

THE MODE OF EXISTENCE OF VALUES: HUME VERSUS REID

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RESUMEN:

El objeto de este artículo es establecer que aunque Thomas Reid utiliza su versión de realismo del valor como arma con la que combatir el nominalismo del valor de David Hume, en un nivel más profundo de análisis, el realismo de uno y el nominalismo del otro son plenamente compatibles.

SUMMARY:

The purpose of this paper is to establish that although that Thomas Reid uses his version of value realism as a weapon with which to beat David Hume's value nominalism, at a deeper level of analysis the realism of the one and the nominalism of the other are fully compatible.

I

My aim is to discuss an apparently irreconcilable disagreement between two philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment concerning the metaphysical status of values. One of the philosophers is Hume and the other is Thomas Reid. I shall expound the disagreement and shall then seek to demonstrate that though Reid took himself to be presenting a doctrine on values that was incompatible with Hume's, a closer examination reveals that on this topic the apparently sceptical position of Hume and the common sense position of Reid are fully consistent with each other. I shall begin by putting the main terms of the dispute into a broader metaphysical context, one with which our two protagonists were very familiar. Identifying the nature of the context will prove helpful as indicating the route to reconciliation.

Philosophers seek to determine the location of the objects they study. Among the objects of perennial interest to philosophers are universals, the common natures shared by many things in virtue of which they are members of a single species. But where are universals? Where for example is cathood, the common nature shared by all cats? The obvious answer is that it is in every cat, and nowhere else. But some have disputed this, and argued that the universal in question does not exist in the outer world, in cats, but is in the human beings who classify the animals. According to this view the universal is a principle of classification, and therefore has the metaphysical status of a concept in the mind of the classifier.¹ Thus in discussing universals, a chief question has concerned their location: are they outside or inside? In the real world or in our minds?

A second example of the interest in location concerns truth. In medieval discussions of truth the same question emerges: Where is it? Is truth in the world or is it in the intellect of the person who looks out upon the world and forms propositions about it? Thomas Aquinas, as interested as anyone in the location of truth, declared it to be primarily in the intellect and secondarily in things known by the intellect.² But this doctrine was stated by him against a background of support for the contrary position.

And one further example of the interest in location concerns time. On the one hand there are strong grounds for locating time in the outer world, and Aristotle provides powerful arguments for doing so.³ But there are also arguments, especially associated with St Augustine, for linking time so closely to the stream of consciousness as in effect to locate time

1. For an illuminating discussion of this view see: KATHERINE H. TACHAU, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham*, Leiden 1988, ch. 5.

2. *Summa Theologiae* 1, 16, 1.

3. *Physics* IV 10-14.

within the mind.⁴ This would require us to say that a world absolutely devoid of conscious beings would not be a temporal world. This latter position may at first hearing seem indefensible, yet if we try to make sense of there being a *now* in a world lacking conscious beings for whom *now is now*, we might begin to see that there are indeed things to be said on behalf of the Augustinian position.

We have here, therefore, three of the deepest concepts discussed by philosophers, universality, truth and time, and a major issue in each case is whether to locate the corresponding objects in the inner or the outer world, in the mind or in physical reality. Two great schools of philosophers are defined by the way they answer these questions. Those who locate these objects in what most people like to think of as reality are called realists, and those who locate them in the mind are nominalists. Of course a philosopher might be realist about universals and nominalist about say, time, but as a historical fact there is a tendency for each philosopher to be inclined in a rather general way towards one school or the other.

It seems therefore that at the heart of philosophy there is a concern with the dichotomy 'inner/outer'. What is in the inner world, that of the mind, and what in the outer, that of physical reality? In view of this preoccupation with the general question of location of objects and the specific focus within that enquiry upon the 'inner/outer' dichotomy, it comes as no surprise to discover that philosophers have approached the concept of value by asking questions concerning the location of value and by bringing the 'inner/outer' dichotomy to bear upon that enquiry. And just as the dispute over whether time is inner or outer is personified by St Augustine and Aristotle, and as the dispute over whether universals are inner or outer is personified by Ockham and Wyclif, so also that over whether values are inner or outer is personified by Hume and Reid. We are plainly dealing here with an aspect of one of the great themes in the western philosophical tradition.

II

What case can be made out for saying that values are inner? There are of course values of different sorts, moral, aesthetic, religious, economic, and so on. Hume's discussion of moral values is a locus classicus for the claim that values are essentially inside the mind,⁵ and I shall turn

4. See for example *Confessions* 26 where St Augustine writes: 'It seems to me, then, that time is merely an extension, though of what it is an extension I do not know. I begin to wonder whether it is an extension of the mind itself'.

5. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford 1967, Book 3, Part 1.

now to his discussion, taking as my starting point the fact that all Hume's philosophical doctrines have a psychological angle; the question of the location of values certainly calls for reference to the facts of our psychological nature, since identifying the faculty by which we come to acquire knowledge of the existence of values will provide us with a clue to their location, or at least it will provide confirmation of our answer if we reach that by some other route. The identity of the relevant faculty was a problem well recognised in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and one answer, especially associated with Samuel Clarke, was that the values of things are a discovery of reason.⁶ Hume famously made a distinction between two sorts of reasoning, reasoning about relations between ideas and about matters of fact.⁷ Reasoning about relations between ideas is found paradigmatically in mathematics and deductive logic. Given a set of propositions and set of rules of valid inference, a conclusion can be deduced which is necessary if the premisses are necessary. To reach the conclusion we do not need to consult our senses or to trust an authority; it is sufficient to apply those rules of inference to those propositions. By arguing in this way we can establish that the internal angles of a triangle equal two right angles, and that two is the cube root of eight. These are the kinds of judgments that we make when we reason about the relations between ideas, and, as Hume points out, judgements of these kinds cannot of themselves move us to act. Of course an arithmetical truth will lead us to act in one way rather than another, as for example when it comes to our giving change or repaying a debt. But the mere knowledge of the arithmetical truth will not motivate us; it can at most give direction to the will if we have a desire to give the correct change or to repay the debt. Given the presence of the desire, reasoning about relations between ideas guides us as to what to do, but Hume's point is that without the desire the arithmetical judgment would never result in any act. This fact about truths of reason contrast with moral judgments, judgments to the effect that given acts are virtuous or vicious, right or wrong, which do move us to act. If deductive reasoning cannot motivate us, and moral judgments can, then we can never discover moral values by reasoning deductively.

The second sort of reasoning Hume identified is reasoning about matters of fact, and for Hume this was essentially causal reasoning. Its deliverances are not necessary truths but contingent propositions about the existence of things in the world, propositions such as that the sun

6. *A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion*, London 1706. Faksimile-Neudruck der Londoner Ausgaben, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1964.

7. *Treatise* Book 3, Part 1, Sect. 1, p. 463.

will rise tomorrow, or that my pen will run out of ink before the end of this paragraph. The conclusions of such exercises of reasoning can no more move us to act than can conclusions of the kind discussed earlier. Learning that something is about to exist will not move us to act unless I want the thing to exist or want it not to, or want to be near it, or distant from it, and so on, when it comes into existence. Hence, again, the deliverance of reason is not by itself sufficient to motivate us; a desire must be in place if the reasoning is to have influence. And again this is to be contrasted with judgments of moral value which motivate by their nature.

In any case what matter of fact could the existence of a value be? It is not in dispute that we have a natural tendency to locate virtue, vice, goodness and wickedness, in agents and their acts, but do we find such qualities in the objects when we look for them? It is Hume's contention that if we attend only to the act and do not look elsewhere we will not find the value. Hume's argument at this point is really no more than an invitation to us, though an invitation within the context of a powerfully argued theory, to give a description of the act which abstracts entirely from our reaction to the act. His contentions that the perceived act will be seen to consist of certain physical movements, and also emotions, motives, volitions, and thoughts. In the description of the act these various elements will have their due place, but so long as we omit from the description anything that is a product of our reaction to the act we shall say nothing about its virtuousness or viciousness. The other elements, the motives, thoughts, and so on, are in the agent, but if the moral value is elsewhere, then where?

When we observe people act we cannot withhold appraisal. Just as we cannot look at anything without liking or disliking its appearance, or being neutral about it, which is also to appraise it, so also we cannot observe a person act without approving or disapproving, or being neutral. Hume spoke about liking and disliking, also about approving and disapproving, and about being pleased and pained, and these dichotomies appear to be interchangeable in his writings. When he invites us to look for the virtue or vice in an act, but in doing so do disregard anything outside the act, such as our reaction to it, it is in particular our placing the act on a scale of approval and disapproval that we are to disregard. Of course we cannot consider the act and not appraise it; that would cut too sharply across our nature. But we can engage in the intellectual exercise of noting what in our experience of the act is our reaction to it, and then describing the act while not referring to our reaction of approval or disapproval.

