception, such passages as this one in “Of the Standard of Taste” can leave no similar doubt at all about the latter work. It is thought, Hume makes unmistakably clear, that reason must deliver itself of conclusions about the functions of art works and their parts before the proper sentiment of beauty (or its opposite) can be expected to arise.

If I am right, then, in my reading of the general drift in theories of aesthetic perception in eighteenth-century Britain, away from non-epistemic, causal theories such as Hutcheson's, towards a more plausibly epistemic theory such as Hume's, in “Of the Standard of Taste,” it seems natural to expect Reid should eventually see the theory of aesthetic perception as just another part of the general theory of perception that he was developing, since that theory was to be so distinctively epistemic itself. That, in any case, is how I see the course of events; and it is now time to play the last, climactic scene.

(5) Reid's account of perception was already fully formed, in its main outlines, in the *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, of 1764. But there is no hint in that work of an attempt to make aesthetic perception a part of the system. There are, indeed, some scattered remarks on the fine arts; they are, however, brief and disconnected, nor do they touch upon any of the main points of what was later to be Reid's theory of taste, except in the most perfunctory manner.¹² If Reid saw, at that time, any systematic connection between beauty, sublimity, and any of the qualities of the external world that a philosophy of perception must deal with, it was a well-kept secret.

In what comes down to us in a manuscript dated 1774 as *Lectures on the Fine Arts*, there is a reasonably complete, if rather sketchy, version of Reid's aesthetic theory. And there is, too, just the beginnings of the idea that this aesthetic theory is not an appendage to Reid's philosophy, but an integral part of it, at least

in so far as that philosophy is a philosophy of perception. I am thinking here primarily of the place in the *Lectures* where Reid says that “there is a judgement implied in every one of our perceptions. It is the same with regard to our taste”¹³ Granted, it is only the merest of suggestions; but it is the linchpin connecting aesthetic perception with perception *tout court* that *both* are to be understood epistemically; and Reid's way of expressing that idea is always by saying that in perception, be it the seeing of a red flag or a beautiful painting, there is judgment that something is the case. In the *Lectures*, however, we merely have this vague suggestion; in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers* we have the *fait accompli*. So let me turn, finally, to the object of our celebrations.

It would be an act of sheer folly for me to lecture this learned company on Reid's philosophy of perception; and I am much too old a dog to commit it. But never mind; it isn't necessary anyway. What we need for present purposes is only the general form; and that, I think, we can all agree on, without getting into the niceties of interpretation at the cutting edge of research.

The general shape of Reid's account of perception is something like this. Let us say that I am looking at a letter box: the American kind. In that case, the following things are true of this simple case of perception, on Reid's view.

(i) I am having, among other sensations, a sensation of blueness. This sensation is conceived of by Reid not as an object but, rather, as an act or event. I am sensing “bluely”; and because the sensation is identical with the act of sensing, the being of a sensation is the sensing of it; the sensation is just identical with the sensing. You can't have a smile without a smiling.

(ii) This sensation is a natural sign of a quality in the object which it signifies. There are three kinds of natural signs, according to Reid. There are learned natural signs, as, for example, where clouds are a sign of rain, or smoke of fire. There is the unlearned emotive language of mankind, which also serves for Reid as the basis for what we would call the “expressive” properties of works of art, as where facial expressions are signs of emotions felt. And, finally, there are the unlearned signs that, by the constitution of our nature, are signs to us of the existence of

physical objects and their qualities, existing independently of us. As Reid says:

A third class of natural signs comprehends those which, though we never before had any notion or conception of the thing signified, do suggest it, or conjure it up, as it were, by a natural kind of magic, and at once give us a conception and create a belief of it. . . .

I think it is evident, that we cannot, by reasoning from our sensations, collect the existence of bodies at all, far less any of their qualities It appears as evident that this connection between our sensations and the conception and belief of external existences cannot be produced by habit, experience, education, or any principle, of human nature that hath been admitted by philosophers. At the same time, it is a fact that such sensations are invariably connected with the conception and belief of external existences. Hence, by all the rules of just reasoning, we must conclude, that this connection is the effect of our constitution, and ought to be considered as an original principle of human nature, till we find some more general principle into which it may be resolved.¹⁴

The blue sensation, then, by an “original principle of human nature,” functions as an unlearned, natural sign of the blue quality in the post box, conveying to us “the conception and belief” of its external existence.

(iii) The act of perception, or perceptual event, in which I perceive the blue color of the postbox is a complex process in which I have a sensation, and in which that sensation, as sign, produces in me the conception of and belief in the external quality of blueness. It is because every perception contains, as a constituent part, the forming of some concept and belief of the kind described above that we can properly call Reid's general account of perception an epistemic one, although, of course, it differs in crucial respects from twentieth-century versions of the doctrine.

The general outline of this account, as I have said before, was already in place in Reid's *Inquiry*; indeed, the long passage that I have just quoted comes from that work. But it was only after that that Reid came to realize, apparently, the possibility of including aesthetic perception, along with taste, touch, smell, hearing, and sight, as another special case. In the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, the account of the two aesthetic qualities universally

recognized by eighteenth-century British writers — that is, beauty and sublimity (or grandeur, as Reid prefers) — are treated, as far as they allow, in exactly the same way as other perceptual qualities of the external world. Let us see how, for the quality of beauty, Reid does this, with direct reference to the three “truths” about perception enumerated and explicated above.

The general shape of Reid's account of the perception of the beautiful goes something like this: Let us say that I am listening to a beautiful tune (or air, as Reid would say). In that case, on Reid's view, the following things are true of this simple case of aesthetic perception.

(i) I am having, among other sensations, a sensation of beauty, whose main distinguishing feature is its pleasurable nature. Reid calls it sometimes an “agreeable emotion.” I need say no more about this except to add that, presumably, Reid would analyse the sensation of beauty, like other sensations, adverbially: that is to say, as an act or event.

(ii) The sensation of beauty is a natural sign of a quality — Reid calls it an “excellence” — in the object, which it signifies. Reid says: “The sense of beauty may be in a manner very similar to the sense of sweetness. It is an agreeable feeling or emotion, accompanied with an opinion or judgment of some excellence in the object, which is fitted by Nature to produce that feeling.”¹⁵ The sensation of beauty, then, like all other sensations (of a veridical kind), by “an original principle of human nature,” functions as a sign of a quality of beauty in the tune, conveying to us “the conception and belief” of its external existence.

(iii) The act of perception, or perceptual event, in which I perceive the beauty of the tune, is a complex process in which I have a sensation, and in which that sensation, as sign, produces in me the conception of, and belief in, the external quality of beauty. It is because every perception of beauty contains, as a constituent part, the forming of some concept and belief of the kind described above that we can properly call Reid's account of the perception of the beautiful an epistemic one.

I need add here only that Reid's account of our perception of sublimity or grandeur follows exactly similar lines. There is sensation, concept, judgment — the lot. What differentiates the two is

the quality of the felt sensations, and the nature of the external features of the world that they signify. But the general outline is the same. So with regard *both* to the perception of the sublime *and* of the beautiful, in other words, with regard to aesthetic perception across the board,¹⁶ we can say that Reid finally made philosophically explicit what had been lurking in the background since Hume's *Treatise* and (I suspect) Hutcheson's own second thoughts about his position in the first *Inquiry*: namely, that aesthetic perception must, at least in the interesting and sophisticated cases, be through and through epistemic and concept-laden.

We cannot, however, let the matter drop with that rather optimistic conclusion. For when it came to working out the details of his aesthetic theory, which, so far, we have presented only in its broadest outlines, Reid did not always go in the right direction. Sometimes there is real insight into the way his epistemic theory must work in order to be an appreciable improvement over Hutcheson's non-epistemic account, whereas sometimes he seems to leave himself open to the same kinds of difficulties, epistemic theory notwithstanding. I shall conclude by making a preliminary exploration of these vagaries, although I do not have the space here to do the thorough job I would like to do, and which Reid's theory requires.

