

# Epistemology

# NAIVE REALISM

" A photographic view of knowledge"

## 1. One-to-one correspondence.

\* Reality = knowledge = truth

\* Sense of absolutes.

## 2. Scientist as a passive recipient.

\* Value and feeling free.

\* Unbiased by his/her history and culture.

\* Totally objective knowledge.

## 3. Knowledge is additive.

\* Logically consistent.

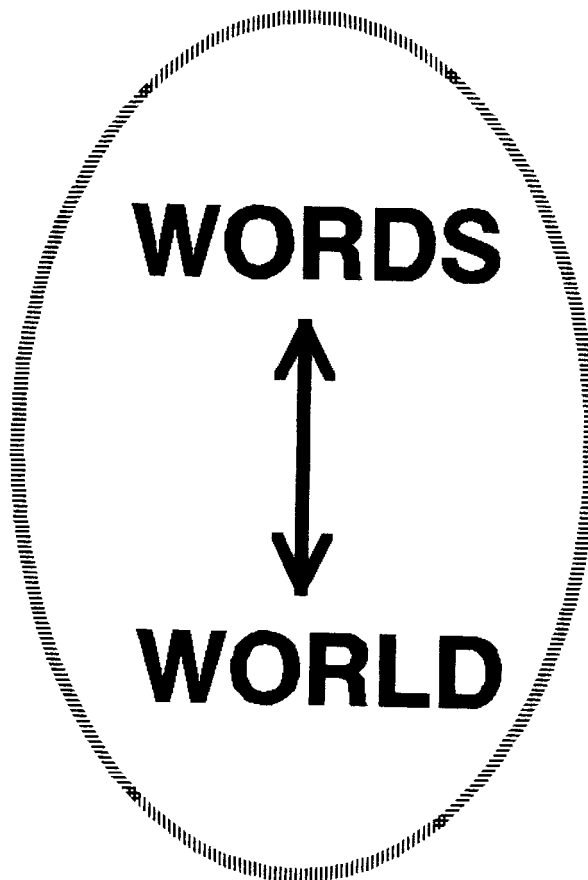
\* Seek to create one grand unified theory (GUT)

\* Potentially exhaustive.

\* Stated in propositional terms.

POSITIVISM:

Sign:



4. Disagreements in a research tradition.

- \* conflict and attack.

5. Science and theology.

- \* reductionism and God-of-the-gaps.
- \* stratigraphic approach at integration.

6. Science and tradition.

- \* science is a new kind of knowledge, tradition is rejected as false.
- \* the 'other' is seen as 'primitive', and 'prelogical.'

**NAIVE REALISM** Science is based on a new positive knowledge.

**1. This knowledge is a photograph of reality.**

- \* only one true picture of reality
- \* scientist is a passive recipient

**2. One-to-one correspondence.**

- \* knowledge = reality = truth
- \* correspondence is literal

**3. Objective.**

- \* the search is for objective truth which is ahistorical and acultural
- \* to be objective it must be freed from feelings and values
- \* it must also be done by specialist individuals unaffected by community dynamics, or by personal and historical biases
- \* sense of absolutes

# **IMPACT ON CHRISTIANITY AND MISSIONS**

- 1. The Gospel is equated with objective truth**
  - \* *conversion is to affirm that truth***
  - \* *conversion does not involve affective or evaluative responses***
- 2. Reason becomes the basis for determining truth**
- 3. There is little room for nonempirical this worldly realities**
- 4. There is no room for mystery or paradox**
- 5. There is a division between 'pure' and 'applied' knowledge that devalues the latter**
- 6. Knowledge becomes increasingly abstract and divorced from particularities**
- 7. In the search for proofs, is little room for wisdom**

# **ATTACKS AGAINST NAIVE REALISM**

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## **1. Physical Sciences:**

- the scientist is part of the picture.**
- it is impossible to have a theory that is: 1) strong, 2) autonomous, and 3) logically consistent.**

## **2. Psychology of science:**

- we are studying people, not objects. Therefore:
  - 1) reflexivity: our theories must apply to ourselves.
  - 2) the people are studying us.
  - 3) our presence modifies the scene of observation.
- we as scientists are humans influenced by our personalities and histories. Subjectivity is an essential part of knowing.