These two sorts of reaction are more plausible candidates for being the substance of virtue and vice than anything I have considered so far, for it is of the essence of moral judgements that they motivate us, and

our approving and disapproving do that. This is not to imply that when we approve or disapprove of an act the virtue or vice is in us. It is to say that our judging the act to be virtuous or vicious is nothing more than for us to have a particular feeling of approval or disapproval towards it. It is to say that a particular kind of pleasure or pain arises in us as a result of contemplating the act. We can still describe the act as virtuous or vicious, and be speaking as though there is a quality, a moral value, in it, but the value's being in the act is simply our affective reaction to the act. Its virtue is not, so to say, at a distance from our feelings about it. What passes for moral judging is nothing more than the feeling of the spectator. These considerations lie behind Hume's dictum that morality 'is more properly felt than judge of'.⁸

There is what we see and there is what we read into what we see, and it is Hume's contention that among the things we read into what we see their value. The idea that we read into things that the things do not have of themselves is a basic one for Hume, playing a pivotat role in the *Treatise*, perhaps most famously in his discussion of the relation between a cause and its effect,⁹ where yet again the 'inner/outer' dichotomy is brought to bear. We judge there to be a necessary connection between an event and what we perceive to be its effect, but if we try to find the necessary connection by looking at the event and its effect, even looking at them repeatedly, we do not see it. We see the cause, and we see the effect, and we are aware also of the spatial and temporal contiguity of the effect to the cause. And that is all, if we look outward. If we turn inward however there is a different story to report, for after seeing type-A events invariably followed by type-B events we come to form an expectation of B when we see A. But the expectation does not stay rooted to the perceiver; it is projected outward by him and is read into the relation between the event and its effect. In that form it presents itself to us not as an expectation but as a necessary connection between the two events.

We see here the same move as that made by nominalists in connection with the location of universals. It may be natural for us to think of the universal as having an existence in the outer world, in the things that exemplify it, but really it exists in the mind. Likewise with causally necessary connection on this nominalists account. Some philosophers believe that Hume did not really think that there is such a thing as a necessary connection between an event and its effect; but in fact .. he could not deny its existence - he thought that our disposition to believe in it was an original feature of our nature. The crucial point is that though

8. *Treatise* Book 3, Part 1, Sect. 2, p. 470.

9. *Treatise* Book 1, Part 3, Sect. 14.

he believed it to exist he did not find it where others were so sure it was, namely outside; instead he found it within, in the form of a belief that event of type-B will occur when we observe event of type-A. Necessity is read into the world and constitutes in part our interpretation of the changes that we observe. For necessity to exist in this way in the world is for us to impose the category of necessary connection upon the data of experience, enabling us to find meaning in what would otherwise be a meaningless sequence of impressions. In exactly this way the virtue and vice of an act should be seen as a projection into the act of our approval or disapproval. In this most important respect there is a formidable consistency of doctrine between Hume's metaphysic of nature and his metaphysic of morals.

It should be added that Hume is no less nominalist in his account of non-moral values. A quotation should make the point:

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.¹⁰

A particularly helpful way that I have found to grasp this metaphysic of value is to see it in terms of the relation between a sentence and its meaning. Suppose I write the sentence: 'Glasgow is a beautiful city', and, in Humean fashion, ask where its meaning is. Is it in the sentence I have written? Well, certainly not in the way that the letters and words are. Nor in the way that the colour of the ink is. And the reason is that the meaning is in no respect physical and therefore is not in the sentence in the way that any physical part or feature of sentence is. Hume would certainly say that we could never locate the meaning if we continue to look outward, and that instead we should look inward, to ourselves as understanding the sentence. While it is of course permissible to speak about the sentence as having a meaning, and therefore to speak in terms of the meaning being in the sentence, the metaphysical status of its meaning is that of an act of understanding. And though that act is in us it is projected outward to the sentence from where it presents itself to us as our act of understanding but as a property of the sentence, namely its meaning. And just as a sentence has meaning only so far as we are disposed to understand it in a given way, so also an act is virtuous or vicious only so far as we are disposed to approve or disapprove of it in a given way, and a landscape or face

10. *Treatise* Book 3, Part 1, Sect. 2, p. 471.

is beautiful or ugly only so far as sight of it affords us a given kind of pleasure or of pain. And in each case there is nothing to the property ascribed to the sentence, act, or landscape over and above a disposition on our part, in the case of the sentence a disposition to understand in a given way, and in the remaining cases to approve or disapprove of what we are attending to.

