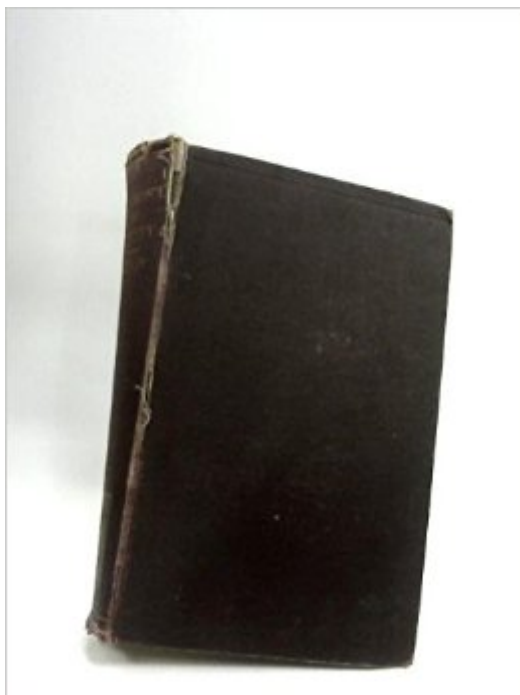


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Appearance And Reality: A Metaphysical Essay



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Customer Reviews

This book, written in 1893, is one of the most important books in the history of English language philosophy. During his lifetime, Bradley was one of the best known of British philosophers, but before he died (in 1924) his metaphysical position dropped out of fashion, in part because it was attacked (and misrepresented) by Russell and Moore. In spite of their hostility, Twentieth Century analytic philosophers were profoundly influenced by Bradley. For an excellent discussion of this matter, read the first chapter of Tom Rockmore's book, *Hegel, Idealism, and Analytic Philosophy*. I recommend reading *_Appearance and Reality_* before taking on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Galaxy Books). Bradley's argument for absolute idealism is the best written in English. His writing is lively, frequently pointed and sardonic, a "good read". This version, a reproduction of the 1893 edition, is sturdy, well bound, on good paper. It is a bargain and a must read for anyone with a

serious interest in philosophy.

Bradley had the misfortune to coincide in his later years with Russell and Whitehead, whose monumental work redirected Philosophy towards the realm of Mathematical Logic and Scientific Materialism. Yet, Bradley's revised version of Hegelian Idealism, strengthened by judiciously chosen elements from the British Idealist tradition, still stands as a practically inexpugnable bulwark against the inroads of those tempted by a spontaneous, unreflective materialism, namely, most of the scientific community today. Also extremely well written, witty, sharp and captivating in parts. Well worth a perusal, especially the early chapters.

FH Bradley wrote a letter to Bertrand Russell explaining that, as he ages, he finds refuge more and more 'in the unknown and the unknowable'. Bertrand Russell didn't reply. This is the difference between East and West. Surely, Russell must have thought, the unknown is by definition void? This is logical. Why is Bradley claiming to be living in void? In India, the philosophical method of Bradley is jnana yoga. Indians claim that the path of knowledge can lead to enlightenment. But only the highly gifted philosopher can transcend. The unknown and unknowable are known only to the jnani. So FH Bradley was really experiencing the state of the Buddha, a state beyond description, like the way a Bach melody is beyond description, not because it is impossible, but because it is of a higher magnitude of ponderance than that of logic. The Absolute is lost to Bertrand Russell because a giant can never fit into the shoes of a dwarf. This explains the cryptic statement of FH Bradley. As you can see, FH Bradley was born on the wrong continent. FH Bradley was ahead of his time. His meditations on the Absolute were lampooned by philosophers like Bertrand Russell but the terrestrial logical mind, forever in the dark, can only snigger like a Monty Python actor because, as Goethe wrote, "I see the learning in what you say. What you don't touch, for you lies miles away. What you don't grasp, is wholly lost to you. What you don't reckon, you believe not true. What you don't weigh, this has for you no weight. What you don't count, you're sure is counterfeit". Goethe is describing the mentality of Bertrand Russell. Why else is idealism lampooned in the academy and not taken seriously? I'm reading chunks of Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* and even tho the wording is stiff and Victorian, I have come across these ideas in India.

This book ISN'T out of print. An edition from Cambridge University Press is available on . This version contains dark scanned pages from a previously owned copy, replete with underlinings and scrawled marginal notes. I'm not joking. I looked up the publishing company (Kessinger), and it

appears this kind of dodgy business is their schtick. The CUP version only costs a little more, and it's, well, you know, a normal book. As far as Bradley's thought is concerned. I've only read the shorter appearance bit thus far, but if you want to see metaphysics at its most unhinged, this is the book for you. I for one love it.

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