

Karol Kleczka (Jagiellonian University)

“Is antirealism a proper metaphysics?”

In the following paper I would like to present and compare Dummett's and Putnam's arguments against metaphysical realism. First I will present the ways in which both philosophers define their opponent and how do they understand realism. I claim that the main target of their critiques is the realist's tendency to make strong ontological commitments. Metaphysical realism makes strong claims about the nature of reality, objectivity of mind-independent world, on which it bases the theory of truth and the theory of meaning. As opposed to this view, antirealism understands itself as a metaphysical tool, a kind of measure for metaphysics, situated on a higher “metametaphysical” level. Putnam and Dummett need realism to form their arguments and so it is not their ambition to form a competitive metaphysical view. What they want is to judge first-level metaphysics and look for reasons for justifying it (if there are any). I conclude that antirealism is in fact “idealism in disguise” and that the modern debate between metaphysical realists and semantic antirealists in fact is a repetition of the older discussion between transcendentalists and naturalists.