It is easy to see that a theory of the kind here expounded lays itself open to the charge of articulating a form value scepticism, for it can readily be taken to be saying that values do not really exist in any of the things to which we ascribe them, and that the illusion that they do is due to our natural propensity to project our feelings about outer objects into the objects themselves. We have to take this charge seriously, for does Hume not commit himself to the doctrine that talk about values of outer objects is reducible to talk about our feelings about those objects? Thomas Reid certainly thought so, and I should like here to attend to the main thrust of his attack, which is that Hume's doctrine is contrary to common sense.

III

The common sense position is that Hume has reversed the true order of things in focusing in the way he does upon our affective reactions. It is true that when we see a virtuous act or a beautiful object we derive a feeling of pleasure, and that there is a necessary and not a merely contingent connection between on the one hand judging the act virtuous or the object beautiful and on the other hand feeling pleased at what we are seeing. But common sense dictates that it is because the act is virtuous and the object beautiful that they please us; the virtue and the beauty have to be in place for us to respond to them in the particular affective way that we do. Why should we be so pleased at the act and the scenery if it is not that each embodies a particular form of excellence, in other words, a value? The value, therefore, comes first, and the feeling next. This is not to say that Hume is wrong to see a necessary connection between the value and our feelings, but whereas for Hume the connection is one of identity, for Reid the necessity is natural, for our propensity to feel pleased at certain excellences in things is due to what he terms 'the constitution of our nature'.¹¹

What is the reason for saying that this is common sense? Common sense principles are principles that all men of common understanding agree in. The principles do not need proof, nor admit of direct proof.¹²

11. *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, 6th edn., William Hamilton (ed.), Edinburgh 1863, vol. I, Essay 8, ch. 1, p. 492.

12. *Essays*, Essay 1, ch. 2, p. 230.

Nevertheless Reid does not mean to deny that evidence can be brought forward in justification of the claim that a common sense position is indeed common sense, and the chief piece of evidence is linguistic. Throughout his philosophical writings we find Reid invoking the linguistic practice of everybody in support of his philosophical doctrines. I say 'everybody' advisedly for Reid often speaks about features and elements that are to be found in 'all' languages, though his use of 'all' here simply reflects his tendency to universalize on the basis of his knowledge of one or two European languages. He comments as follows upon the proposition 'Virgil's *Georgics* is a beautiful poem':

Why should I use a language that expresses the contrary of what I mean? My language, according to the necessary rules of construction, can bear no other meaning but this, that there is something in the poem, and not in me, which I call beauty. Even those who hold beauty to be merely a feeling in the person that perceives it find themselves under a necessity of expressing themselves as if beauty were solely a quality of the object, and not of the percipient.¹³

And Reid is not speaking only about his own linguistic practice. He continues:

No reason can be given why all mankind should express themselves thus, but that they believe what they say. It is therefore contrary to the universal sense of mankind, expressed by their language, that beauty is not really in the object, but is merely a feeling in the person who is said to perceive it. Philosophers should be very cautious in opposing the common sense of mankind; for, when they do, they rarely miss going wrong.¹⁴

And, to quote just one more passage on this central theme of Reid's:

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.¹⁵

Reid's preoccupation with language, not just with vocabulary but even more with grammar, is due to his conviction that there is a close fit between language and reality. It is because the world is as it is that we speak about it in the way we do. Thus the fact that our verbs are tensed reflects the temporality of our world, the fact that our verbs are in the

13. *Essays*, Essay 8, ch. 1, p. 492.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Essays*, Essay 8, ch. 3, p. 495.

active or passive voice reflects the fact that there are active powers and passive powers, and so on. And the basic form of the proposition, subject plus copula plus predicate, reflects the fact that in the world there are substances in which attributes inhere. Hence when I say 'Glasgow is beautiful' or 'Joe Bloggs is wicked', I am ascribing a property to Glasgow or to Joe Bloggs. I am not talking about myself but about the world. Certainly Glasgow and Joe cause me pleasure or pain, but that is because my nature is so constituted that when I see something beautiful or something wicked I am pleased or pained. That is all.

IV

I have no reason to suppose that Hume would deny any of the linguistic claims that Reid makes, though he might perhaps have demurred over Reid's tendency to universalize about language. But whether or not Reid is correct about features of all languages, a question can be raised concerning the conclusions to be drawn from the supposedly universal linguistic facts. Let us then focus on Reid's affirmation, directed as much against Hume as against anyone: 'And the use of all languages shows that the name of beauty belongs to this excellence of the object, and not to the feelings of the spectator'.¹⁶ Would Hume object to this? How could he? Reid is telling us that we look at the world, see things to have a given aesthetic value, and use subject-predicate propositions to declare that value to be a value of the objects, attaching to the objects and not to our feelings. Who could object to this account? I believe that Hume's experience of the world and of the values that we ascribe to the things in it was not very different from Reid's, and that he would not have objected to Reid's account. In line with this belief I shall seek to argue now that Reid's criticism of Hume misses its target, and that though Reid's linguistic evidence is to be taken seriously it does not prove what he thinks it does.

