

I seem to recall Dewey saying somewhere (in *Experience and Nature*, I think) something to the effect that metaphysics supplies "the ground map of criticism," which is to say, the critical reflection necessary to living better if not also to living well and to simply living. My question is whether this basic idea shouldn't be generalized to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, not only to metaphysics as the unique *ontological* science, but also to the two other kinds of science properly so-called, i.e., the special *ontic*, empirical sciences, human (or social) as well as natural; and the axiomatic sciences of logic and mathematics.

Common to all three kinds of science as such is that they are constituted, pretheoretically as well as theoretically, by some *intellectual* question rather than by any existential question; i.e., they abstract completely from any concern with meaning for us to attend entirely to *structure in itself*—whether the structure of *actuality*, in the case of the special sciences; the structure of *possibility*, in the case of logic and mathematics; or the structure of *necessity*, in the case of metaphysics. But, then, each, in its way, plays the role of enabling or facilitating criticism: metaphysics, by explicating the structure of the necessary (including the strictly necessary); logic and mathematics, by identifying the structure(s) of the possible; and the empirical sciences, by disclosing the structures of the actual (including the distinctive structure disclosed by the hermeneutical sciences commonly referred to as "meaning").

Structures of all three types determine the limits with which any life, and therefore any understanding and critically reflective life, also, must come to terms. In this sense, all three kinds of science, in their different ways, supply the basis for the criticism upon which any understanding life depends if it is not only to live and to live well, but also to live better.

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