

## THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF CLAIRVOYANCE

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Our reflection must dwell primarily on the object as an idea, and on the postulates implied by this concept. Epistemologically, the object is that which is thought as not taking "myself" into account. So far as I function as a physical agent, I can compel objects to take my ego into account. My body is the indispensable mediator through which I act on objects; this effectiveness implies a certain homogeneity between body and objects. The body is subject to the ego's desires, but the relation between the ego and this particular aspect of the body is not, and cannot be, instrumental. We may call it "sympathetic immediation," or "Unmittelbarkeit."

The entire epistemological problem consists in determining how knowledge can account for itself, or how it may become, itself, an object of knowledge. Assuming that this end is attained, may we not say that epistemological reflection requires substitution of a very different ego from the ego previously mentioned? This may be, basically, the transcendental ego of Kant and his followers. It should not be confused with the empirical ego, though not completely distinguishable from it. Necessarily, the epistemologist must tackle the major question bearing on the relations between the transcendental and empirical ego. Contemporary philosophy, so far as it stresses "being in-the-world" or the concept of situation, is quite prepared to welcome the idea of original immediation presupposed by all instrumental mediations of whatever nature.

Can this sympathetic immediation become a way of

approach for those who wish to get at paranormal or supernatural modes of knowledge? If so, paranormal knowledge will no longer be regarded as the poor relative, the bastard child, made to enter the back door. It might even be granted a certain priority of rights over positive knowledge.

What is the real meaning of a clairvoyant's detection when confronted with an object that has belonged to someone else? It is true detection, but certainly not built on causal logic, as identification by fingerprints. I suggest that it does not bear upon the object as object. The body—my body—should be considered under two diverse aspects: as an instrument or ensemble of instruments on the one hand, or as being present to me in "sympathetic immediation." Suppose then that the object presented to the clairvoyant shares this duality of the body of the person to whom it belonged? A familiar object, such as my watch or wallet, as a living part of my over-all experience, ceases to perform the function of a so-called object. To *see* it as the clairvoyant sees, would be to raise oneself from the perception of an object to the memory of that object. The memories associated with the object by the owner are now incorporated into its perception, so that they are an indivisible unit.

But how can the clairvoyant do this, who has not shared the memories? May it not be that the essence of mediumship is the mysterious facility that enables him to de-personalize himself in a sort of self-annihilation so that the distinction between himself and the owner as "somebody else" has been temporarily obliterated? If so, the object can release to the clairvoyant the existential waves of the owner which were once that owner's exclusive property. It will be as if the clairvoyant were somehow becoming this being to whom the object belonged, though whether owner or clairvoyant is being "penetrated," and if so, which, is difficult to determine. Here we are in a world where the opposition between passivity and activity tends to lose its meaning.

I believe we must first undertake a certain classification of the modes of para- or supra-normal cognition. Next, we must determine exactly their common characteristics and differences. It would be necessary to illustrate each of these modes, factually. Then the hypothesis I have advanced could be evaluated.