Rationalism, empiricism and what not: what’s in a label?

Cem Bozşahin
Rationalists do it **by** the rules.  

Empiricists do it **to** the rules.  

(Shimon Edelman)
A distinguished line of development of thought:

Socrates  Plato  Aristotle  Descartes  Kant  Russell  Quine
Not-so-distinguished lines of development of thought:

Demokritos  Ibn Sina (Avicenna)  Ibn Haldun  Hume  Husserl  Wittgenstein
The heavyweights:

Socrates    Aristotle    Descartes    Kant    Hegel    Marx

A lighter side of life:

Heraklitos    Demokritos    Science of man philosophy

SOM: Locke    Hume    Smith    Ferguson    Ibn Haldun    Bishop Berkeley
Cogsci heavyweights:

Plato Descartes Chomsky Fodor

the workhorses:

Plato Hume Wittgenstein Newell Elman Dennett
Sources of knowledge:

God-centered

King-centered

Human-centered

Nature-centered

Nothing-centered?
Gibson 1966: time and space are terms for physicists.

Organisms only care about change and permanence (a modern Herakleitos?)
Three Gibsonian surprises:

Vision cells. Auditory cells. Haptic cells?

Having a sensation and having a sense perception (feel the fire fire)

Is there a high animal without a head? It helps orientation. Was it designed for the mind?
Perception is learned.

It is very basic. almost like an instinct.

So is breathing.

Some babies forget to breathe.
No-one in this day and age can do science without observation.

Rationalist assume structure and richness in the mind, and seek data to make it explicit.

Empiricist assume structure and richness in the data, and seek its understanding with limited abilities.

Mind-centered cogsci.

Ecology-minded cogsci.

Lets-see cogsci.

You decide.