There is an apparently self-evident proposition which seems basic to idealism and empiricism and which is interestingly related to much modern language analysis: the proposition that everything is itself and not some other thing. Since in ordinary language the term “map” is used only where a) some notation, b) indicative of a terrain, c) intelligible to some person, is involved, an ambiguity is involved whenever the same term is used if any of the three elements are left out. Stated in somewhat tortured syntax, a map cannot be itself without ceasing to be a map. Avoiding the tortured syntax we can say that if the map were “itself” only, then it would be mere paper and ink lines, or some other human alteration of materials. This last use of the term “map” is equivalent to what might be called a token map, borrowing an expression from Peirce. A pirate map made up to deceive treasure hunters would be a fictive map. The unqualified use of the term “map” in ordinary language does not refer to token or fictive maps, and hence logically involves the three factors spoken of above—i.e., the use of a token by a person to orient himself with regard to some terrain. Moreover, a person is a map user only if there is a relevant token and a relevant terrain, and finally a terrain is not a mapped terrain unless there is a person and a token relevant to that terrain.

All of this seems to be sufficiently simple, straightforward, and non-controversial. When the empiricist speaks of sense-data, however, or when the idealist speaks of ideas, or the anti-metaphysical language analyst speaks of language, each seems to speak about these as if they were themselves, and were not also some other things, and thereby introduces ambiguities of the most consequential kind. A sensation spoken of on the paradigm of a “raw feel” may be subjective—leaving aside the problem of distinguishing the person experiencing the raw feel, from the raw feel experienced. But a human perception, if we let ordinary language be our guide, must (logically must) be by someone, of something. Returning to our tortured syntax to make a point, perception, like the map, is not just itself but also some other thing(s). The same may be said at least for those “ideas” for which there is a referent. Language too, if it refers, is about what is not language, and is uttered by someone. A clear

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analogue of the terrain is missing in the “language” of formal and symbolic logic, in geometry, mathematics, and literature, and in some other forms of discourse. We can say, then, that just as something is a map only when it is of a terrain for someone, and there is perception only when it is the perception of something by someone, so there is unambiguously referential language only when it is about something existing independently of language and is expressed by someone. Language in use about the world aims at expressing the world.

The logical impasse (or linguistic cramps) that we encounter by analyzing the claim that what we perceive are “impressions,” or in analyzing the claim that the “external world” has to be “given” through these impressions so that knowledge of the “external world” becomes an “inference,” suggests that something is amiss. Similarly, the linguistic cramps encountered by analyzing the notion that we cannot “go beyond mind” to discern how things really are (the noumenal world) and that we know literally nothing “outside of mind,” suggest overwhelmingly that there is something radically amiss with this sort of language about mind.

We do not “go beyond perception” when we perceive the world, for it is the world we perceive (sometimes), nor do we “go beyond understanding” when we understand the world, for it is the world we understand (sometimes). In a word, we do not “go beyond mind” when the world is manifest to us, for mind is not beneath the skin or inside the brain, or anywhere else; this sort of para-mechanics or para-geometry about mind is meaningless. But to pursue these issues any further would carry us away from the main point of the present essay.

I wish to argue that although the insights of language analysts have already done a great deal to alleviate the perplexities involved in the epistemologies (particularly empiricism and idealism) which came to prominence after Descartes, yet some language analysts tend to reactivate mental cramps similar to those engendered by empiricism and idealism, precisely by excessive zeal to avoid metaphysics in the sense of ontology. In terms of my analogy, some language analysts tend to gain the whole linguistic map and lose the terrain.

The analogy of reader-map-terrain is conspicuously defective in clarifying the point I wish to discuss, in that whereas one can “gain access” to the terrain without a map (as when one sees it), one cannot “gain perceptual access” to what is given in perception without perceiving. There is no way to perceive the terrain in its “naked” reality. Likewise, we cannot, logically cannot, express how the world is except in some notation; or rather, it is meaningless to say that we can express it without some notation. In at least this sense we “cannot exit from language.” Incidentally, if this involves anything about whether language can be amplified, it clearly should suggest that it can be. We can exit from present language.