(6) To illustrate that Reid's position on aesthetic perception, epistemic though it is, can fall prey to some of the same objections one might raise against Hutcheson, let me revert, for a moment, to a passage previously quoted, rather unfavorable in this regard. Reid, you will recall, compares the perception of beauty to the perception of secondary qualities such as tastes of the palate. "The sense of beauty," he says, "may be in a manner very similar to the sense of sweetness." But if we take this literally, it does very little good for Reid to add the characteristic epistemic rider that "It is an agreeable feeling or emotion, accompanied with an opinion or judgment of some excellence in the object, which is fitted by Nature to produce that feeling." For what we need is not merely the assurance that having the idea of beauty (as Hutcheson calls it) brings along with it the conviction or belief that something out there, a *je ne sais quoi*, is

the cause, and is *really* beautiful. Where the knowing or believing, the conceptualizing, must come in is temporally, or at least epistemically, *prior to* the act of sensation. I must first come to believe or know some things about what I am looking at or listening to before the enjoyable sensation or emotion can arise, and the knowing or believing must have something to do with its arising. If *uniformity amidst variety* is the operative quality, then I must perceive that relation of parts in the object, at least under some relevant description or other, in order aesthetically to appreciate or enjoy it — which is, of course, what Reid's sensation or emotion of beauty comes down to. It is there, not in some conviction temporally or epistemically subsequent to the sensation, that the epistemic component must lie, if Reid's theory is to be an improvement, in this respect, over Hutcheson's.

But perhaps we have taken Reid's analogy between beauty and sweetness too literally. In a more favorable passage, Reid gives us pretty much what we have just been demanding of an epistemic account. He writes: "Beauty or deformity in an object, results from its nature or structure. To perceive the beauty, therefore, we must perceive the nature or structure from which it results."¹⁷

Assume again that the "nature or structure" alluded to is Hutcheson's *uniformity amidst variety*. If that is the case, then Reid is saying just what we thought was appropriate to say in the circumstances and what Hutcheson certainly was not saying: that prior to our having the sensation of beauty — at least in the epistemic sense of "prior," if not in the temporal sense as well — we must *perceive that* the object before us has *uniformity amidst variety* (or whatever the aesthetically operative "nature or structure" might be). That is the cash value of saying that "To perceive beauty, therefore, we must perceive the nature or structure from which it results." And it is in that prior perception of the nature or structure from which beauty results that we must locate the epistemic moment of the perception of beauty, or at least the most important part of it. Without that we have made only nominal progress away from Hutcheson, and towards a truly epistemic account of aesthetic perception.

What is somewhat perplexing about this insightful passage is that immediately after the insight occurs, Reid seems to back off

from it, as if he does not thoroughly understand what he has just said, and, quite perversely, attributes the discovery of the view to Hutcheson who, if I am right, held a view quite inconsistent with it. Having stated that we must perceive that “nature or structure” of an object responsible for its beauty prior to perceiving the beauty itself, Reid adds: “On this account, Dr. Hutcheson called the senses of beauty and harmony reflex or secondary senses; because the beauty cannot be perceived unless the object be perceived by some other power of the mind.”¹⁸

It should be noted straightaway that Hutcheson only started to use the terms “reflex” and “secondary” with regard to the sense of beauty in his later works, where he was already himself turning away from the non-epistemic position expressed in the first edition of the first *Inquiry*; neither term ever occurs in the first edition of that work, so far as I can remember. Nevertheless, Hutcheson certainly thought, right from the beginning, that you must first perceive an object (and that means, I presume, to perceive it under *some* description or other, take it to be some kind of thing) before you can perceive its beauty. But if it appears that Reid is equating that modest claim with the one he has just made, he is either paying Hutcheson a compliment he does not deserve, or misunderstanding his own position in an unfavorable way. Perhaps it is a little bit of both: new ideas, after all, are born with difficulty; and it is comforting both to put at least some of the blame for them on someone else, as well as to make them seem more like the old and familiar than they really are. In any event, all that Hutcheson was saying is that in order to perceive the beauty of an object, one must first perceive it as an object under some description; and he was expressly *denying* that one need perceive it under the description “varied and yet unified” for the idea of beauty to be aroused. Whereas Reid was saying quite expressly that one must perceive an object under just that description which includes mention of the “nature or structure” responsible for the object's beauty in order to perceive that beauty; in order, that is to say, to feel the sensation of the beautiful. It is not a restatement of Hutcheson's view but an insightful departure from it in the direction of a more plausibly epistemic account of the perception of the beautiful.

The important, and disturbing question, however, is whether the view I have attributed to Reid here is really consistent with his theory of aesthetic perception when given out as a special case of the general theory; for the former places the epistemic part, the knowing or believing, prior to the act of sensation, whereas the latter places it as subsequent, or at least as simultaneous. Let me conclude by worrying this question just a bit.

There are at least two ways to go here in arguing for the consistency of Reid's position. The first would be to see the claim that we must perceive the nature or structure of an object before perceiving its beauty as being independent of the claim that in every perception of beauty there is knowledge or belief conveyed by sensation. On this interpretation, what happens in the perception of beauty is something like this: I perceive the nature or structure of an object that is responsible for its beauty: (say) *uniformity amidst variety*. In perceiving that nature or structure, I feel the pleasurable sensation of the beautiful; and that sensation leads me to knowledge or belief in some excellence in the object.

But what is the "excellence"? It cannot be the nature or structure, the *uniformity amidst variety*, for I have already perceived *that*, and formed a belief in *its* existence. It must be some *other* excellence, perhaps the excellence of which *uniformity amidst variety* is the sign, namely, the designing mind. For on Reid's view, material things cannot be truly beautiful, but only beautiful as reflections of the mental, which itself is the only thing beautiful in the literal sense. Thus, "If we consider . . .," Reid says, "the beauty of form or figure in inanimate objects, this, according to Dr. Hutcheson, results from regularity, mixed with variety. Here, it ought to be observed, that regularity, in all cases, expresses design and art; for nothing regular was ever the work of chance; and where regularity is joined with variety, it expresses design more strongly."¹⁹

This interpretation works well enough, I suppose; but I can't work up much enthusiasm for it. For it seems to me that Reid's really important contribution to the subject is *both* his recognition that aesthetic perception is through and through epistemic, *and* his recognition that such qualities as *uniformity amidst variety* do not function as causal properties, in Hutcheson's way, but as

properties recognized and enjoyed: in other words, perceived epistemically. And if all Reid's crowing about the role of knowledge and belief in the perception of the beautiful is not in reference to knowledge and belief in *these* qualities, his theory loses some of its claim to insight and originality. I would prefer an interpretation that can give me a more original and insightful Reid; and I think there is one.

Reid distinguishes between two ways in which beauty is perceived: "the first we may call instinctive," he says, "the other rational." Instinctively, "Some objects strike us at once, and appear beautiful at first sight, without any reflection, without our being able to say why we call them beautiful, or being able to specify any perfection which justifies our judgment."²⁰ "But there are," Reid continues, "judgments of beauty that may be called rational, being grounded on some agreeable quality of the object which is distinctively conceived, and may be specified."²¹ And it is important to note, Reid adds, apropos of this distinction, that instinctive and rational perceptions of beauty usually interpenetrate one another, so that in any given case, both are operative and difficult to disentangle.

Although the instinctive and the rational sense of beauty may be perfectly distinguished in speculation, yet, in passing judgment upon particular objects, they are often so mixed and confounded, that it is difficult to assign to each its own province. Nay, it may often happen, that a judgment of the beauty of an object, which was at first merely instinctive, shall afterwards become rational, when we discover some latent perfection of which that beauty in the object is a sign.²²

If I understand Reid correctly on this point, something like the following kind of thing is often taking place when an adult human being perceives a beautiful object. At first, it strikes him, he knows not why, as beautiful, which is to say, he finds himself sensed to beautifully; and this sensing, as a sign, leads him to the belief in some excellence in the object as its cause. (This is the instinctual part of the process.) But his interaction with the object will not cease here: rather, he will begin immediately to perceive that nature or structure, *uniformity amidst variety*, let us

say, that does in fact constitute the excellence in the object responsible for its beauty. And in perceiving it, he will begin to enjoy its presence, to savour it, so to speak; in other words, he will be further sensed to beautifully. This is the beginning of the rational part of the process. Just the beginning, however; for there is no reason to think that further sensing will not lead to further or renewed conviction in the excellence inhering in the object; nor reason to think that this further or renewed sensing will not lead to further discoveries about the nature or structure of the object's aesthetic features. The perception of the beauty will thus tend to widen and prolong itself, with pleasurable emotion and epistemic perception of the nature or structure of the object mutually interacting one with the other, the richness and duration of the process, of course, determined by the complexity of the object of perception, and the ability of the perceiver to respond to it.