### **3. Sociology of Science.**

- **scientists are part of social communities that influence deeply their theories.**

### **4. Anthropology of Science.**

- **scientists are in particular cultures and histories, and are shaped by these.**
- **as anthropologists live deeply in other cultures, their views are radically changed. They become bicultural people.**

## 5. Philosophy of Science.

- science is rooted in western philosophy.
- knowledge is not positivist, but shaped by the personality, community and culture of the scientist.
- knowledge is paradigmatic in nature (Kuhn).



**COLLAPSE OF  
NAIVE REALISM**

# **INSTRUMENTALISM**

"A Rorschach view of knowledge."

## **1. Knowledge is created in the mind.**

- \* we do not know if it corresponds with 'reality'.
- \* it is subjective: shaped by the culture and history of the scientist.

## **2. Knowledge is useful, not true.**

- \* all knowledge is relative.  
There are no absolutes.
- \* the test is pragmatism - is it useful.

### **3. Knowledge is paradigmatic:**

- \* knowledge can not be exhaustive.**
- \* change takes by addition, and by paradigm shifts.**

### **4. Disagreements create no conflict.**

- \* there are many ways to view the same thing, all of which may be right.**

# **IDEALISM**

## **1. CHARACTERISTICS:**

- the mind creates reality.**
- the road to knowledge is reason and insight.**
- strong affirmation of absolute .**
- different mental worlds are incommensurable.**

## **2. DISAGREEMENTS:**

- talk past each other. No external reference point to compare views.**

## **7. Disagreements lead to conflicts and attacks**

## **8. Science and theology in tension.**

- \* *reductionism***
- \* *God-of-the-gaps***
- \* *stratigraphic approaches to integration***

## **9. Science and tradition.**

- \* *science seen as a new kind of knowledge, tradition is rejected as superstition***
- \* *start of the 'schooling' approach to learning***

# **DETERMINISM**

## **1. CHARACTERISTICS:**

- knowledge is determined by external realities.**
- there is no rational observer.**
- people are mechanical robots.**
- there are no claims to truth.**

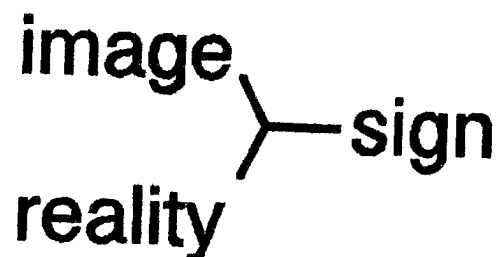
## **2. DISAGREEMENTS:**

- surface conflicts that have no real issues of truth involved.**

# CRITICAL REALISM

## 1. CHARACTERISTICS:

- there is a real world outside.
- knowledge is a map of reality. It has select correspondence to reality.
- knowledge is configurational.
- knowledge is open ended.
- knowledge connects objective reality with mental maps via symbols.





- knowledge is approximate. It sees somethings clearly, but not everything in full detail.
- knowledge is complimentary. Different maps are needed to present a full picture of reality.
- knowledge is embedded in worldviews.