Reid sees virtuous acts and beautiful objects, and of course ascribes the virtuosness to the acts and the beauty to the objects. Hume does likewise. But that things appear to us as beautiful or ugly, virtuous or vicious, and so on, prompts a question about the mode of existence of the values which we ascribe to things. If Hume propounds any sort of value scepticism, he is at least not at all sceptical about the existence of values. Of course he thinks values exist, and he regards it as a basic feature of our psychological constitution that we see things in terms of values, in the sense that he thinks that a human being unable to ascribe

16. *Essays*, Essay 8, ch. 4, pp. 499-500.

value, whether positive or negative, to anything would lack a human perspective upon the world. But knowing that a thing exists does not imply knowledge of how it exists, and it is upon the latter problem that Hume focuses.

The problem is dealt with in terms of the 'inner/outer' dichotomy. Where does Hume think values are, inside or outside? On the one hand he is as willing as anyone else to ascribe values to outer objects, but at the same time he thinks that there would be no values if things did not have a propensity to please or displease us. This is not to say merely that if things neither pleased nor displeased us we would not be aware of values; it is to make the stronger claim that in those circumstances values would simply not exist. Here then is a form of what some might think of as scepticism: a denial of the possibility of values in a world devoid of feeling. But it is plainly not a denial of the existence of values *tout court*, nor even a denial of the existence of the values in outer objects. Of course we see values as in outer objects, but Hume argues that they are there because we put them there, by our magical propensity to project our feelings into the world and to read them in the world as though they are other than our feelings at a distance from us.

It is also appropriate to describe Hume's position as sceptical to the extent that he denies, as against Samuel Clarke, that reason has the power to discover values. But as regards this form of scepticism, there is in any case no disagreement between Hume and Reid. The central disagreement between the two men concerns Hume's reductionist programme. Hume thinks that talk about values can be rewritten, without remainder, as talk about feelings, and Reid says otherwise. But has to be noted that Hume's reductionist programme is not on the same analytic level as Reid's common sense account, for Hume's programme presupposes the common sense position that Reid and everyone else espouse. Hume grants all the obvious things, and asks what explanation could be given of why things appear to us the way they do, whereas Reid skirts round but does not ask the question that really interests Hume. The point can be expressed in terms of the difference between the phenomenological and the metaphysical facts of the case. There is a phenomenology of values, and a metaphysic of values. Hume and Reid agree about the phenomenological facts, but it is only Hume, of the two men, who delves into the metaphysical facts, and provides a serious account of the mode of existence of values, an account which focuses upon the inner life, the feelings of approval and disapproval, the pleasures and pains, a focus which causes Reid to think that Hume, contrary to common sense, was actually locating values in the inner person and not in the world. Hume as we have seen was doing no such thing. It was feelings that were being located within, not values. Hume did not think that because a landscape caused him to pleasure, it was he and not the landscape that was beautiful!

Earlier I characterised Hume's position as nominalist, and I should like here to clarify this characterization. His account of the nature of values in terms of our feelings is nominalist in the sense that a phenomenon, a value, which we naturally think of as external to ourselves is presented in that account as an inner state read into the world, so that when we meet with it it is at a distance from us and so to say confronts us as something in the order of external things and independent of us, much as the necessity which we see to connect events related as cause and effect is an inner state read into the world, so that when we meet with it it is at a distance from ourselves and so to say confronts us as something in the order of external things and independent of us. Nevertheless Hume is realist in the sense that he does not deny that values really exist; in the way just described values are in the world and confront us. But, as is now clear, this realist position is not so much a metaphysical position as a phenomenological one. We might almost say that Hume is realist about the phenomena and nominalist about reality. As regards the realist aspect of this history, Hume is neither more nor less realist than Reid is, but Hume's nomination takes him a step beyond Reid because Reid does not ask himself the metaphysical question that elicits from Hume the nominalist reply.

It should also be clear from this exposition of Hume's doctrine, that the common sense position, maintained by all people of sound mind, is realist in the sense that it describes how things really appear to us and therefore it is also Hume's position. But whereas most people stop at that sort of realism, Hume saw that it was precisely that position that calls for metaphysical investigation.