Of this process of perception, I can say that it is through and through epistemic in just the way that I would like to. The nature or structure of the object *is* what I must perceive, epistemically, prior to my pleasurable emotion or sensation of the beautiful. But the sensation or emotion nevertheless *is* the sign of just that nature or structure, because after the emotion is felt, it drives me to return to the object further to perceive, epistemically, its nature or structure. Therefore, it is perfectly compatible with Reid's doctrine, on this interpretation, to understand his insistent claims regarding the omnipresence of knowledge or belief in the perception of beauty to be claims to the effect that it is the nature or structure of the object which these beliefs are about. It is only in the instinctive perception of the beautiful that this interaction of emotion with object with emotion again is lacking. But that need not bother us much: for instinctive perception of the beautiful, when it occurs in the complete absence of the rational perception of beauty, occurs, for all intents and purposes, only, as Reid puts it, "in brute animals, and in children before the use of reason"²³ Wherever it occurs in interesting cases, it occurs along with rational perception; and in such cases, there is all the room required for epistemic perception to play its vital part.

This interpretation of Reid has the advantage of representing his doctrine in the very best light possible. Indeed, when I reflect on my own experience of the beautiful, and other aesthetic qualities, it seems to me that what Reid has said, on this interpretation, is not only interesting, but very largely true. I wish I had space to pursue that thought further. But I fear I have tried your patience too much already. Reid enthusiasts though you all are, you may by now have learned more about this particular aspect of Reid's philosophy than you wanted to know. I only hope that you have not learned *less*.

Notes

Chapter I

1. Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*, trans. J. P. Pettegrove (Edinburgh, 1953), p. 160.
2. Basil Wiley, *The Seventeenth Century Background* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1955), p. 125.
3. See C. Güttler, *Eduard Lord Herbert von Cherbury* (Munich, 1897), pp. 163–182.
4. W. R. Sorley, “The Philosophy of Herbert of Cherbury,” *Mind*, n.s. III (1894), p. 501.
5. Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, *On Truth*, trans. M. H. Carré (Bristol, 1937), pp. 116, 122.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 122.
7. Sorley, *op. cit.*, p. 500.
8. *On Truth*, pp. 140, 139.
9. *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 5th ed. (London, 1773), vol. I, p. 399.
10. *An Account of Virtue; or, Dr. Henry More's Abridgement of Morals*, trans. Edward Southwell, (London, 1690), p. 28.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
12. Aharon Lichtenstein, *Henry More: The Rational Theology of a Cambridge Platonist* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 67.
13. Quoted in Paul Arthur Schilpp, *Kant's Pre-Critical Ethics*, 2nd ed. (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1960), p. 31. Kant, of course, rejected the moral sense in his mature ethical writings.
14. For some brief accounts of the history of “taste” as an aesthetic concept, see K. Borinsky, *Baltasar Gracián* (Halle, 1894), pp. 39–72; *Die Poetik der Renaissance* (Berlin, 1866), ch. VI; K. H. von Stein, *Die Entstehung der Neuren Aesthetik* (Stuttgart, 1886), pp. 83–97. For a thorough account of “taste” in Germany and France during the seventeenth

- and eighteenth centuries, see Alfred Baeumler, *Kants Kritik der Urteilkraft: ihre Geschichte und Systematik* (Halle, 1923), pp. 18–82.
15. *The Oracle*, trans. L. B. Watson (London and New York: Everyman's Library, 1962), p. 97.
 16. See, for example, "Sur les Plaisirs," *Oeuvres Mêlées de Saint-Evremond*, ed. C. Giraud (Paris, 1866), vol. I, p. 34.
 17. See, for example, "Discours de la Justesse," in *Oeuvres Complètes*, ed. Charles-H. Boudhors (Paris, 1930), vol. I, pp. 95–112.
 18. "The *Je Ne Sais Quoi*," trans. Donald Schier, in *The Continental Model*, ed. Scott Elledge and Donald Schier (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960), p. 230. For a discussion of the *je ne sais quoi* as a critical concept in Bouhours, see E. B. O. Borgerhoff, *The Freedom of French Classicism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), pp. 186–200.
 19. "The *Je Ne Sais Quoi*," p. 236.
 20. *Ibid.*, p. 229.
 21. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
 22. *La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit* (Paris, 1771), p. 402.
 23. *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. G. Gregory Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), vol. I, p. 158.
 24. *The Dramatic Works of Sir Robert Howard*, 3rd ed. (London, 1722), p. 307.
 25. *Of Dramatic Poesy, and Other Critical Essays*, ed. G. Watson (London: Everyman's Library, 1962), vol. I, p. 120.
 26. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. F. C. A. Koelln and J. P. Pettegrove (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 304.
 27. Katherine Gilbert and Helmut Kuhn, *A History of Esthetics*, 2nd ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1956), p. 233. The same point is made, and enlarged upon, in Jerome Stolnitz, "Locke and the Categories of Value in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory," *Philosophy*, XXXVIII (1963).
 28. *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, ed. Benjamin Rand (London: Swan Sonnenschein; New York: Macmillan, 1900), p. 403.
 29. *Characteristicks*, vol. II, p. 74.
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 372.
 31. *A Plurality of Worlds*, trans. John Glanvill (London, 1702), p. viii.
 32. *Characteristicks*, vol. II, p. 295.
 33. *Ibid.*, p. 406.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 427.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 408.
 37. *Works of Plotinos*, trans. K. S. Guthrie (Alpine, New Jersey, 1918), vol. I, p. 51 (*Enneads*, I.vi.7).

38. *Characteristicks*, vol. II, p. 427.
39. Letter to Michael Ainsworth, June 3rd, 1709, *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 405. John Toland was the “pirate.”
40. This gap, however, is by no means barren of intellectual effort: witness the large amount of material written between 1698 and 1712, published for the first time by Benjamin Rand in 1900 under the title *Philosophical Regimen*.
41. *Characteristicks*, vol. II, pp. 28–29.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
43. *The Tragedies of the Last Age*, in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J. E. Spingarn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), vol. II, p. 183.
44. “On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory,” *The Philosophical Quarterly*, XI (1961), p. 111.
45. *An Antidote Against Atheism* [1652], in *A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings of Dr. Henry More*, 4th ed. (London, 1712), pp. 52–53.
46. *Characteristicks*, vol. II, pp. 414–415.
47. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 234.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 336.
49. *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 161.
50. R. L. Brett, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury* (London: Hutchinson, 1951), p. 151; my italics.
51. *Characteristicks*, vol. II, p. 411.
52. For one example of Locke's argument on this regard, see *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book I, Chapter III, Section 2.
53. *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 403. This argument seems almost a sketch of a later and more famous one with which Kant introduced the first *Critique*: “But though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience” (*Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith [New York: The Humanities Press, 1956], p. 41).
54. *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911), p. 82.
55. *Characteristicks*, vol. III, pp. 164–165.
56. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 353.
57. *Second Characters or the Language of Forms*, ed. Benjamin Rand (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), p. 177. Shaftesbury died before the completion of this work. The portion from which I have quoted existed only in the form of manuscript notes until published by Rand.
58. *Characteristicks*, vol. I, p. 332.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 340–341.
60. Two *immediate* predecessors of Hutcheson, L'Abbé Du Bos and

Leonard Welsted, deserve at least brief mention here; for both spoke explicitly of a critical or aesthetic sense. Thus, Du Bos writes in the *Reflexions Critiques sur la Poesie et sur la Peinture* (1719): “We have a sense, which judges of the merit of works, that consist in the imitation of objects of a moving nature . . .” (Jean Baptiste Du Bos, *Critical Reflections on Poetry, Painting and Music*, trans. Thomas Nugent [London, 1748], vol. II, p. 238). And, similarly, Welsted writes in *The State of Poetry* (1724): “. . . To have what we call *Taste*, is having, one may say, a new Sense or Faculty superadded to the ordinarily ones of the Soul, the prerogative of fine Spirits! and to go about to pedagogue a Man into this sort of knowledge, who has not got the Seeds of it in himself, is the same thing, as if one should endeavor to teach an art of seeing without Eyes . . .” (in *Critical Essays of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. W. H. Durham [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915], p. 366).

