

ABSTRACT

The topic of this dissertation is the aesthetic experience as it relates to our natural environment. This concept, while first established in the mid-20 century, is explored and expanded on, by both Yi-Fu Tuan and Ronald William Hepburn. This work will show how both philosophers are concerned in their special way in substantiating the specific attributes of the aesthetic experience with nature, and to further accent the important role nature has in our life by comparing both their approaches. The text at first contours the fundamentals of environmental aesthetics at the time it was first established. Within this frame of environmental aesthetics, both Tuan and Hepburn introduced a wide range of ideas. The main task of this dissertation is to explore the ideas both philosophers have in common and show where their viewpoints differ. Yi-Fu Tuan accents the pure and frameless experience with nature, whereas Hepburn leads us to acknowledge the inherence of senses and thought components in our aesthetic appreciation of nature. According to Hepburn we did not create nature, but we have extensive knowledge about it; and therefore, we should project this into our appreciation of our natural environment. Unless we realize this, we are unable to properly appreciate and judge our natural environment and how it differs from our common belief in what is the artistic experience.

KEYWORDS

Natural environment, art, topophilia, aesthetic experience, appreciation of nature, landscape, scenery, Yi-Fu Tuan, Ronald W. Hepburn.