

1. Meditation I

The objective is absolute knowledge to ground the sciences. How to get it? One way, get some 1st principles. But how do we know these are correct, how do we recognize abs. knowl for what it is? RD's answer is "certainty." This is the mark or index of abs. knowledge. JP: what is this "certainty"? Confidence? Lots of extreme confidence? Verified belief? What is verification? JP: one way of getting at it is to show what abs. knowl. looks like, then say "that's what certainty gets at." The via negativa: first look at what abs. knowl is not. It is not false (truth seems to be a property of known assertions). It is not what I do not believe. But is true belief knowledge? No. Is justified true belief knowledge? No, since have not established what is a relevant justification for a given belief.

2. Does JTB=Knowledge?

JP's "I believe it is 9:30 am" is justified belief, given the efficacy of the watch recently viewed, and let us suppose it happens to be true belief. Problem: cannot claim there is no reasonable support for a doubt about the belief. Suppose the watch stopped 7 days ago at 9:30 a.m. Would it then be real knowledge? So then, what more does it take to have knowledge? Justif'd true belief + X = K. If X were 'indubitability of the justified true belief', then we think we would have knowledge. For RD, criterion of certainty, and hence of knowledge, is indubitability. Something which is conceptually beyond doubting, for example. (RD has argument for claim that anything indubitable is true)

3. RD's Method of Doubt

Find some principles which are indubitable, then derive, as in a geometric deduction, the rest of the true beliefs about the world from these. Method of doubt acts as a filter for our dubitable beliefs. Note that RD finds actual geometry dubitable (Meditation I).

4. Doubt in Three Steps

RD generates general doubt about any belief class with a 3 step sceptical attack:

- i) ordinary sense belief....illusions
- ii) secure sense belief....dreams
- iii) mathematical/geometrical beliefs (simple natures/general things)...evil demon hypothesis (EDH).

At end of Meditation I we are in a state of "epistemic vertigo" (the dark night of despair).
Maximus Scepticus.