

A Priori, Transcendental and Naturalistic Argument: Three Defense Strategies for Realism

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Abstract : A priori argument is a kind of reductio ad absurdum provided by Colin McGinn on the premise of accepting the basic rules of Dummett. The core part of the theory is to analyze the three joint positions besides realism and make them invalid, thus proving the rationality of the stance of realism. However, this argument strategy is vulnerable to skepticism because it delays the skeptical problem. In addition to McGinn, John Searle offers a linguistic transcendental argument strategy, which regards realism as the comprehensible condition that all normal activities of understanding must assume, while skepticism does not enjoy the same status. However, Searle's transcendental argument does not solve the problem of the relationship between realist presupposition and representational presupposition. Strawson, Hume, Reid, Wittgenstein, and others provide a naturalistic argument for realism. In this argument, realism is either a priori commitment from nature, or our second nature, or even a background belief that is fundamentally immovable. The key to this argument is to provide a quietistic treatment that ultimately invalidates our anti-realist myths. In comparison, the naturalistic argument is a more promising one. In this paper, methods of theoretical analysis and comparative research are used in order to demonstrate that in the face of skepticism, McGinn's a priori strategy and Searle's transcendental strategy are untenable, while Strawson and others' naturalistic strategy may resist the pressure of skepticism and make realism possible.

Keywords : a priori argument, transcendental argument, naturalism, realism, skepticism

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