## **2. DISAGREEMENTS:**

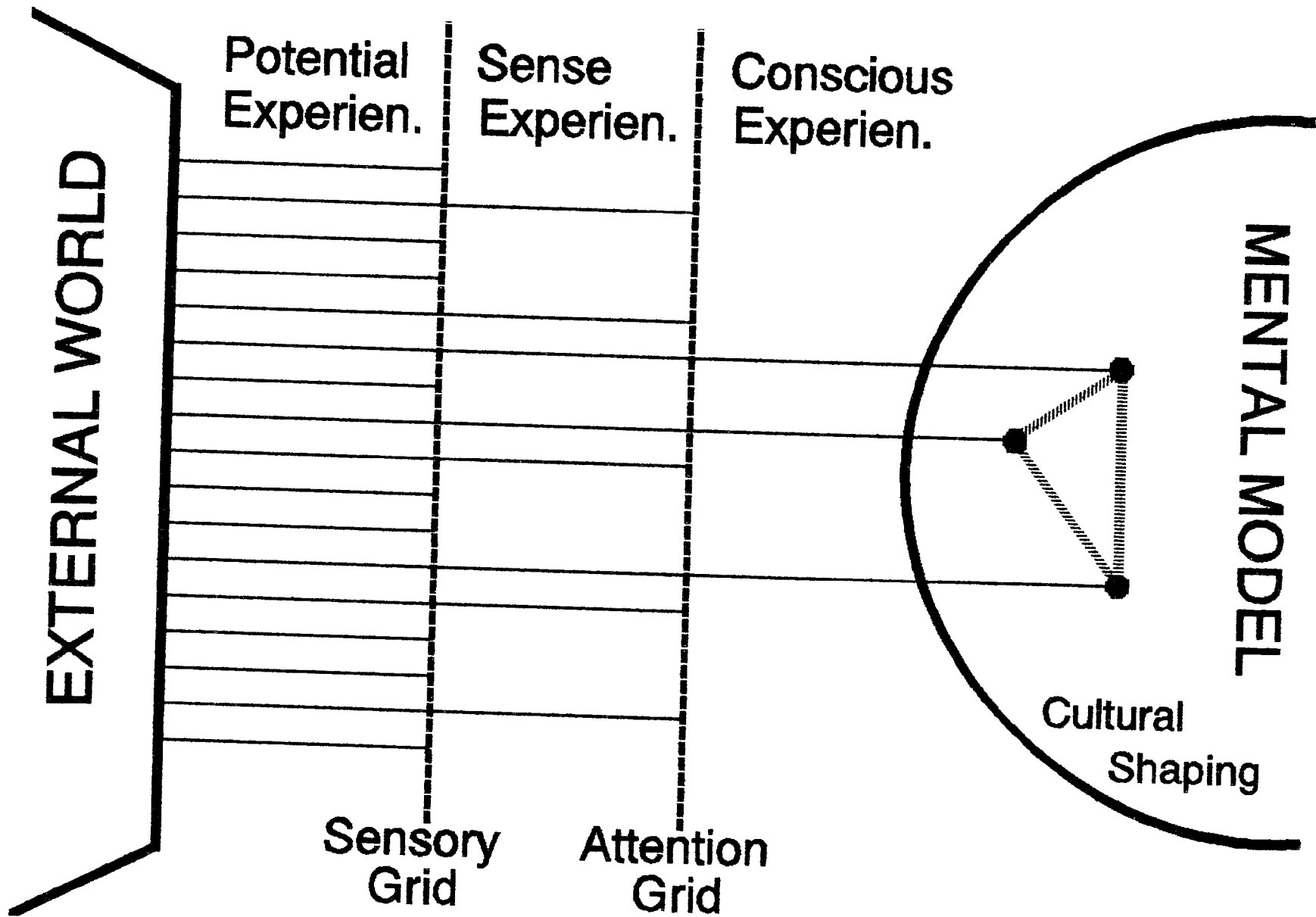
- test both maps against reality.
- reevaluate the worldviews.