Chapter II

1. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed. (London, 1725), p. vii.
2. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 2nd ed. (London, 1726), p. xxi. This reference to Shaftesbury was added in the second edition.
3. Jerome Stolnitz, “Locke and the Categories of Value in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory,” p. 47.
4. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. iv.
5. John Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. A. C. Fraser (New York: Dover Publications, 1959), vol. I, p. 160.
6. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. v.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, pp. v–vi.
9. *Ibid.*, p. vi.
10. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 4th ed. (London, 1738), “Additions and Corrections.”
11. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. viii.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
13. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 58.
14. See J. Gibson, *Locke's Theory of Knowledge and its Historical Connections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 38.
15. This is not to say that Descartes and those of his ilk were the only objects of Locke's critique, or that what I have suggested here was his only critical purpose. As John Yolton has, I think, pretty conclusively shown, there were those who actually did hold the doctrine of innate knowledge in just the naive form that Locke sometimes attacked, and not in the more subtle form of Descartes and the Continental rationalists. See John Yolton, *John Locke and the Way of Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), especially ch. II.

16. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. ix.
17. Joseph Addison, *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*, Paper I, *The Spectator*, ed. A. Chalmers (New York: D. Appleton, 1879), vol. V, pp. 30–31.
18. *Ibid.*, Paper II, p. 33.
19. *On the Sublime*, XXXV.
20. *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*, Paper II, vol. V, pp. 34–35.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
22. *Ibid.*, Paper III, pp. 39–40.
23. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 32.
24. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 468.
25. *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*, Paper VIII, vol. V, pp. 68–69.
26. Francis Hutcheson, *Reflections Upon Laughter and Remarks Upon the Fable of the Bees* (Glasgow, 1750), p. 27.
27. The “*Sensus Ridiculi*” is, indeed, included in the list of internal or reflex senses in Hutcheson's Latin treatise, *Synopsis Metaphysicae, Ontologiam et Pneumatologiam Complectens* (Glasgow[?], 1744), p. 55.
28. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. 78.
29. Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections. With Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, 1st ed. (London, 1728), pp. 4–6.
30. Francis Hutcheson, *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, 1st ed. (Glasgow, 1747), p. 13.
31. Francis Hutcheson, *A System of Moral Philosophy* (London, 1755), vol. I, p. 15.
32. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. 11.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
34. I am indebted to George Dickie for bringing this point to my attention.
35. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. 11.
36. See D. D. Raphael, *The Moral Sense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 19.
37. *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, 1st ed., p. 42.

Chapter III

1. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., pp. 6–7.
2. I have in mind particularly here Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities. See, for example, Reginald Jackson, “Locke's Distinction between Primary and Secondary Qualities,” reprinted in *Locke and Berkeley*, ed. C. B. Martin and D. M. Armstrong (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1968).
3. Locke, *Essay*, ed. Fraser, vol. I, p. 28.
4. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 122.

5. See Richard I. Aaron, *John Locke*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 111–112.
6. Locke, *Essay*, vol. II, p. 145.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 2.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
10. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 173.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 302.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 214.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 215–216.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 146–147.
15. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 2.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.
18. Cf. C. D. Broad, “Some Reflections On Moral-Sense Theories in Ethics,” reprinted in *Readings in Ethical Theory*, ed. Wilfrid Sellars and John Hospers (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952), pp. 369–370.
19. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 10.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
22. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 4th ed., p. 10.
23. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 10.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
25. *The Works of George Berkeley*, ed. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop (London: Thomas Nelson, 1948–57), vol. II, p. 176.
26. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., pp. 15–16.
27. The notion that *uniformity amidst variety* can exist in an arrangement of secondary qualities is implicit, for example, in Hutcheson's discussion on pp. 5–6 of the first edition of the *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, and even more obvious in the passage as it was revised for editions two, three, and four.
28. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 172; my italics.

Chapter IV

1. A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*, 2nd ed. (New York: Dover Publications, 1946), p. 113.
2. William Frankena, “Hutcheson's Moral Sense Theory,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XVI (1955); William T. Blackstone, *Francis Hutcheson and Contemporary Ethical Theory* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1965); Bernard Peach, ed., *Francis Hutcheson: Illustrations on the Moral Sense* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971).
3. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 73.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
5. *Euthyphro*, XII, 10; trans. Jowett.
6. Broad, *op. cit.*, p. 365.
7. Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, vol. II, pp. 8–9.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 98.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
12. Berkeley, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 37.
13. C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), pp. 21–22.
14. The correspondence between Hutcheson and Burnet is reprinted in the appendix to Professor Peach's edition of Hutcheson's *Illustrations on the Moral Sense*. I have quoted from this (Peach, *op. cit.*, p. 212).
15. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 26.
16. See Jerome Stolnitz, "On the Origins of 'Aesthetic Disinterestedness,'" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XX (1961).
17. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 11.
18. *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections*, 1st ed., p. 102.
19. See, for example, Anthony Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), ch. III.
20. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. viii.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 4–6. The words in brackets were added in the second edition.
24. Charles Hartshorne, *Philosophy and Psychology of Sensation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), p. 186. Cf. Vincent Tomas, "The Concept of Expression in Art," reprinted in *Philosophy Looks At the Arts*, ed. Joseph Margolis (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962).
25. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 184.
26. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 81.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
28. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 531–533.
29. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 4.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

Chapter V

1. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 78.
2. *The Spectator*, ed. Chalmers, vol. V, p. 34.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.
6. *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, p. 13.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 125 (Part I, ch. 6).
9. Hutcheson, *Reflections Upon Laughter*, p. 7.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
12. Francis Hutcheson, *A System of Moral Philosophy*, vol. I, p. 16.
13. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 22.
14. William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty* (London, 1753), p. 14.
15. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. J. T. Boulton (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul; New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 105.
16. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 34.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–22.
21. R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 38–39.
22. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., pp. 27–28. “In right-angled triangles, the square on the side subtending the right angle is equal to the squares on the sides containing the right angle.”
23. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
24. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 2nd ed., pp. 32–33.
25. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 29.
26. Stephen F. Barker, *Philosophy of Mathematics* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 25.
27. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., pp. 25–26. Hutcheson was obviously a novice in music, and he made alterations of this passage in later editions of the *Inquiry* to correct his terminology. “Chord,” for example, becomes “Concord.”
28. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.
30. See Rudolf Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* (London: Alec Tiranti, 1962).
31. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 36.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37.
33. For a useful discussion of such theories, mostly in the period 1750–1800, see Herbert M. Schueller, “‘Imitation’ and ‘Expression’ in British Music Criticism in the 18th Century,” *The Musical Quarterly*, XXXIV (1948).
34. “What Mattheson Said,” *The Music Review*, XXXIV (1973).
35. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., pp. 77–78.

36. This same kind of observation led to various theories of the origin of music from speech. See Peter Kivy, "Herbert Spencer and a Musical Dispute," *The Music Review*, XXIII (1962).

Chapter VI

1. Francis Hutcheson, *Synopsis Metaphysicae, Ontologiam et Pneumatologiam Complectens*, p. 96.
2. *A System of Moral Philosophy*, vol. I, pp. iv–v. Leechman's biographical sketch of Hutcheson comprises the preface to the posthumously published *System*. Leechman also tells us that in 1717 Hutcheson wrote a letter to Samuel Clarke, pressing some of his theological objections. Leechman adds: "Whether the Doctor [Clarke] returned any answer to this letter does not appear from Dr. Hutcheson's papers."
3. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 42.
4. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 2nd ed., p. 48. This definition of undirected or undesigned force was added in the second edition.
5. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 43.
6. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Teleological Judgement*, trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1928), p. 54.
7. *Ibid.*
8. See Antony Flew, *God and Philosophy* (New York: Delta Books, 1966), p. 60.
9. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 48.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
11. David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 2nd ed. (London, 1779), pp. 47–48.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
13. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 91.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
15. *Ibid.*
16. René Descartes, *Compendium of Music*, trans. Walter Robert (American Institute of Musicology, 1961), p. 13. Cf. Descartes's letter to Mersenne, March 18, 1630, in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, ed. Adam and Tannery (Paris, 1897), vol. I, pp. 132–134.
17. Spinoza, *Ethics*, appendix to Part I, *Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover Publications, 1951), vol. II, p. 79.
18. *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, 1st ed., p. 93.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
21. R. L. Brett, "The Aesthetic Sense and Taste in the Literary Criticism of the Early Eighteenth Century," *The Review of English Studies*, XX (1944), p. 203.

22. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 321.
23. "Locke and the Categories of Value in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory," p. 40.
24. "On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory," p. 99.

