

REALITY: A STATEMENT ABOUT IT AS INTELLIGIBLE- BEING

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Abstract: No reality can get the value of being reality if it is beyond knowledge. It cannot be life and part of practice and cannot serve for the welfare if it is not revealed determinately. It is trivial to say that my reality is beyond my knowledge, separate from me. Misguided approach causes failure to determinate cognition of reality that leads to it as indescribable. In such a paradoxical situation, epistemological proving of Reality gets only a subordinated import. Reality independently from thought and thought isolated from language cannot be the object of philosophical reflections. Metaphysicians construct their systems of reality because of reason and fortify them by the rationale of reason comprising epistemic proofs, arguments, justifications, beliefs, instances and evidences. Do they drive reason in its proper direction? Epistemology is a natural urge of metaphysics; there is no other way to convince about the reasonability and justifiability of the systems. Even in some cases, they accept imagination also as a proof. Some may produce justifications and grounds of justifications of reality while others may find fault with it; to some it may perhaps give incentive to mystification and to some other to skepticism. Reality becomes the problem of philosophical investigation and discussion only when it figures in cognition and then, it is not a thing- in- itself or ontic reality but the intelligible reality expressed by language. It may be an individual or universal, may be beyond or inexpressible, may have a name or unnamable, but that can be known determinately thus only because language presents it so.

I

How does the question of reality arise in most natural way? When we think about reality, we find ourselves in the duality of 'I', the conscious being who knows that is subject and the external things before me to which I know, that is, objects. A third thing also falls in the compass and that is the sources by which we claim to know the reality. All the three are realities for the realists but they concentrate basically only on the former two as reality. Some of the realists provide with equal status to both sorts of realities but they have no defense against the subordination of the later on former in an activity of knowing in which the things are dependent on the mind who knows them. On the contrary idealists give importance to the consciousness to the extent that they assume even the external reality as the manifestation, appearance or as the hypostatization of the consciousness. The reality is consciousness which is the reality of things we know by sources of knowledge also. I have concluded that idealists added an edge over realists but the question is: is consciousness –it-self the object we know as reality in a philosophical activity? So far the use of reason is concerned both the realists and the idealists try to justify their metaphysical constructions in a way that keep

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them away from object of doing proper philosophy. Metaphysicians construct their systems of reality because of reason and fortify them by the rationale of reason comprising arguments, justifications, beliefs, instances and evidences. Do they drive reason in its proper direction? Is philosophy simply a game of reason? Is a philosopher's concern with reality not confined to analysis and reflection on cognition as it figures in or flashes forth in the mind? These questions form the subject matter of the discussion in this paper.

II

Epistemological thinking in East and West is popularly developed as offshoot of a metaphysical system whose purpose is to show that assumptions of metaphysical entities are well supported by measures of knowledge that is, they are based on true knowledge of the reality, proved by arguments and demonstrated by logical justifications and evidences. Such attempts in the field of epistemology are centered mainly on two different views-i- "reality is dependent on knowledge" that paves way for a noetic dependence epistemology and ii- 'knowledge is dependent on reality' that served as the basis of ontic dependence epistemology. In Indian philosophical systems the aforementioned views form the controversy of "*mānadhīnā meyasiddhiḥ*"¹ and '*meyadhīnā mānasiddhiḥ*'². Indian philosophical systems have held fast either to the former or to the latter of these two positions in a way that they frame arguments for refuting each other as their opponents.

There are three popular attitudes about knowledge that have played central role in determining the direction of epistemological thinking in Indian Philosophical systems.

i. Had all knowledge been true there would have been no need of epistemology. Epistemology is required for determining the nature of knowledge, truth and falsity of knowledge and the conditions involved therewith. Mīmāṃsā school of Indian Philosophy is an exception to this ideology. It accepts all knowledge true and then develops a theory of knowledge that merits maximum number of epistemological proofs.

ii. Contrary to the former, there is a view that there is the need of epistemology because the truth and falsity of knowledge cannot be worked out without an epistemology. Epistemology is developed in our attempt of knowing the truth of knowledge of reality. Reality comprises not only the thing existents (*bhūta vastu*) but those that can be brought into existence (*bhāvya vastu*) also. Accordingly, two sorts of epistemology –descriptive and prescriptive came into light. Out of the two the former is only popular in the theories of knowledge. With the contemporary Western efforts especially in the field of moral and religious language the latter is also developing as theories of knowledge and justification.

iii. All knowledge is true therefore there is possibility of logic and theories of knowledge. The knowledge expressed beforehand serves as the foundation of not only different theorizations of it but also of proving its truthfulness or falsity on the basis of

¹Tattvapradīpikā, verse 18 p. 356, according to it, the existence, non-existence truth falsity, etc. of the objects are relative to the epistemological proofs.

²This definition is accepted by some Buddhists for whom things are endowed with all powers and the truth and falsity, validity and invalidity of the proofs and justification depend on their agreeability with the powers of things.

epistemological measures and logic based on availability or absence of the corresponding things. This view gives importance to the verity of knowledge. All knowledge is determinate and veridical. Validity and invalidity, truth and falsity, cohering and non-cohering, consistency and inconsistency of the verity are logical measures through them the verity is logically testified³. Here in the present discussion, I am concerned with the view for which the knowledge expressed by language is veridical and the measures of knowledge, theorization of knowledge are possible only if it serves as the cognitive ground of epistemological and logical activities.