Nevertheless, we have noted that Reid produces at least one powerful argument in support of his own and against Hume; that is his argument from language. Reid may be on shaky ground when he pleads that all languages point towards his doctrine and away from Hume's, but there is no doubt that Reid's own languages, English and Latin at least, appear to be on his side. How might Hume reply to that line of attack?

I think that Hume would question the applicability of Reid's linguistic methodology to the metaphysical issues. Naturally our language reflects our experience of reality, an experience with Hume and Reid share. They agree about such facts as that there are in the world distinct substances with attributes, that causally linked events are connected necessarily, that we sometimes feel duty bound to perform given sorts of act and to eschew others, and that some things in this world are beautiful, others ugly. That is how our world appears to us is not something for which Hume requires proof, whether linguistic or otherwise. Instead he asks why the world appears to us in this and not in some other way. And the latter is a question to whose answer language provides no clue if, as Reid believes, language merely reflects our experience of the

world. For if that is the order of things, first our experience of the world and then language with its broader categories, its grammar and its vocabulary, then language does no more than reflect the data that themselves demand philosophical study. We can so to say read the problems off language, but we cannot read the answers off it. The situation would be otherwise if linguistic categories, proper names, predicates, and so on, were seen not as reflecting experience but as determining it. For in so far as our experience of the world is structured by linguistic categories then we ought to be able to learn about basic features of the experienced world by a consideration of our language.

This quasi-Kantian manner of understanding the role of language in its relation to experience, a manner which is basic to Frege's philosophy, and also Wittgenstein's, is not however at all similar to that of Hume and Reid. Because it treated language as reflecting experience, not shaping it, the common sense philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment was bound to see language as supporting the common sense position, and on the other hand the nominalist Hume was bound to see language as irrelevant. Language reflects what we are all agreed upon, and Hume, in wonderment at what we are agreed upon, institutes a metaphysical enquiry into what we all share. We see the world as containing things of value, and we speak of the value of those things as if it were a quality of the things and inhering in them. That is how we speak about value because that is how we see value, that is, as confronting us as if it were something distinct from us and independent, when in metaphysical fact it is neither of these things.

Hume's philosophical masterpiece *A Treatise of Human Nature* has the subtitle *Being An Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects*. Its discussion of the nature of values is a clear example of the experimental method of reasoning. The investigation is not deductive, but starts instead from the phenomena, in this case from the fact that we ascribe value to things, and it observes that however hard we look we never seem to see the value in things, any more than we see in or between causally related events the necessity of their connection. This draws Hume on to consider the role of the perceiver and he focuses upon the idea that the term 'values' should be treated not as a noun but as a verb. To say that something has a value is to say that we value it. Value, then should be thought of not as a mere accident inherent in an object, but as an act, something that we do, and this prompts the question of the kind of act valuing is. This leads directly to an investigation of the affective part of our nature, and to the conclusion, which can be reached only by the 'experimental method of reasoning', that we do, as a basic fact of our nature, respond with one kind of affection or feeling to some sorts of thing, and with other sorts of affection or feeling to other sorts of thing. Why we should value certain

things and not others cannot in the end be answer except by saying that that is our nature - that is how we are. Had we been otherwise we would no doubt have valued things otherwise, though in what wise we cannot say a priori; we would need to employ the experimental method of reasoning.

However, for Hume valuing is not a matter of feeling only; it is central to his account that there is also a projective act through which we see the value as existing not in us but in what we value, and as existing independently of us. This projection grounds the possibility of the value realism which Hume shares with all other people, including the Scottish common sense philosophers.

To sum up: I think that Hume's value philosophy survives Reid's powerful attack. Essentially Reid takes his stand on value realism, and complains that Hume is not a realist; and if I am right, Hume's reply is simply that he is a realist in precisely the sense in which Reid is, but that the philosophical questions which Hume tackles after his acceptance of that realism and as a result of that acceptance.

In considering the dispute between Hume and Reid, it is difficult not to recall arguments which have taken place in this century between defenders of cognitivist and of noncognitivist theories of value, and particularly between the emotivists and their opponents. Many of the terms of the recent debates replicate those of the earlier one I have been examining, but as regards clarity of observation, depth of insight, and subtlety of argument, I do not believe that a great deal has occurred in the twentieth century debate that matches the writings of Hume and Reid, those two most formidable protagonists of the Scottish Enlightenment.