Chapter VII

1. Sir Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Harbinger Books, 1962), vol. II, p. 2.
2. Berkeley wrote a treatise on ethics which was lost while he was traveling in Italy.
3. *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 66n.
4. John Balguy, *A Collection of Tracts, Moral and Theological* (London, 1734), pp. 60–61.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 155–156.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 226–227.
8. *The Works of George Berkeley*, ed. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop (London: Thomas Nelson, 1948–1957), vol. III, *Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher*, ed. T. E. Jessop, p. 116n.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
10. *The Works of George Berkeley*, ed. Luce and Jessop, vol. I, *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, ed. A. A. Luce, p. 252.
11. *Alciphron*, pp. 123–124.
12. Stephen, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 3.
13. D. D. Raphael, *The Moral Sense*, pp. 1, 111.
14. "Some Reflections on Moral-Sense Theories in Ethics," p. 363.
15. *A Review of the Principal Questions in Morals*, ed. D. D. Raphael (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 4.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
17. For some recent discussion of this issue, see W. D. Falk, " 'Ought' and Motivation," reprinted in Sellars and Hospers, *Readings in Ethical Theory*; and William K. Frankena, "Obligation and Motivation in Recent Moral Philosophy," *Essays in Moral Philosophy*, ed. A. I. Melden (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958). For a discussion of the issue in Hutcheson, see Henning Jensen, *Motivation and the Moral Sense in Francis Hutcheson's Ethical Theory* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), ch. III.
18. Price, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
21. Price's moral and aesthetic "dualism" has been defended in recent years by E. F. Carritt in "Moral Positivism and Moral Aestheticism," *Philosophy*, XIII (1938).

22. Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–21.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

Chapter VIII

1. Sections (1)–(4) of this chapter consist (with minor revisions) of a previously published article, “Hume's Standard of Taste: Breaking the Circle,” *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, VII (1967). It is reprinted here with permission of *The British Journal of Aesthetics*.
2. *The Letters of David Hume*, ed. J. Y. T. Greig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932), vol. I, p. 40.
3. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 471.
4. As Kant characterized him in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 597.
5. “Of the Standard of Taste,” *The Philosophical Works of David Hume* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1854), vol. III, p. 252.
6. *Works*, vol. IV, p. 233.
7. “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Works*, vol. III, p. 257.
8. “The Sceptic,” *Works*, vol. III, pp. 179–180.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
10. “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Works*, vol. III, pp. 265–266.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 265.
12. See, for example, S. G. Brown, “Observations on Hume's Theory of Taste,” *English Studies*, XX (1938); and James Noxon, “Hume's Opinion of Critics,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XX (1961).
13. “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Works*, vol. III, p. 260.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 261.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
16. “Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion,” *Works*, vol. III, p. 3n.
17. “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Works*, vol. III, p. 263.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, p. 472.
20. Cf. Kant, *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911): “by the name *sensus communis* is to be understood the idea of a *public sense*, *i.e.* a critical faculty which in its reflective act takes account (*a priori*) of the mode of representation of every one else, in order, *as it were*, to weigh its judgement with the collective reason of mankind, and thereby avoid the illusion arising from subjective and personal conditions which could readily be taken for objective, an illusion that would exert prejudicial influence upon its judgement. This is accomplished by weighing the judgement, not so much with actual, as rather with the merely possible, judgements of others, and by putting ourselves in the position of every one else, as the result of a mere abstraction

from the limitations which contingently affect our own estimate" (p. 151).

21. "Of the Standard of Taste," *Works*, vol. III, p. 264.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 268.
23. C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language*, p. 138. Stevenson's remark has reference, of course, to ethical disputes, and I have appropriated it for this analysis of Hume's aesthetic theory.
24. *Critical Review*, III (1757), p. 213.
25. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1094b, trans. Martin Ostwald.
26. *Works*, vol. IV, p. 355. My attention was drawn to this passage by the article of William H. Halberstadt, "A Problem in Hume's Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XXX (1971), p. 212.
27. Halberstadt, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

Chapter IX

1. *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, *The Philosophical Works of Thomas Reid*, 8th ed., ed. William Hamilton (Edinburgh: James Thin, 1895), vol. I, p. 275.
2. C. D. Broad, "Some Reflections on Moral-Sense Theories in Ethics," p. 368.
3. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 310.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, p. 312.
6. "The Nature and Reality of Objects of Perception," *Philosophical Studies* (Paterson, New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams, 1959), p. 50. It should be noted that Reid refers to some sensations as unlearned signs of qualities, but does not apparently, believe that all sensations are *unlearned* signs.
7. Reid, *Works*, vol. I, p. 310n.
8. A. C. Fraser, in *Thomas Reid* (Edinburgh and London, 1898), is also, I believe, guilty of this kind of misinterpretation. See, for instance, pp. 64, 141.
9. Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 107.
10. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 309.
11. In James McCosh, *The Scottish Philosophy* (New York, 1875), pp. 223–224.
12. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 425.
13. Moore, "The Nature and Reality of Objects of Perception," p. 50.
14. For an account of John Sergeant's relation to Locke, see John W. Yolton, "Locke's Unpublished Marginal Replies to John Sergeant," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XII (1951).
15. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 313.

16. *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), vol. I, p. 248.
17. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 313.
18. *Philosophical Works of Descartes*, vol. I, p. 249.
19. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 313n.
20. See Peter Kivy, "Lectures on the Fine Arts: An Unpublished Manuscript of Thomas Reid's," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXXI (1970); and Thomas Reid, *Lectures on the Fine Arts*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973).
21. Reid, *Inquiry, Works*, vol. I, p. 117.
22. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 490.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 492.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Reid, *Lectures on the Fine Arts*, p. 37.
26. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 490.
27. *Ibid.*; my italics.
28. Reid, *Inquiry, Works*, vol. I, p. 141.
29. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 493.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, p. 495.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, p. 498.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 496.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 500.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 501.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 500.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 501–502.
39. Reid states explicitly: "some of the qualities that please a good taste resemble the secondary qualities of body, and therefore may be called occult qualities. . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 490).
40. *Ibid.*, p. 500.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 505.
42. David Ross, *The Right and the Good* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 88.
43. D. O. Robbins, "The Aesthetics of Thomas Reid," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, No. 5 (1942), p. 36.
44. *Works*, vol. I, p. 89. The letter is dated 3d Feb. 1790; it was sent in acknowledgment for receipt of a copy of Alison's *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*.

Chapter X

1. For an account of the associationist aesthetics in eighteenth-century Britain, see Martin Kallich, *The Association of Ideas and Critical Theory in*

- Eighteenth-Century England* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970).
2. Prefixed to Edmund Law's translation of King's *Essays on the Origin of Evil*.
 3. *British Moralists*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, Library of Liberal Arts, 1964), vol. II, p. 269.
 4. Gay was not the only eighteenth-century moralist to see Hutcheson as a disguised psychological hedonist. Cf. Kant, *Foundations of the Meta-physics of Morals*, trans. Lewis White Beck (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, Library of Liberal Arts, 1959), pp. 61, 61n.
 5. *British Moralists*, vol. II, p. 269–270.
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 283.
 8. Hartley wrote in the preface to the *Observations*: “About Eighteen Years ago I was informed, that the Rev. Mr. Gay, then living, asserted the Possibility of deducing all our intellectual Pleasures and Pains from Association. This put me upon considering the Power of Association” (*Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty, and his Expectations* [London, 1749], vol. I, p. v).
 9. *Ibid.*, p. 418.
 10. *Ibid.*, p. 419.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 426.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 420.
 13. Alexander Gerard, *An Essay on Taste*, ed. W. J. Hipple, Jr. (Gainesville, Florida: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1963), pp. 1–2. This is a facsimile of third edition (1780). For an account of the *Essay*'s inception, see M. L. Wiley, “Gerard and the Scots Societies,” *The University of Texas Publications: Studies in English*, No. 4026 (1940); and Hipple's introduction to the *Essay*, pp. v–ix.
 14. W. J. Hipple, Jr., *The Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory* (Carbondale, Illinois: The Southern Illinois University Press, 1957), p. 68.
 15. Gerard, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–2n.
 16. Hutcheson, *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, p. 6.
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. *On Free Will (De Libero Arbitrio)*, Book II, ch. IV and V), trans. R. McKeon, *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*, ed. R. McKeon (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), vol. I, pp. 23–27.
 19. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 123.
 20. Marjorie Grene, “Gerard's *Essay on Taste*,” *Modern Philology*, XLI (1943), p. 45.
 21. Gerard, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
 22. *Ibid.*
 23. *Ibid.*
 24. DuBos, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 5, 20, *et passim*.
 25. Gerard, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 34. Hipple has suggested (*The Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque*, p. 75) that this is essentially the Aristotelian notion of magnitude. See *Poetics*, vii, and *Nicomachean Ethics*, IV.iii.
27. Gerard, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41.
30. Grene, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
31. Gerard, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 147n.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 146n.
35. Burke, *Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful*, p. 26.
36. Gerard, *op. cit.*, p. 145n.
37. Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, vol. I, p. 214.
38. “Locke and the Categories of Value in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory,” p. 40.
39. Locke, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. xi (editor's *Prolegomena*).