When we attempt to express matters of fact, we are attempting to express how it goes with whatever there is. It may appear that we are bewitched into
“philosophy” or metaphysics by using everyday language and/or scientific language in ways which have no employment. Imagine the following dialogue: “What is this bench made of?” “Clearly it is made of wood.” “But what is wood made of?” “It is made of carbon and hydrogen atoms.” “And what are they made of?” “They are made of sub-atomic particles.” “And what are sub-atomic particles made of?” “Standing waves.” “And what are standing waves made of?” “That’s a nonsense question. One comes to an end somewhere in asking ‘what is x made of?’ Where there is common-sensical or scientific employment for the question we know where we are and what we are saying. To go further is to put language on a holiday.” “But is everything made of standing waves? Is perceiving, for example, made of standing waves?” “That is a category mistake. There is legitimate employment for ‘what is a bench made of?’ and for those other questions we mentioned, but not for ‘what is perceiving made of?’”

But if it were not because of something about matters of fact which required our expression about such matters of fact to be as we say it ought to be, then we would be entitled to say anything about them, and more importantly, anything we said about them would be on the same footing. So whoever would sanction what common sense and science can say about matters of fact, but place general restrictions on “metaphysics,” may betray a temperamental bias for the physical and the prosaic, rather than a professional commitment to clarity and understanding.

Support for this last claim is found by going back to our dialogue for a moment. “Is it because of something special about perceiving or because of something about language that we cannot ask ‘what is perceiving made of?’” “It is because of something about language.” “But perceiving exists surely, so why is it that some existents like perceiving are not made of anything whereas others are?” “I did not say that some existents are not made of anything, I said that it does not make sense to ask ‘what is perceiving made of?’” “But you also said that it does make sense to ask ‘what are sub-atomic particles made of?’ Is that because of something about sub-atomic particles or because of something about language?” “It is because of something about sub-atomic particles and language.” “Why does one kind of question involve language and reality, and the other only language?”

If there is an everyday or scientific use for terms regarding matters of fact, and other uses are suggested which raise metaphysical perplexities, it is because we are convinced that maps can be made of whatever there is, and that those maps can be made coherently. To abandon that ideal is to give up the search for whatever truth men can have.

Facts as facts have no meaning, but what we say about facts has. Logic, whether common-sensical, scientific, or metaphysical, is “in language” not “in the world,” although logic is part of what there is. More precisely, statements about matters of fact are logical and have meaning, and wherever there are any true statements about facts, there reality has been expressed. If there were no
true statements (in some sense of “true”) about matters of fact, then all language would be on some sort of holiday—language would be a kind of pure literature.

How it goes with whatever there is, is expressed in language, and as so expressed has meaning. To attribute to whatever there is the character of language is a constant and an unavoidable condition of speaking about whatever there is. The only alternative is silence.

Whoever insulates language from reality too severely is left with “mere language” on the one hand, and an unspeakable reality on the other. The logical consequence of what might be called the radical realist or non-linguistic position would be even more astonishing. “Reality always appears covered with a patina of interpretations,” Julian Marías tells us, and the “primary mission of theory is the removal of all interpretations.”¹ That removal would not make the “naked reality” manifest in all its truth, but would be silence.

Paradoxically, we find Nietzsche casting his lot on the side of a frank and outlandish form of idealism (or empiricism) when he says that there are no facts, only interpretations. On our analogy of maps, he is saying that there are only map-makers and maps, but no terrain. Just as paradoxically, many language analysts seem to be required to take the same position as Nietzsche! It is said that the use of language is clarified by illustrating other uses. If this means that sound philosophy is concerned with the use of language as opposed to expressions of matters of fact, then philosophy is concerned only with “maps” whose “meaning” is relevant only to other “maps.” For simplicity’s sake we might say that concern with “maps” is concern with meaning on the horizontal dimension of language, and that concern with maps is concern with meaning on the vertical dimension of language as well.² To restrict philosophy’s concern to maps on the horizontal dimension alone turns philosophy into a kind of literary criticism whose “text” is “available language”—not the world or experience.