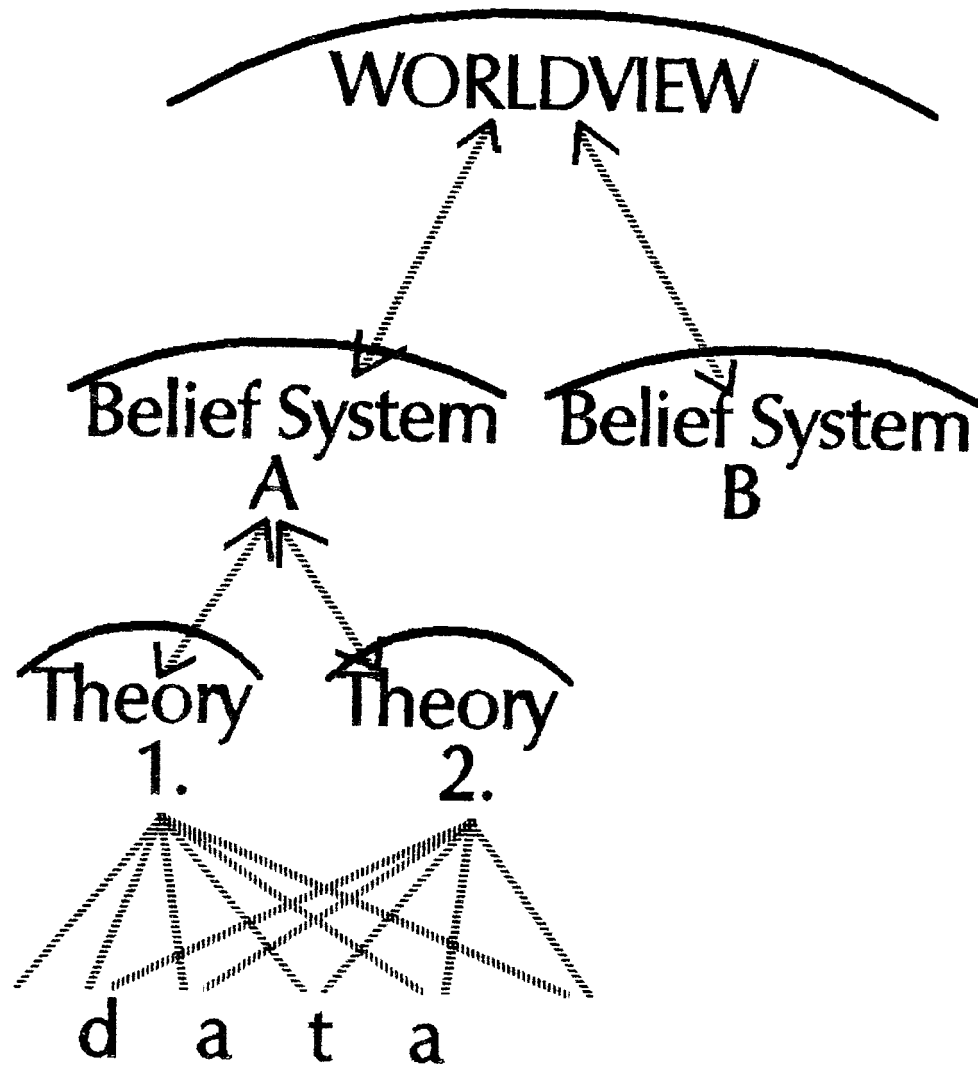
# **COMPLIMENTARITY**

- 1. DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC MODELS**
- 2. THEOLOGY AND SCIENCE**
- 3. EMIC AND ETIC VIEWS**
- 4. SCALE**
- 5. SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES**
- 6. MECHANICAL AND ORGANIC ANALOGIES**

# COMPLIMENTARITY

	DIACHRONIC "Story"	SYNCHRONIC "Structure"
THEOLOGY		
SCIENCE		





- fundamental assumptions about reality

- key questions  
- methods for investigation

- answers and explanations

- observed "facts"

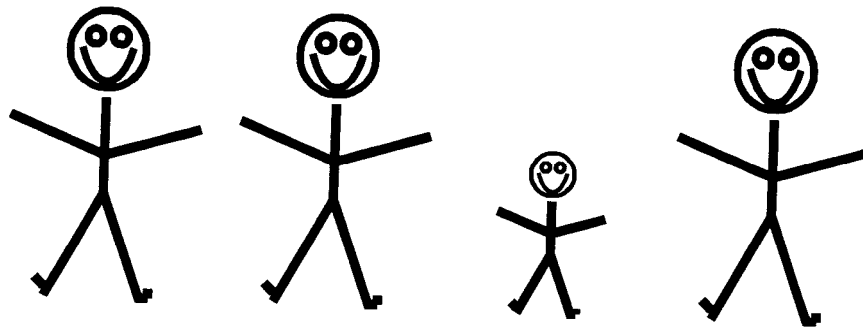
# CAUSALITY

- **linear**  
- **multilayered**
- **systemic**  
- **multiple origins**

**Figure 2.2**  
**TEST OF LOGICAL ASSOCIATION**

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1. *Which one does not belong to the set?*



2. *Which one does not belong to the set?*