Chapter XI

1. Joseph Priestly, *A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism* (London, 1777), pp. 72–73.
2. Archibald Alison, *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* (Boston: Cummings and Hilliard, 1812), p. vii.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
7. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, p. 11.
8. Alison, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
9. For an analysis of Alison's use of aesthetic disinterestedness and its significance, see Jerome Stolnitz, “On the Origins of ‘Aesthetic Disinterestedness,’ ” p. 137–139.
10. Alison, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 106–107.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 107–112.
17. Gordon McKenzie, “Lord Kames and the Mechanist Tradition,” *University of California Publications in English*, XIV (1942), pp. 94–95. It should be noted, however, that Kames was not a strict determinist; nor is

it likely that Alison was either, for Alison, a divine, would not have been likely to give up freedom of the will.

18. Alison, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 268.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 417–418.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 421.

Chapter XII

1. *Philosophical Essays, The Works of Dugald Stewart* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Hilliard and Brown, 1829), vol. IV, p. 184 (“On the Beautiful”).
2. *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 185.
3. *The Principles of Human Knowledge*, ed. T. E. Jessop, *The Works of George Berkeley*, ed. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop (London: Thomas Nelson, 1948–1957), vol. II, p. 36.
4. “On the Beautiful,” *The Works of Dugald Stewart*, vol. IV, pp. 187–188.
5. This parallel between Stewart and Wittgenstein is recognized in passing in S. A. Grave, *The Scottish Philosophy of Common Sense* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 231–232n, as well as in Jerome Stolnitz, “‘Beauty’: Some Stages in the History of an Idea,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXII (1961), pp. 202–203.
6. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1953), pp. 31–32^c.
7. G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 14–15.
8. Clive Bell, *Art* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958), p. 17. For some suggestive remarks on Moore's influence, see Berel Lang, “Intuition in Bloomsbury,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXV (1964), pp. 295–302.
9. G. E. Moore, “Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930–33,” *Philosophical Papers* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 306.
10. Paul Edwards, *The Logic of Moral Discourse* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1955), pp. 139–140.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
12. Helen Knight, “The Use of ‘Good’ in Aesthetic Judgments,” reprinted in *Aesthetics and Language*, ed. William Elton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 155.
13. Morris Weitz, “The Role of Theory in Aesthetics,” reprinted in Margolis, *Philosophy Looks At the Arts*, p. 53.
14. See Richard Payne Knight, *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*, 2nd ed. (London, 1805), pp. 9–18.
15. *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* [1792], *The Works of Dugald Stewart*, vol. I, pp. 273–274.
16. *Philosophical Essays, The Works of Dugald Stewart*, vol. IV, p. 233.

17. *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, The Works of Dugald Stewart*, vol. I, p. 273.
18. *Philosophical Essays, The Works of Dugald Stewart*, vol. IV, pp. 197–198.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 240.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 240–241.
21. *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, The Works of Dugald Stewart*, vol. I, pp. 271–272.
22. *Philosophical Essays, The Works of Dugald Stewart*, vol. IV, p. 324 (“On Taste”).
23. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 338.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 329–330.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 337.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 338–339.
28. Denis Diderot, *Oeuvres Esthétiques*, ed. Paul Vernière (Paris: Editions Garnier Frères, 1959), p. 401.

Appendix A

1. References to Cooper occur, for example, in A. Bosker, *Literary Criticism in the Age of Johnson* (New York, 1935), pp. 164–165; W.J. Bate, *From Classic to Romantic: Premises of Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), pp. 53–54; E.N. Hooker, “The Discussion of Taste, from 1750 to 1770, and the New Trends in Literary Criticism,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XLIX (1934), p. 79n. References to Melmoth can be found both in Bate (pp. 52–53) and Hooker (p. 79n).
2. “Though he was neither a comprehensive nor a profoundly original writer, Blair was of immense importance as a popularizer of aesthetic and critical speculation . . .” (Hipple, *The Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque*, p. 122).
3. The first volume of the *Letters* was published in 1742; a second in 1748; the two volumes were first published together in 1749. The work seems to have maintained its popularity throughout the century, going through a number of editions.
4. William Melmoth, *Fitzosborne's Letters on Several Subjects* (Boston, 1815), p. 112.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, p. 114. Melmoth emphasizes the uniformity of man's aesthetic nature here; but he is not altogether consistent about this. Cf. p. 109.
7. John Gilbert Cooper, *Letters Concerning Taste. The Fourth Edition. To which are added, Essays on Similar and Other Subjects. The Second Edition* (London, 1771), pp. 2–3.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
11. Bate, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
12. Cooper, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
13. Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 3rd ed. (London, 1787), vol. I, pp. iii, 4n.
14. *Ibid.*, p. iv.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

Appendix B

1. Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Elements of Criticism*, 6th ed. (Edinburgh, 1785), vol. II, p. 505.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 506n.
3. *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 1–2.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 2n.
5. *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 508.
6. *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, in *British Moralists*, vol. II, p. 302.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 303.
8. Kames, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 198.
9. Gordon McKenzie, “Lord Kames and the Mechanist Tradition,” p. 98.
10. Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part I, Appendix.

Chapter XIII

An earlier version of this chapter was presented as a paper to the Columbia University Seminar on Eighteenth-Century European Culture, 20 March 1975. I am extremely grateful to all those in attendance, for a valuable and stimulating discussion, and, especially, to Professor John H. Middelndorf for his encouragement. I also want to express my thanks to Professor Jack Glickman for reading and commenting on another early version of the paper.

1. Paul. K. Feyerabend, “Comments on Baker's ‘The Role of Simplicity in Explanation’,” *Current Issues in the Philosophy of Science: Proceedings of Section L of the American Association for the Advancement of Science 1959*, ed. Herbert Feigl and Grover Maxwell (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1961), p. 279.

2. Jerome Stolnitz, for example, calls Addison's *On the Pleasures of the Imagination* "the starting point of modern aesthetics," in "On the Origins of 'Aesthetic Disinterestedness,'" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XX (1961), p. 143.
3. *The Spectator*, ed. Alexander Chalmers (New York: D. Appleton, 1879), vol. V, p. 20 (Paper No. 409).
4. Stolnitz ("On the Origins," pp. 139–140), quite rightly, I think, argues that for Addison "taste" and "imagination" are names for the same faculty; and thus the pleasure of taste for the beautiful in Paper 409 is one of the pleasures of the imagination which give Papers 411–422 their name.
5. The third test presupposes that a thought expressed by a great writer will have a different effect on the reader from the same thought expressed by "a person of ordinary genius" (Addison, *On the Pleasures*, p. 21); so if the thoughts of great writers have the appropriate effect on me, then I know that I have taste. But what the specific nature of this effect is Addison does not make clear.
6. Addison, *ibid.*, pp. 20–21.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 36 (Paper No. 412).
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 37–38.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 47 (Paper No. 414).
12. If Professor Stolnitz is right, the doctrine originates in Shaftesbury. See his, "On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory," *Philosophical Quarterly*, XI (1961). If George Dickie is right, the British version of the doctrine in the eighteenth century was more markedly different from the modern version than Professor Stolnitz makes out. See Professor Dickie's "Taste and Attitude: The Origin of the Aesthetic," *Theoria*, XXXIX (1973). I have purposely kept my statement of the doctrine as vague as intelligibility permits in order to avoid a philosophical detour so extensive that we will never get back to the subject at hand.
13. Following Stolnitz, "On the Origins of 'Aesthetic Disinterestedness,'" pp. 139–143.
14. Addison, *On the Pleasures*, p. 31 (Paper No. 411).
15. I am speaking of it as in the days of Ross. Today, likely as not, you *would* find one.
16. This is the first of two treatises (the second being *An Inquiry Concerning Moral Good and Evil*) which Hutcheson published together under the title: *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*. It went through four editions during his lifetime, all under his supervision: 1725, 1726, 1729, 1738.
17. Francis Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 34. The text quoted in this chapter is always that of the first edition (1725). For a more detailed and comprehensive account of Hutcheson's views, along similar lines, see above, Chs. II–IV.

