

BIG QUARREL; NEW INSTALLMENT.

The London School of Economics and Political Science

(University of London)



Houghton Street, Aldwych
London, W.C.2
Telephone HOLBORN 7686

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Dear Joske,

did/ Thank you for your letter which I found even more charming than I expected but not quite satisfactory. I would rather have a bitter quarrel and achieve my aim than have a charming agreement without arriving at anything. You still say that you read the logic papers in the book you reviewed. I still say that if you claim to have read them you don't know what the word 'reading' means. Of course I do not mean by reading, scanning it with your eyes. I find it absolutely impossible that you should have understood the key ideas in Robinson's introductory paper (which was very carefully selected to be the introductory paper) and which dealt with the basic results achieved by the Tarski group in recent years) or that you should have understood most of the other papers, say Dana Scott's). I would also insist that this review is a sad turning point in your reviewing career. Your reviews were always worth while reading, they always combined a serious account of the book you reviewed with some original insights which I always very much appreciated even if I found your exposition occasionally uneven and I found that you like to jump to over-statements and even philosophically justify them. (Don't say that we always speak in over-statements - you know that I don't mean that; in this case I claim that you speak in over-over-statements.) I want to pursue this matter because during your Hong Kong days it seems to me that you lost a lot of your original humility and developed some frightening signs of narcissism and megalomania.

I re-read your paper on sensationalism; in fact I read it first time. I shall read it again. So my present remarks are only provisional. I think that the paper contains some good ideas, but like your Galileo paper it lacks self-discipline. You can't write down everything that just occurs to you even if it is interesting; your ramblings and red herrings distract the reader too much. Also the paper in fact consists of two papers; one is a discussion of inductivism and conventionalism which I think is very interesting and breaks new ground but is unsatisfactory and it is very hard to understand even for me. What then about others who have less common background with you? The second part which should have gone into a different paper is a short, sharp and good point, namely that the theory of basic statements in Popper is superfluous. My praise is here not without qualification.

I think you are ~~a bit~~ unfair to Karl since while I admit he ~~over-elaborated~~ his theory of basic statements, and I even admit that this ~~is~~ because he couldn't get completely away from some aspects of empiricism, there are two very important circumstances which you omit. Karl is the first empiricist in my sense (I am referring to the terminology of my Aristotelian Society paper). Karl however is also a fallibilist (again in the sense of the terminology of my Aristotelian paper), which is your present position. You propose a complete switch from "empiricism" to "fallibilism". This is however not so easy and trivial since it opens up new difficulties. In empiricism basic statements whose falsity is established can knock out a theory. In fallibilism criticism cannot be simply a question of "knocking out". *the explicit gist of LSD is exactly the problem: how to be simultaneously a theoretician and a falsificationist.*

Also, when you discuss Popper's "sensationalist" roots you do not notice that Karl was the first real "empiricist" in my sense (my footnote to Schlick as a representative of empiricism was a historical mistake.).

I decided to write a comment on these lines on your paper as soon as it is published. I do not think I shall submit it to Mind. I have too much contempt for it. I also cannot refrain from commenting on your introducing Ryle's theory of perception into your paper. It is a red herring and to describe it as "revolutionary" seems to me rotten/flattery to the editor of the paper you wanted to have published. I don't believe that you could possibly mean it.

and, of course, pointless and useless!

~~I would like to mention your historical mistake which I think is rather a careless formulation than a mistake since you obviously know it too well for it to be a mistake. You write, esp. page 5, ...~~

Also I very much liked a few quotations of yours, especially your reference to Bacon's 'famous passage': science as the wedding of the intellect and the senses'. Where is it? I deplore the lack of footnotes containing these references. Ryle surely would not have objected. Also I was delighted by your reference to Maxwell: 'today's commonsense as Maxwell has already claimed, is yesterday's frontier of science' (p. 23). Please send the reference URGENTLY.

I mentioned your megalomania and I would like to come back to this. I was absolutely shocked by the end of your paper which I regard simply as mad. You first describe some tacit assumptions of Russell. Then you say, to finish your paper:

'In contrast to these tacit assumptions of Russell I propose the following view. 1. All pictures of the world which science explains are realistic. 2. All of them are naive to this or that degree. 3. Yesterday's frontier of science is today's rather naive realism. 4. Science is the attempt

to explain the existing picture of the world, but this attempt is not based on the adoption of this picture; rather it leads to changes of the picture. 5. As Popper has suggested, science must remain at war with itself if it is to progress.

Now it is cheek to say "I propose the following view..." since all the five points - and not only the fifth - are Popper's and they are not particularly excitingly put.

e.g.
Three views
CR, p. 15.

I hope that I don't have to choose between glossing over the points of our disagreement and ending up with mutual insults. So please give a thought to all this. I repeat, I decided to write a comment on your, and Feyerabend's, recent paper where it will not be difficult for me to comment on your presentation in a civilised and ~~perhaps~~ even appreciative way (this will be a more difficult, if not impossible, task with regard to Feyerabend). I can do this since in fact I appreciate your point but I abhor its undertones and some aspects of its presentation. You also may be interested to know that at a later date I am planning to write a short note about your disagreement with Karl about the criteria of satisfactory explanation where I just respectfully disagree with you while thinking that you touched on an interesting point.

Yours as ever, (i.e. puzzled but with love)
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more

Dr. Joseph Agassi,
Philosophy Dept.,
University of Illinois,
Urbana, ILL.,
U.S.A.

P.S. I should be very much obliged to you if you could send me the reference to your Maxwell quotation before I answer the letter. By the way I hope that I shall see you some time in the near future, if not in Jerusalem, then in Urbana.