The implicit or explicit claim that “experience” is “mental” and merely itself—with the consequence that it is experience which we experience, might be called the fallacy of classical empiricism. Its “fallacy” is that it describes experience in such a way as to drop out what the experience is experience of. The “vertical” dimension is left out. The implicit or explicit claim that ideas are “mental” and merely themselves, with the consequence that it is ideas which we think, might be called the fallacy of classical idealism. There seems to be an analogous fallacy of language analysis which implicitly or explicitly claims that language is itself, with the consequence that it is language which we express. But when we express something about how or what or why the world is, we express something about the world. Even the locution “language expresses something about the world” is misleading if we are led to conclude that the something is meaning or language, for what is expressed in these cases is not language, but the world. Ordinary language can let us down fatally here.
If we relied upon it as our guide, we might say confidently that it is language that we express, and say quite as confidently that the notation “express the world” is tortured and misleading, or characterize it in some other deprecatory manner.

To argue that the use of the word “mind” can be clarified without ontological implications is a very close bed-partner of the contention that there are no facts, only interpretations. If mind be not some kind of fact, then what is being clarified—“language”? Where the full complement of using language (in ordinary language) includes token, person, and terrain, it is misleading to say that the use of language can be clarified by illustrating other uses, while denying that this has a fundamental bearing on what we say is the case. Linguistic analysts can avoid ontology only by avoiding both the use of, and examination of the use of, such terms as “mind,” “matter,” “appearance,” “reality,” “freedom,” and so forth.

The task of reconciling freedom of choice with what physicists tell us about so much of the world is assuredly not “a matter of expression” as opposed to a “fact of the world.” To say so is to imply that ontology is to be decided by physicists and farmers. And perhaps, just perhaps, ontology will be decided by physics or ordinary language for a given society. But that would be because philosophers had relinquished one of their essential tasks—metaphysics. If the language analyst can avoid ontological implications only by implying that language does not ever express the world, then clearly the price of that avoidance is too great. If he turns ontology over to the physicist he subscribes to materialism, if he turns it over to common sense he simply refuses to deal with the issue.

In the Blue Book we find that the man who says “only my pain is real” rebels against the way the words are commonly used, and that he is not aware that he is objecting to a convention.³ Wittgenstein suggests in the same passage that one could explain to the pain solipsist “what you want is only a new notation, and by a new notation no facts of geography are changed.” There is a tremendously weighty ambiguity in the term “convention” here, and I submit that it is the very heart of a very important matter. No one would, I believe, seriously question that it is a convention to use “legs” or “pattes” or some other notation to say that dogs have legs. It could even be soundly argued that it is conventional in some extended sense of that term that walking appendages should be isolated for attention and spoken about. It is clear that the use of “convention” has shifted appreciably here. It is only in some notation, something that humans agree to do (convenient agere), that they articulate “Dogs have legs.” It is also something they agree to when they say that dogs have legs. Although we might change our notation, it is misleading to say that we might change our use of the expression. For if we did change that, we could do so only by saying something else about dogs or legs, or about an entirely different matter. Since
the statement that some dogs have legs is as incorrigible as any could be, then some dogs do have legs regardless of what is said.

Perhaps this means no more than that there are creatures in existence (persons) who can isolate out of the ineffably complex local situation certain features of what there is, and express that isolating process in grammatical structures. But that is quite enough. There might be numerous other statements that might be made by creatures who speak, and those statements might differ enormously from saying that dogs have legs, but even that would not “change the facts of geography.”

Without bringing in these fantasies, there are profound problems in determining what can most fundamentally be meant by saying even something as straightforward and reliable as that dogs have legs. For example, if I am not mistaken, the taking of the term “legs” as referring to the morphology as opposed to the function of legs can have ontological consequences as significant as those between a substance ontology and a process ontology.

What perplexes the man who would say “only my pain is real” is that other things that he says about finding things out (like looking for a hidden Easter egg) seem quite obvious, while finding out that someone else is in pain is so utterly different. Is it too far off the mark to suggest that Wittgenstein finds whatever is public (common both in the sense of available to everyone, and in the sense of ordinary) unparadoxical and in no need of analysis, whereas whatever is not common (in either sense) does require the medicine of genuine philosophy, i.e., analysis? If this is so, why should it be so? Is it perhaps the empiricist prejudice in a new form?

