Keith Hossack: "Metaphysics of Knowledge"

Chapters 1 and 2
Problèmes de Métaphysique

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'S knows that A'

Knowledge is a primitive fundamental relation between minds and facts.

The 'Causal Thesis': Belief causes knowledge rather than constituting it. That-clauses in knowledge attributions specify the content of the mental act causing the knowledge (2, 6).

Prize to be paid: "although Pharaoh knows of Hesperus's being Phosphorus, we do not say that he knows that Hesperus is Phosphorus" (10)

A fundamental tension:

On the one hand

1. "an inference is rationally correct only if it is possible by its means to pass from knowledge of the premisses to knowledge of the conclusion" (5)
2. "A fact d is a defeater of S's knowledge that A if, if S were to learn of d, S would no longer be rationally jsutified in believing that A" (20)
3. "E and Σ justify one's belief that A if in a favourable context E and Σ would cause one to know that A." (27)
4. "one's warrant about A is one's disposition to know that A if one has the true belief that A" (29)

But on the other

"Whether something is known, or true, or a fact depends only on the actual world..." (24)

Facts

We should believe in facts because we should believe in universals and the theory of universals is incomplete / inconsistent without facts.

Facts are resemblance-makers for things in respects of universals and truthmakers for contents (43).

Combination is a multigrade relation of facts, universals and individuals.

To finitely axiomatise the theory of facts (e.g. the Axiom of Extensionality), we need vector variables, which can only be quantified by the universal and the negative existential quantifier.

Truthmakers for negative contents are negative facts, which contain negation as a constituent (the relation which holds between the constituents of a proposition iff no fact combines them).

A number of things are "sense" (or: a "Russellian proposition") if they're combined either in a positive or a negative fact (63, 65).

Something is a particular if it never is the first component of either a positive or a negative fact (66).

Conjunctive facts contain conjunction and two groups of things. Conjunction is the multigrade relation that obtains between these two groups if they are both combined into facts.

General facts contain generality and a group of things. Generality is the relation among these things that obtains iff there is a fact that "everything instantiates them" [???, cf. p. 72]