

Does Philosophy Investigate Language or Reality?

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Academia Internacional de Filosofia

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- Manifesto 'The Scientific World Conception: The Vienna Circle'

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- Series ‘Einheitswissenschaft’ edited by Neurath.

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- The word 'Scientifico' is used tactically, referring only to the *natural* sciences. 'Experience' is used to refer only to sense experience.
- An agenda against metaphysics and (Christian) theology.

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- ‘Enlightenment’, ‘antimetaphysische Tatsachenforschung’. Calling one’s view a ‘fact’ adds nothing to defend it rationally.
- For ‘experience’, against ‘speculation’. Rhetorical. That ignores that many have reported to experience God and that many things of which we have experience are evidence for the existence of God.

20.9.2011: Organising

- Half-term exam: Tuesday, 11 October, 2011

20.9.2011: The Manifesto of the Vienna Circle

Part II: Die wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung (La concepción científica del mundo)

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- What is the task of philosophy, according to the Manifesto?
- Discover which problems are pseudo-problems and which ones are ‘empirical’, i.e. to be investigated by the empirical sciences. There are no genuinely philosophical statements.

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- Example: ‘There is no God.’, Realism, Idealism.
- Two mistakes of metaphysics: 1. Hypostasierung, Substanzialisierung;
- 2. One can acquire knowledge through thinking alone. All reasoning and inferring is tautological.

- Logical Positivism rejects all synthetic knowledge a priori. ‘Die wissenschaftliche Weltanschauung kennt nur Erfahrungssätze über Gegenstände aller Art und die analytischen Sätze der Logik und Mathematik.’

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- The phenomenologists (Max Scheler) stressed against them that there was synthetic modal knowledge.

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- Logic is purely formal. ‘Logical form’. (6)

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- Verification is always observation, immediate experience ('unmittelbares Erleben', 7) 'There is no other examination and confirmation of truth than through observation and through empirical science.'

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- There are no philosophical truths. There is no part of reality that is the proper object of philosophy. The task of philosophy is only to clarify the meaning of sentences.
- It is absurd to try to 'express the content of pure qualities (the "essence" of things through knowledge ("Erkenntnisse"))'. (9) [What can one mean by knowledge of an 'essence'?)]

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- Schlick: It is a ‘healthy instinct’ ‘that philosophy has to provide the ultimate fixed point of knowledge.’ (10)

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- Is it really true that metaphysics traditionally expected or claimed apodictic certainty?
- Is there apodictic certainty in the natural sciences?