What can philosophy have to say about matters of fact—“facts of geography”? Here is the rub. Were we to agree that Wittgenstein’s remarks about pain, referred to above, apply to what might be called “the fallacy of philosophy,” which is to consider a philosophical problem as though such a problem concerned a fact of the world instead of a matter of expression,4 we would find a kindred spirit in the Kant of the first Critique. It was Kant who first argued powerfully and systematically to the effect that the proper domain of philosophy has nothing to do with settling matters of fact. Thus he calls his first inquiry a transcendental examination of the conditions for the possibility of cognition. Even if it is fairly clear that it is a fallacy for philosophers to attempt to settle certain matters of fact by argument, it is equally clear that settling transcendental (or linguistic) claims has a colossal bearing on what one considers to be matters of fact. In Kant’s treatment, the investigation of systematic factuality (nature) is limited to the application of the categories of pure reason to what is “given” in sensation. Are not Wittgenstein’s “matters of expression” as opposed to “matters of fact” like Kant’s “transcendental inquiry” as opposed to his “empirical inquiry”?

If what has been suggested above is basically sound, the linguistic analyst avoids ontology by adopting an empiricist or Kantian sense of “the use of
language.” Another alternative—that of remaining neutral—can be consistently maintained only by making linguistic analysis a kind of pure phenomenology. Then there is the “bait and switch” alternative. Bait one into accepting ontological neutrality as far as life, morality, mind, and religion are concerned, and then switch back to science and common sense for talking about “matters of fact.” Ryle seems to be a case in point here. His view is that philosophy cannot settle questions about matters of fact or even investigate them in any sense, for that is the purview of the natural sciences. In this view philosophy has nothing to say about existence and existence claims, but only about “the use of language.”

Ryle tells us that a “linguistic consequence of all this argument (the analysis of sensation and perception) is that we have no employment for such expressions as ‘objects of sense,’ ‘sensible object,’ ‘sensum,’ ‘sense datum,’ ‘sense content,’ ‘sense field,’ and ‘sensibilia’; the epistemologist’s transitive verb ‘to sense’ and his intimidating ‘direct awareness’ and ‘acquaintance’ can be returned to the store.” However devastating to “epistemology” his and others’ arguments may be, sensation and perception remain realities. “Perceiving” is a word with its uses, but there is also the fact of perceiving. It may even be true that human beings cannot devise a suitable language to express such facts except as provided by what is called ordinary language, but this indicates something paradoxical about such facts. A modicum of false intellectual comfort was provided for those bewitched by the para-geometry and para-mechanics of a post-Cartesian epistemology. Contemporary philosophers are to be left without any comfort regarding the actuality of mind, other than a very sophisticated shrugging of the shoulders expressed in the form of “... the phrase ‘there occur mental processes’ does not mean the same sort of thing as ‘there occur physical processes’, and, therefore, ... it makes no sense to conjoin or disjoin the two.” This is an intricate way of saying “We can talk commonsensically using the term ‘mind’ but it does not make any sense to ask if or how there could be mind in a world of fact.” Or, to use a medieval distinction, it is a way of saying, “Philosophy is grammar, not metaphysics. Aristotle’s On Interpretation is all right, but his On The Soul, On Physics, and After the Physics are confusions.”

One may indeed be brought down to earth by being admonished that whereas brains have weight, mind does not, and that one reason for this (not the only reason) is that the grammar of mind is incompatible with terms relating to gravity, and not because of anything “mysterious” or “ghostly” about mind. How can one be kept ‘down to earth’ when one remembers that there are existents (persons) who can manipulate the world in ways that no other existents can, and that those manipulations have an efficacy that is not clearly attributable to the dynamics of nature understood as the ongoing studied by physics, chemistry, or biology? There may indeed be something wrong with the grammar (with consequently the ontology) of saying that mind
is efficacious in the world, and there may be something wrong even with the
grammar of saying that there is any efficacy at all!7 But that is for metaphys-
icians to find out. The disposition to leave these matters to science and/or
common sense is a kind of fideism—in which science and/or common sense
stand as revealed doctrines whose meaning it is the philosopher's task to make
clear.

