

Philosophy 101

Representation  
& Mind

Representation

Resemblance:  
A Test Case

Linguistic  
Representation

Mental  
Representation

# Philosophy 101

## Representation & Mind

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# Representation

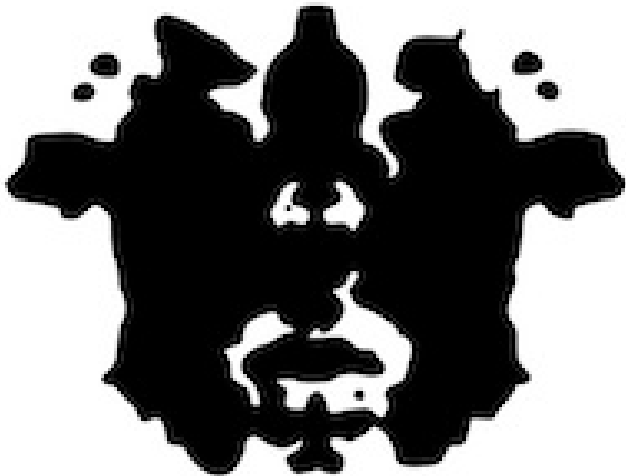
# What is a Representation?

**Representation:** something that represents something (either itself or something else)

- stand-in, proxy, or symbol

## Two Features of Representation

- 1 Anything can represent anything



## Two Features of Representation

- ② Representations can represent what doesn't exist



## Two Questions

- How does a representation represent?
- Are some forms of representation more fundamental than others?

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## Resemblance: A Test Case

# Resemblance

- X represents Y in virtue of X's resembling (in some way) Y
  - is resemblance *necessary* for X to represent Y?
    - is it impossible to have Y without X?
  - is resemblance *sufficient* for X to represent Y?
    - is it impossible to have X without Y?



## Pictorial Resemblance



Figure : Vincent Van Gogh, 1889

# Pictorial Resemblance

- How does Van Gogh's portrait represent him?
  - represents him in virtue of resembling him
- Is the fact of resemblance both necessary and sufficient for the portrait to resemble Van Gogh?

## Is Pictorial Resemblance Sufficient?

- resemblance is *symmetrical*
  - $aRb \rightarrow bRa$
  - The self portrait resembles Van Gogh
  - Van Gogh resembles his self-portrait
    - Van Gogh represents his portrait

# Is Pictorial Resemblance Sufficient?

- resemblance is *reflexive*
  - aRa
  - both Van Gogh and his portrait resemble themselves

## Is Pictorial Resemblance Sufficient?

- resemblance is too broad
  - everything resembles everything else in some way
    - resembles a physical object
    - resembles bearded men

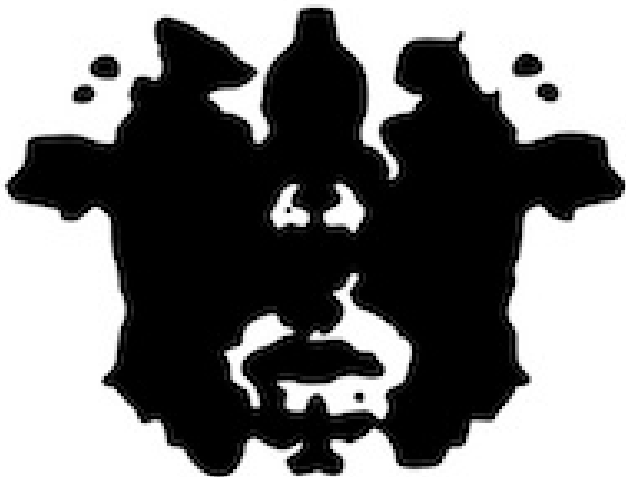
# Is Pictorial Resemblance Necessary?



# Is Pictorial Resemblance Necessary?

- Some resemblance must hold between representation and represented, but resemblance alone cannot *explain* what it is about a picture that makes it represent its subject matter

# Is Pictorial Resemblance Necessary?





# Is Pictorial Representation Fundamental?

- Could pictorial representation explain representation more generally?

# The Problem with Pictures

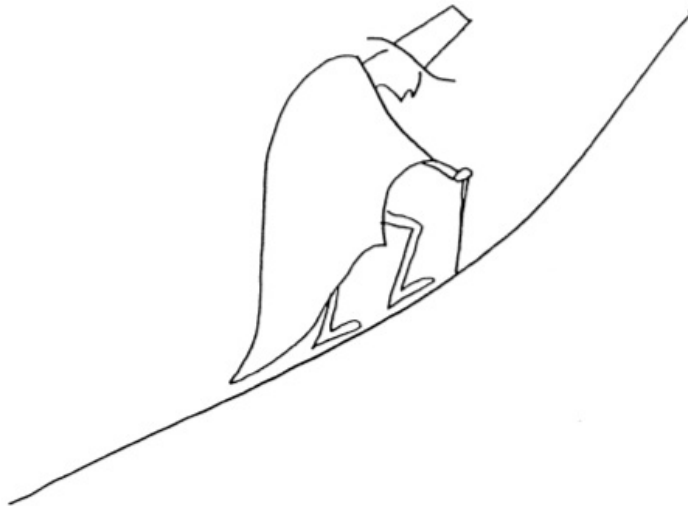


Figure : Walking Uphill or Sliding Down?

# The Problem with Pictures

- ① Interpretation
- ② Logical relations
  - if...then...
  - ...and...
  - either...or...
  - not...

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# Linguistic Representation

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*The cat is on the mat*

- How does the string of symbols 'the cat is on the mat' come to represent a particular situation—viz. the cat's being on the mat?

# Linguistic Representation

- Convention
- Expression of 'ideas' or mental states

# Linguistic Representation

## Convention

- cannot explain the representation relation, only why some things represent other things
  - 'dog' represents dogs by convention
    - convention cannot explain *how* 'dog' represents

# Linguistic Representation

## Expressing Ideas

- 'dog' represents dogs in virtue of being correlated with a mental 'idea' that represents dogs
  - pushes the problem of representation back, but doesn't explain it



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# Mental Representation

# Thoughts & Propositional Attitudes

**Thought:** A state of mind that represents the world

- Some thoughts—'Propositional Attitudes'—have a particular structure
  - the situation represented
  - the 'attitude' taken towards the represented situation
- John believes **that it is raining outside**
- A  $\Psi$ s that S

# Intentionality

**Intentionality:** The 'directedness' of a mental state at some (existing or non-existing) thing

**Brentano's Thesis:** Intentionality is the 'mark of the mental'—i.e. a necessary and sufficient condition of a state's being a mental state is that it is intentional

# Is Intentionality the Mark of the Mental?

## Two Counterexamples

- Pain
- Moods