18. William Frankena, "Hutcheson's Moral Sense Theory," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XVI (1955); William T. Blackstone, *Francis Hutcheson and Contemporary Ethical Theory* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1965); Francis Hutcheson: *Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, ed. Bernard Peach (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971).
19. *Letters Between the Late Mr. Gilbert Burnet and Mr. Hutcheson Concerning the True Foundation of Virtue or Moral Goodness* (1735), reprinted in Hutcheson, *Illustrations*, ed. Peach, p. 212.
20. See C. D. Broad, "Some Reflections on Moral-Sense Theories in Ethics," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, XLV (1944–5).
21. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, p. 47.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
23. Cf. Carolyn Wilker Korsmeyer, "Relativism and Hutcheson's Aesthetic Theory," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXXVI (1975). Ms. Korsmeyer's conclusions are marred, it seems to me, by the failure to distinguish, in her discussion of the standard of taste, between the "normal" and the "correct."
24. David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste," *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 235.
25. I have presented a similar interpretation of Hume in a somewhat different way in "Hume's Standard of Taste: Breaking the Circle," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, VII (1967), and above, Ch. VIII.
26. "The Sceptic," *Essays*, pp. 166–167.
27. "Of the Standard of Taste," *Essays*, pp. 246–247.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 248.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 247; italics mine.
30. For a discussion of this objection, and a possible answer to it, see "Hume's Standard of Taste: Breaking the Circle," pp. 60–63.
31. For a recent account of Hume's efforts in this direction, see William H. Halberstadt, "A Problem in Hume's Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XXX (1971).
32. Isabel C. Hungerland, "The Logic of Aesthetic Concepts," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, XXXVI (1962–3), p. 58.
33. As the title of this chapter indicates, I have wished to confine myself to the 50-year period beginning in 1712 with Addison's *On the Pleasures of the Imagination*, which would put the 1780 edition of Gerard's work well out of range. But W. J. Hipple, who has a knack for knowing this kind of thing, assures us that the argument, and perhaps even the text itself of this addition to the original *Essay*, "had been worked out years before, at the time of discussions in the Aberdeen Philosophical Society." This could place Gerard's "Of the Standard of Taste" as early as 1758–9, well within my purview. See Hipple's introduction to Alexander Gerard, *An Essay on Taste* (Gainsville, Fla.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1963), p. xxii.
34. Gerard, *An Essay on Taste*, edition cited, p. 255. The pagination of this edition corresponds to that of the third edition (1780).
35. *Ibid.*, p. 261.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

37. There is no reason why we cannot, on Gerard's view, use more complex inductive procedures. I choose the method of sameness, in its most primitive form, for simplicity of exposition only.
38. Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Elements of Criticism* (6th ed.; Edinburgh, 1785), vol. II, p. 488. The first edition of Kames's influential book appeared in 1762.
39. Gerard, *op cit.*, p. 247n.
40. Kames, *op cit.*, vol. II, p. 494.
41. *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 492.

Chapter XIV

1. Dabney Townsend, "Lockean Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XLIX (1991), pp. 349–361.
2. Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 34.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 33, and quoted in Townsend, "Lockean Aesthetics," p. 353.
4. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 138.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
7. Townsend, "Lockean Aesthetics", p. 353.
8. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 47.

Chapter XV

This chapter was originally written as a paper for presentation in a plenary session of the Conference to Mark the 300th Anniversary of the Birth of Francis Hutcheson, at Glasgow University, 8–11 April 1994, under the auspices of the Scots Philosophical Club, Trinity College Dublin, and the University of Glasgow. It is published here with minor revisions.

1. Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (4th ed.; London, 1738), p. 7.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
3. *Ibid.*
4. See Dabney Townsend, "Lockean Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XLIX (1991), and my reply, "Hutcheson's Idea of Beauty: Simple or Complex?," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, L (1992). See above, Ch. XIV.
5. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 14. An obscure passage follows in which Hutcheson seems to suggest that the idea of beauty is *between* the idea of a primary and the idea of a secondary quality.
6. George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, ed. Robert Merrihew Adams (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986), p. 12.
7. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 17.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 14. Actually, the statement that the idea of beauty is caused by “our *Perception* of some primary *Quality*” is not inconsistent with the notion that the complex idea is the immediate cause of the idea of beauty, since the primary qualities are the immediate cause of the ideas both of primary and of secondary qualities; and that may be all that Hutcheson is saying here.
9. Francis Hutcheson, *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (Glasgow, 1747), pp. 12–13.
10. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 29.
11. Thomas Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense, The Works of Thomas Reid*, ed. Sir William Hamilton (8th ed.; Edinburgh: James Thin, 1895), vol. I, p. 137.
12. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 6–7.
13. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 631.
14. There is a parallel, although not an exact one, between the argument here as to whether the idea of beauty is simple or complex and the argument, in moral theory, as to whether Hutcheson was an ethical “realist” or not. On this see Kenneth P. Winkler, “Hutcheson's Alleged Realism,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, XXIII (1985).
15. See Chs. XIII and XVI herein.
16. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 15.
17. [Charles] Batteux, *Les Beaux Arts réduits à un même principe* (Paris, 1747).
18. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 39.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 15 n.
20. Hutcheson does not treat gardening as a representational art; but the great English gardens did have representational, narrative, and metaphorical aspects, as is now well known. Nor was architecture, in the view of at least some of Hutcheson's contemporaries, without representational implications. I leave these complications out of consideration here.
21. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 27.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
24. On this disputed issue in Kant's aesthetics, see Theodore E. Uehling, Jr., *The Notion of Form in Kant's “Critique of Aesthetic Judgment”* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), pp. 18–34. I agree with Uehling on this point and, like him, take the text of the third edition of *The Critique of Judgment* as correct with regard to it.
25. Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, Works*, vol. I, pp. 500 and 501.
26. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 11.
27. A. C. Bradley, *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, in Eliseo Vivas and Murray Krieger (eds.), *The Problems of Aesthetics: A Book of Readings* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1960), p. 569.

Chapter XVI

This chapter is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented to the Tenth Hume Conference, Trinity College Dublin, 26 August 1981. I am grateful to the audience for many useful questions and comments, and, particularly, to my co-symposiasts, Peter Jones and James King. I am also indebted to T.J. Diffey for substantial improvements in the text.

1. Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 34.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
3. See Ch. III, section 9, above.
4. John Balguy, *A Collection of Tracts Moral and Theological* (London, 1734), pp. 226–227. Cf. Ch. 7, section 3, above.
5. Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty*, p. 54.
6. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 581.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 461.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 576–577.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 585.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 483.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 617.
13. David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. Charles W. Hendel (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957), pp. 6–7.
14. “Hume's Standard Taste: Breaking the Circle,” *British Journal of Aesthetics*, VII (1967).
15. See above, Chs. VIII and XIII; David Hume, “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Essays Moral, Political and Literary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 235.
16. On this, see Ch. XIII above.
17. “Of the Standard of Taste,” pp. 247–248.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 247; italics mine.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 245.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 245–246.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 247; italics mine.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 250.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 245.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 244–245.
25. For example: “the useful we call beautiful, and beautiful in the way in which it is useful, and for the purpose for which it is useful, and at the time when it is useful; and that which is in all these aspects useless we say is ugly.” Plato, *The Greater Hippias*, trans. H. N. Fowler (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, The Loeb Classical Library, 1953), p. 389 (295D).