The comparison with the *Critique of Pure Reason* without the saving grace
of the other *Critiques* is even closer. Without Kant's acknowledgement that
he found it necessary to "deny knowledge" in order to "make room for faith,"
philosophy becomes the charwoman of science and common sense, and its sole
task is to tidy up grammar. Is it consistent for the anti-ontologist to place
inquiry into matters of fact in one category and ontological inquiry into
another? If philosophy as philosophy cannot say anything about matters of
fact, who can? If the answer to that is "science and/or common sense" we are
left with the difficulty of reconciling science with common sense, and that gets
us back into metaphysics.

Disorders of memory are occasioned by cortical lesions, but a question still
remains as to what could be meant by saying that "memory traces" are
"destroyed" by such lesions. It is an evasion to clear up the perplexity by an
explanation as banal as ‘‘the destruction of memory traces’’ can mean no more
than ‘after the cortical lesion one is unable to remember.’’ Most of us feel
fairly comfortable with the assertion that cortical lesions are plain, straightfor-
dward facts. Hardly any of us feels comfortable with the assertion that memo-
ries are just as plain and straightforward facts. To remain comfortable with
cortical lesions as matters of fact but to resort to analysis in order to dispel
"linguistic confusion" regarding "memory traces" betrays an antipathy not for
ontology (for a materialistic ontology is thereby approved), but for anything
that is not subject to "empirical" examination. Kant's first *Critique* is under-
written, and the others are declared null and void. But a category mistake is
only sometimes merely a mistake in the use of language, e.g., puns or jokes
taken seriously. Category mistakes with ontological implications, however, are
mistakes in the expression of some fact.

If the sciences aim at saying what is true about the world, whereas philoso-
phy aims at disclosing only the logic of what can be truly or even falsely said
about the world, what can be the thrust of that "only"? Is not that "only"
misleading, since if philosophy does disclose the logic of what can be truly or
even falsely said about the world, it *ipso facto* legislates or at least gives an
imprimatur to what science and/or common sense can say about the world?
Philosophy even in this view is at least restrictive ontology and thereby gets
back into the business not of what is and what is not so (that is the domain
of nature, and whatever else may exist) but back into the business of normative
ontology in at least a negative or restrictive way.
None of this should be construed as suggesting that all philosophers as philosophers must be ontologists. On the other hand, since the human utterance purporting to assert a matter of fact is a kind of cartography, critical analysis of the maps made by any cartographer is a legitimate inquiry. The expression, “light travels at approximately 186,000 miles per second,” allows one to infer, “light is not a standing wave nor a disturbance of a medium.” It may not be true that light travels at all, but if it does and coherent rational sense can be made of it, then it is not the disturbance of a medium. It may even be that facts cannot be made ultimately coherent, but whatever knowledge we have of them must be. If so, epistemological nihilism is true only where this ultimacy comes into play.

If the character of matters of fact as embodied in any particular expression makes it impossible for us (or anyone after us or before us) to conceive how some other clearly ascertainable fact could possibly be, then that expression is unjustifiable, and must be qualified or rejected. If someone says or implies, for example, that all processes take place according to the laws of physics, then my speaking and everyone else’s takes place according to those laws. Now since in that view it is inconceivable how there can be any sense to the statement that what anyone says can be true or false, then such a statement is self-stultifying—it says of itself that it cannot be true or false.

The negative normative position might be called the bed-maker view of philosophy. “If the words ‘language’, ‘experience’, ‘world’, have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words ‘table’, ‘lamp’, ‘door’.”9 “Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language, it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is.”9 Indeed what the bed-maker says is all right, whereas what the philosopher says is often not right at all. But what each is trying to say requires only ordinary common sense in the one case and something like genius in the other. Would it not be more appropriate to say that ordinary language expresses a natural, i.e., an a-critical ontology? And of course this “natural” ontology is not to be treated lightly, for it contains the accumulated wisdom of the ages. “Natural” ontology is a kind of ballast to philosophy which may be legitimately jettisoned only for compelling reasons. The de facto navigational guides and rules for plying the waters of language about reality may indeed be implicit in ordinary language and/or in science. The laying bare of those hidden rules (by critiques, epistemologies, “depth” grammar investigations, etc.) would then lay bare the de jure rules only if ordinary language and/or science already contained somehow all the rules for speaking about everything that exists (or at least what can be spoken about).

