

While an epistemology and a psychology have no effect on the reality of things, they do exert a notable influence on ontology, i. e., on our account of the reality of things. So it is that a mythic epistemology and psychology imply a mythic ontology, whose characteristics now claim our attention.

In ontology the basic notion is the notion of being, and in mythic ontology the notion of being is the notion of the reality of the given. It has been said, true enough, that being is what we see. Still, for being to be, it does not have to be seen. Things do not come into existence as Jack or Jill turn to look at them. They already are; they are out there waiting to be seen; prior to the actual givenness of their being seen, there is the potential givenness of their waiting to be seen. Between two extremes, each of which is a disastrous error, one must choose the middle course. The phenomenalist admits the ~~given~~ givenness but denies the reality; the Kantian admits the thing-in-itself but claims it to be ~~unknowable~~ unknowable, to lack givenness for any human intuition; the mythic realist strides down the central path; for him, the reality and the givenness are at one and the reality he names being

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Naive Realism

For the naive realist, being is what we see, and knowledge is the seeing of being. The verb ~~to see~~ 'to see' is used analogously, of course.

Now all analogous knowledge is imperfect and incomplete: A is partly like B and partly unlike B, that we know; but just how different ~~is~~ A is from B, that we do not know.

It follows that, inasmuch as the verb 'to see' is employed analogously, being is imperfectly and ~~is~~ incompletely characterized as what we see, and just how imperfect and incomplete that characterization is, we do not know. Again, it follows that knowledge is imperfectly and incompletely characterized as the seeing of being, and just how imperfect and incomplete that characterization is, we do not know.

Further, it follows that, if the naive realist were to respect the limitations of analogy, he could not object from his premisses either that intelligence is not knowing or that rationality is not knowing or that ~~what~~ the object of intelligence or of rationality is not being. It is true of course that ^{ocular vision} ~~seeing~~ is neither intelligent nor rational. It is true that from the analogy of ocular vision nothing whatever ~~is~~ is or can be known either about intelligence or about rationality. But, at least, if the naive realist took seriously the limitations of analogy, he would not deny a priori the cognitional validity of intelligence and of rationality, and he would not claim a priori that the object of intelligent activity qua intelligent and of rational

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Naive Realism

For the naive realist, being is what we see, and knowledge is the seeing of being. The verb 'to see' is used analogously, of course. In other words, the luminous instance of knowledge is ocular vision. For any other activity really and truly to be knowledge, it must be like ocular vision.

The naive realist is not concerned to learn from inner experience just what the conception of universals is; he adverts to the fact of universals and, in the light of his analogy, concludes that we must see them. He is not concerned to learn from inner experience just what our grasp of principles is; he adverts to the fact of universals and, in the light of his analogy, concludes that we must see them too. He is not concerned to learn from inner experience just what our knowledge of the truth of our knowledge is; he adverts to the fact of truth and, in the light of his analogy, concludes that it too is seen.

Now all analogous knowledge is imperfect and incomplete. If ~~the~~ the naive realist were to attend to this limitation of analogy, he would say, not that being is what we see, but that being is imperfectly and incompletely conceived as what we see. Again, he would say, not that knowledge is the seeing of being, but that knowledge is imperfectly and ~~is~~ incompletely conceived as the seeing of being. Were such reservations made, naive realism would lose most of its naivete. But the reservations are not made, and so naive realism turns out to be a trap.

see is being. He cannot carry the matter any further for the simple reason that he has ~~walking~~ walked into a trap. For he has employed analogy without observing the limitations of analogy.

The naive realist has employed analogy. He has found ocular vision to be a luminous instance of knowledge. He has leaped to the conclusion that knowledge can be knowledge only if it is like ocular vision. He has not examined the psychological process by which universals are conceived; he has merely adverted to the fact of universals, and jumped to the conclusion that we must see them. He has not examined the psychological process by which we grasp principles; he has merely adverted to the fact that principles are grasped, and jumped to the conclusion that we must see them too. He has not examined the psychological process by which intellect knows truth; he has merely adverted to the fact of knowledge of truth, and jumped to the conclusion that it too must be seen.

The naive realist has not observed the limitations of analogy. For whatever is known by analogy, is known incompletely and imperfectly. Moreover, as long as we know only by analogy, we do not know in what precise manner our knowledge is incomplete and imperfect.