Chapter XVII

1. David Hume, *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* (London, 1772), vol. II, p. 149.
2. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 17.
3. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 253.
4. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 239.
5. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 238.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Peter Kivy, "Hume's Standard of Taste: Breaking the Circle," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, VII (1967), p. 59.
8. Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste," *Essays and Treatises*, vol. I, p. 241.
9. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 252.
10. *Ibid.*
11. See Chs. VIII and XVIII herein.
12. Theodore A. Gracyk, "Rethinking Hume's Standard of Taste," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, LXII (1994), p. 176.
13. *Ibid.*
14. On this see above, Ch. XVI.
15. Gracyk, "Rethinking Hume's Standard of Taste," p. 182n.
16. Hume, "Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion," *Essays and Treatises*, vol. I, p. 5.
17. See Chs. XVI and XVIII herein, for particulars.
18. "Of the Standard of Taste," *Essays and Treatises*, vol. I, p. 239.
19. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 243.
20. It is of more than passing interest, too, to note a disanalogy between Hume's moral and aesthetic theory that tends to militate against Gracyk's attempt to conflate them. As Gracyk himself observes, in describing Hume's moral theory in the second *Inquiry*, "variations in moral approbation give way to genuine moral judgments when we turn away from the sentiment that arises from our particular point of view and adopt a 'universal' perspective" (p. 176). In the aesthetic judgment, this apparently must take place, on Gracyk's reading, where we view the true judge and by universal (moral) sentiment affirm that person superior to others. The problem is that, at least as I read Hume, he has *already* used the "disinterested spectator" concept in the stipulation that the true judge should be without prejudice and be able to consider himself as "a man in general" (*Essays and Treatises*, vol. I, p. 249). I by no means think this is conclusive against Gracyk; but it is a blemish.

Chapter XVIII

1. In the introduction to *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*.

2. James McCosh, *The Scottish Philosophy* (New York, 1875), p. 207.
3. I have given a more detailed account of the period from Addison to Reid in Ch. XIII.
4. *The Spectator*, ed. A. Chalmers (New York: D. Appleton, 1879), vol. V, p. 20 (Paper No. 409).
5. Francis Hutcheson, *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 34. This is the first of two treatises which Hutcheson published in tandem in 1725 as *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*.
6. For a thorough discussion of this question, see Ch. IV, sections 1–4, above.
7. Hume did have some vague thoughts about the causal question, on which see William H. Halberstadt, “A Problem in Hume's Aesthetics,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XXX (1971).
8. David Hume, “The Sceptic,” *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 166–167.
9. “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Essays*, pp. 246–247.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 248.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 247.
12. Gerard's most sustained treatment is to be found in his essay, “Of the Standard of Taste,” which he appended to the third edition (1780) of his *An Essay on Taste*. But the views here propounded seem to have been formed as early as 1758–9. So I treat them as earlier than the views of Reid. They are certainly earlier than his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*. On the matter of Gerard's chronology, see W. J. Hipple's introduction to his edition of Gerard's *Essay on Taste* (Gainsville, Fla.: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1963), p. xxii.
13. “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Essays*, pp. 235–236.
14. Gerard, *Essay on Taste*, edition cited, p. 253.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Elements of Criticism* (6th ed.; Edinburgh, 1785), vol. II, p. 488. If, of course, the ought and ought not are moral, they might very well be perfectly justified. One ought not, after all, be pleased by the suffering of innocent babes.
17. There can be no doubt that Reid was acquainted with all these models. Hutcheson's *Inquiry*, Gerard's *Essay* (as well as Addison's *Pleasures of the Imagination*) are explicitly cited by Reid in his writings on aesthetics. And although I cannot recall a reference to Hume's “Of the Standard of Taste,” it is referred to in Gerard; and, in any case, Reid's frequent references to Hume's works leave little doubt that he was familiar with Hume's most extended venture into the philosophy of criticism.
18. It is this failure to see Reid's aesthetics in the context of his theory of perception that leads to such underestimations of his originality as W. J. Hipple's, in *The Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1957), pp. 149–157, *et passim*.

19. For an early recognition of Reid's importance as an aesthethician, see David O. Robbins, "The Aesthetics of Thomas Reid," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, No. 5 (1942).
20. *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, The Philosophical Works of Thomas Reid*, ed. Sir William Hamilton (8th ed.; Edinburgh: James Thin; London: Longmans, Green, 1895), vol. I, p. 441.
21. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 434.
22. *Ibid.*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 453.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, Works*, vol. II, p. 591.
25. *Active Powers, Works*, vol. II, p. 590.
26. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 454.
27. *Active Powers, Works*, vol. II, p. 591.
28. *Ibid.*, *Works*, vol. II, p. 590.
29. Michael Scriven, "The Logic of Criteria," *Journal of Philosophy*, LVI (1959), 858.
30. Thomas Reid, *Lectures on the Fine Arts*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 35. The manuscript does not seem to be in Reid's hand, and may well be a student's notes to Reid's lectures.
31. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 490.
32. *Lectures*, p. 35.
33. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 490.
34. *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense, Works*, vol. I, p. 106.
35. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 229.
36. *Inquiry, Works*, vol. I, p. 183.
37. *Lectures*, p. 35.
38. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 490.
39. Gerard, for example.
40. *Lectures*, p. 39.
41. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 495.
42. *Lectures*, p. 37.
43. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 492.
44. G. J. Warnock, "On What is Seen," *Perception: A Philosophical Symposium*, ed. F. N. Sibley (London: Methuen, 1971), 1–2.
45. F. N. Sibley, "Analysing Seeing," *Perception*, p. 81.
46. John Balguy, *A Collection of Tracts, Moral and Theological* (London, 1734), p. 227.
47. *Lectures*, pp. 36–37.
48. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, pp. 491–492.
49. *Ibid.*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 491.
50. *Inquiry, Works*, vol. I, p. 122; *IHM*, p. 67. Reid must have gotten the idea of sensation as a kind of language from Berkeley; but in taking it literally, he formulated an original theory of perception.
51. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 259.
52. *Lectures*, pp. 35–36.

53. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 438.
54. *Inquiry, Works*, vol. I, p. 108.
55. Cf. Godfrey Vesey, *Perception* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1971), 82–85, *et passim*. See, also, S. A. Grave, *The Scottish Philosophy of Common Sense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 86–87, and 92, where the appeal to “common sense” is usefully contrasted with the closely related Wittgensteinian “paradigm case” argument.
56. Norman Malcolm, “Knowledge and Belief,” *Knowledge and Certainty* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 64–65.
57. John Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book IV, Chapter II, Section 14. Reid makes reference to this in *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. I, p. 464 and 466.
58. *Intellectual Powers, Works*, vol. i, p. 503.
59. *Lectures*, p. 41.
60. *Ibid.*
61. Reid has an able (but perhaps overly sympathetic) defender, here, in Philip Bourdillon, who was kind enough to let me see the typescript of his valuable essay, “Reid's View of Aesthetic Experience.”
62. Thomas Reid, *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, ed. Timothy J. Duggan (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1970), editor's introduction, p. xi.

Chapter XIX

1. F. N. Sibley, “Analysing Seeing,” *Perception: A Philosophical Symposium*, ed. F. N. Sibley (London: Methuen, 1971), p. 81.
2. Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 34.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 47 (II, xiv).
4. See Ch. XVI.
5. Emily Michael, “Francis Hutcheson on Aesthetic Perception and Aesthetic Pleasure,” *British Journal of Aesthetics*, XXIV (1984), p. 247.
6. I am not the first to see an evolution in Hutcheson's views on various topics. See, for example, W. R. Scott, *Francis Hutcheson: His Life, Teaching and Position in the History of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900).
7. I have spelled out Hume's views on this regard more fully than I have time to do here in Ch. XVI.
8. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1955), pp. 585 and 363.
9. David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. Charles W. Hendel (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957), p. 6.
10. See *Treatise*, p. 617.
11. David Hume, “Of the Standard of Taste,” *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 245–246.

12. For the curious, these remarks are to be found in the following places: Thomas Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, *The Philosophical Works of Thomas Reid*, ed. Sir William Hamilton (8th ed. Edinburgh: James Thin, 1895), vol. I, pp. 117, 121–122, 147, 190.
13. Thomas Reid, *Lectures on the Fine Arts*, ed. Peter Kivy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 37.
14. Reid, *Inquiry*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 122.
15. Reid, *Intellectual Powers*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 499.
16. Reid did recognize, too, the category of “novelty” in works of art and other aesthetic objects, as had others before him. But it did not interest him, nor play much of a role in his position on aesthetic perception, just because it was a relative notion. “What is new to one man, may not be so to another; what is new this moment, may be familiar to the same person some time hence,” *Intellectual Powers*, *Works*, vol. I, pp. 493–494. Not being a “property,” it was not subject to Reid's “critique” of taste, and was thus dismissed as “but a slight impression upon a truly correct taste.”
17. *Intellectual Powers*, *Works*, vol. I, p. 492.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, p. 505.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 500.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 501.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*, p. 500,

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