One may be thoroughly convinced that most metaphysics is trash, or nonsense, or a sophisticated labyrinth of confusion, and still realize that to eschew
it completely is to remain neutral regarding some fundamental features of matters of fact, or to trust science and/or common sense to pronounce upon all matters of fact. Since remaining neutral is a kind of nihilism, and trust in science and/or common sense is a kind of secular fideism,¹⁰ critical common sense enjoins that we do metaphysics however perilous and difficult. To put a general ban on metaphysics is to attempt to block inquiry.

When a philosopher finds that he cannot relate his personal understanding and life coherently to some particular ontology, he has a prima facie case against it. One does not, for example, deal with a rock as a permanent possibility of sensation, nor does one have the slightest apprehension or doubt that the sun will rise tomorrow (even if he does know that it does not “rise”). It is perhaps these types of confusion which indicate some “sickness” in philosophy. But there are other kinds of philosophical sickness, and one of them seems to be less an antipathy toward ontology than an antipathy toward anything that smacks of the “spirit” or of the “non-empirical,” as they say.

In La Nausée, Roquentin is described by Sartre as finding anything that is just there (i.e., impersonal) somehow too much (de trop) to the point of producing nausea. Is the antipathy some philosophers have towards ontology an inverted and philosophical form of Roquentin’s nausea? Why else does Ryle, who is as ontologically antiseptic a philosopher as one may find, still concede that settling matters of fact is within the purview of the natural sciences? The impersonal character of reality (matters of fact) is quite acceptable; in fact precisely insofar as, and only insofar as, reality is impersonal does its examination seem in order. Ontology can be handed over to science. What Ryle seems so forcefully aghast at are “ghosts” or any remnants of what used to be called animism.

But the facts of the world include perceiving, thinking, loving, speaking, living, and so on, and if these facts are not “animistic,” then what kind of facts are they? The task of speaking soundly and coherently about these facts is anything but simple. Indeed, the only method available for examining how to speak soundly about them is linguistic analysis. This will not sit well with those who have become accustomed to unifying language and reality too completely, with those who do not seem to realize that in objecting to the claim that ontology cannot be anything other than linguistic analysis they are saying something like, “Ontology is not something said, it is how things are, and how they are is as follows . . .” (and they say something).

Through methodical doubt Descartes lost the world and everything in it, and could get it back only with the help of God. The language analyst who has nothing to say about matters of fact is like Descartes still in the clutches of the malin génie. Like Descartes still in doubt, this language analyst says, “as a philosopher I have nothing to say about how matters stand,” but unlike Descartes who calls in God to save the day, this language analyst sends you to your local physicist or chemist, or to the barber or bed-maker.
Maybe the real sickness of philosophy is not that it tries to do metaphysics, but that it feels compelled to give it up. A metaphysically antiseptic language analysis seems to be a kind of new Enlightenment philosophy which is not directed against supernaturalism, obscurantism, and dogmatism, but against the spirit and perhaps life itself. How else are we to understand the anti-metaphysical language analyst's failure to be puzzled by saying that houses are made by laborers, but admission of puzzlement (momentary) when he has to agree that homes can also be made. Houses clearly exist and can be torn down by bulldozers. But do homes exist? Well, a good dose of the salutary medicine of linguistic analysis will cure any "mystification" that might otherwise crop up.\footnote{11}

In attempting to understand life and mind and everything related to mind, intimations of "mystery" arise very easily. For example, on first reflection the remembrance of earlier experiences may seem to have to be stored "in our minds" for recall. Are these memories something like the bits of information stored in a computer? The bits of information in a computer are actual and presently existing iron-oxide patterns on a piece of Mylar tape which can be brought into action according to a program. Is human memory something like this except that the "bits" of information are neural states? The recourse to ordinary language in order to relieve the perplexity is deceptive. When I remember my youth, it will be said, I do not fish into a kind of box of memories, whether psychical or neural, for the simple but good reason that such memories would be present, whereas what I remember is past. An object of attention presently attended to would be something present whether it were mental or physical, but what I am attending to is past. To insist that when my grammar has been cleaned up I should be satisfied is singularly unconvincing. Some features of reality may indeed be beyond human understanding, others may elude our present available conceptual (linguistic) potential. But perplexity should be a spur to inquiry, not a proof that one is barking up the wrong linguistic tree.

It is not difficult to share the temper of Heidegger's somber lament in An Introduction to Metaphysics, "The spiritual decline of the earth is so far advanced that the nations are in danger of losing the last bit of spiritual energy that makes it possible to see the decline . . . and to appraise it as such."\footnote{12}

A map which is a map of nothing is not a map. The question of truth is the question of whether there is anything in existence answering to notations expressing matters of purported fact. Sometimes this is very easy to determine within a sufficiently narrow context. To exclude entities because there is no notation on any particular map or even system of maps is to attempt to will them out of existence. Ontology, like science, has to be something of a procrustean bed, trying to fit all the items of what comes to light in experience, and in all of what can be said, into some coherent structure. When either experience or sanity in language compels one to grant that there are entities other
than those provided by a particular language, that language must be altered under penalty of losing those entities. The net must be made for the fish, and not to satisfy some fear, or shame, or doctrine, or anything else.

It is true that there is some sense in which we are imprisoned within our age, i.e., our available languages. Only genius can break out of that “prison.” The past geniuses of history have done precisely that—broken out of the bounds of particular ages, and revealed how it goes with much of what there is. For three hundred and fifty years we have made extraordinary progress in extending and filling in the gaps in the map of the world as given in what is called experience, a notion of experience captive of a picture (in Wittgenstein’s sense) taken from physics. The mapping of mind has been neglected except by the much maligned metaphysician. Ontology-shy language analysis abets this neglect.

Natural science is one of the forms of expressing how it goes with a significant part of what there is; it is a kind of map of that aspect of what there is. It is not only unlikely, but impossible, for one to find notations on that map for mind, morality, art, and so on. Nor should one expect to find them there, any more than one should expect to find notations for France on a map of the moon. Furthermore, even as regards natural science it is not the map (science) that we know when we know how to read and use it, but rather the terrain that we know by means of the map.

Ontology attempts to draw a map (linguistic of course) of much that is left out by natural science. If an ontology fails to tally what it draws with the map of natural science, it does so at the risk of drawing a fictive map.

NOTES


6. Ibid., p. 22.

7. Even many scientists in our day do not want to say anything about matters of fact. In 1957 Max Jammer pointed out that “Since the raison d’être of a scientific concept and its importance lie in the methodological function it performs, the concept of force in classical physics was not merely a will-o’-the-wisp”; in recent years, however, “... it became increasingly clear that the


9. Ibid., p. 124.

10. This expression is not quite accurate since fideism is radically anti-philosophical. During the Middle Ages, however, a philosopher was constrained by his own conviction that in dealing with the deposit of faith (Sacred Scripture and Tradition) he could do nothing but further understand what was already revealed. The anti-metaphysical philosopher’s subservience to science and/or common sense justifies the expression secular fideism.

11. Does this philosophical orgy of debunking have a counterpart in that wave of self-hate of mankind found in much recent social commentary about the “pretentiousness of man who acts as if the planet earth were his personal preserve”? As if the distinction of man and nature provided the conceptual framework for absolute human power over the non-human, and could not just as well provide for a conceptual framework in which human love would cherish the universe and everything in it.


13. Hume’s impressions for example seem to be the effect (causal resultant) of something that is not an impression. All equivalents of the notion of stimuli, as far back as the “idola” of the early atomists have been captive of a spatio-causal model unsuitable to an understanding of anything more than the spatio-causal conditions for the occurrence of sensation, experience or anything else having to do with consciousness. There is more on this is my essay “The Birth of Dualism out of the Spirit of Geometry,” Southwestern Journal of Philosophy 6, No. 1 (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, Feb. 1975): 71–78.