Had metaphysician not been giving high importance to epistemological scheme of proving, I would have not been prompted to write the present paper on reality? Metaphysics cannot survive without epistemology and both of them taken together form a system. Epistemology is a natural urge of a metaphysics which have no other way to convince about the reasonability and justifiability of their systems. They construct a number of entities and produce a number of epistemic proofs and justification to justify them. Some of the entities they claim to know by perception and others by inference, resemblance, presumption, authority, implication, non-apprehension, practice, unseen power and several other means of knowledge. If they do not find any popular proof to prove a certain reality they give evidences and logical justification to convince about the veritable myth of their assumptions. Even in some cases they accept imagination also as a proof. I shall discuss the point in section IV. Epistemological proving schemes based on metaphysics or on a theory about something –in-itself which is beyond the grasp of reason, falls short in checking metaphysical construction either by contradiction or by their incapacity of encountering reality. Epistemology may realize its limitation and may leave such things as beyond for religious meditation. Either they do not succeed in proving the reality they intend to prove or in proving that which not the object they intended to prove was; they mislead to an unwarranted conclusion. Such proving is based on creating confusion between the object they intend to prove, the object reached by their arguments of proving and the object beyond the limit of the arguments. More clearly they intend to prove the object of knowledge which they grasp and their arguments prove the object which they do not grasp that is beyond the grasp. Such amalgamation has caused great harm to philosophy. What is the object that needs proving and what object the epistemic proofs prove? I shall shift on the issue after a few steps. Here I want to point out the metaphysician's undertaking of the reality with specific instances from Indian philosophical systems.

Metaphysics is taken as a theory that involves in determining the real or ultimate nature of things, world preoccupied with the concept of existence and reality. The term 'metaphysics' now a day is taken in so many senses. It includes questions about the reality of external things, their kinds, modes and epistemology based on proving them. Modern thinkers take the term for the study of things separate from and transcendental to the world of things but having more intrinsic reality and value than the things. More precisely, I take the term 'metaphysics' in

³A precise discussion on the issue by the same author can be seen in D. N. Tiwari's *The Central Problems of Bhartṛhari's Philosophy* published by ICPR, New Delhi, pp. 40-42, 2008.

the sense of a mode of thinking in which the thought and the reality or the essence of thing – empirical or transcendental- are considered independent and exterior to language that refers to or represents them. However, in both of the senses metaphysical things-transcendental or empirical – are not only independent from but also are beyond the grasp of thoughts and language. Both the empirical and transcendental are in a sense transcendental- one is transcendental to the sensory data we acquire from contact or experience and the other to the data and world of things we sense as well.

Metaphysicians discuss reality as the reality of the world of experience and as the absolute as well with an unsteady and illegitimate difference of empirical and transcendental. The former out of them are the things existing independently of knowledge but are taken popularly as the objects we perceive by senses and the later as existence beyond the grasp of human reason. We very often use the words thing, object, being, interchangeably. I perceive these concepts differently and find that interchangeable use of them may cause confusion. By the term ‘thing’ I always mean the thing –in-itself in Kantian jargon. A thing is an object when it is sensed or it concerns with knowledge or a theory of it. Some metaphysicians accept that, ultimate reality/absolute reality/Brahman is not the object of our senses; it does not fall in the category of things; it is the object of direct knowledge; it may be the knowledge itself as Sāṅkara Vedāntins⁴ accept; but that is not the object of senses; it is immediacy. Let us proceed to examine critically as to how Sāṅkara Vedāntins define and what problems are caused by their interpretations of reality. At the very outset I want to clarify that my critique of the dialectic of Buddhists’ against metaphysical objects and epistemic proofs, and Sankara’s approach to immediacy through subletting worldly existences, and showing the insufficiency of different epistemological proofs like perception, inference, etc, is not to lower the religious importance of these systems. Indeed I would point out that they use those devices to cultivate the mind towards a religious experience of the transcendental reality via the grasp of speech, thought and a whole construction of the mind. It is thus to show they give importance to philosophical reflection only as a device for moving towards a religious experience. Their aim is not to achieve philosophical excellence but to excel their religious design by philosophical thinking. They admit that reality is beyond the grasp of reason, and for that reason these systems are respected.

III

Śankara Advaita defines reality in two ways- first as that which is not sublated in all the three parts of time (*trikālābādhitvam hi sat*). For this view nothing in this world is real because everything even the world itself is subject to time, change and sublation; they are born, exist and lastly destroyed in future. Śankara himself accepts that which is subject to sublation is false (*bādhitvāt mithyā*⁵). To say something real is not similar to say that other things are false and vice-versa. To accept different criterion for two different sorts of reality is to split reality into

⁴Knowledge is Existence and vice versa. *Śārīrakabhāṣya on Brahmasūtra* 3/2/21.

⁵Reality is that which is not sublated in all the three divisions of time and that which is sublated is false *ādhyasmanātvāt Mithyā- Śārīrakabhāṣya on Brahmasūtra* 3/2/4.

reality as such and it as false. To say that falsity implies the practical reality different from the reality in definition is not only to confuse the logic of reality but to mislead the philosophical conclusions regarding it.

Secondly, Advaita Vedantins take reality as the reality of the realities (*satyasya satyam*).⁶ In view of this definition the reality of this world (*Vyavahārika sattā*) and the reality of appearance (*pratibhāsika sattā*) get place in the realm of existences in which ultimate reality (*Pārmāthika sattā*) inheres (this inherence may be false). This definition entails that reality is universal that inheres in individuals, universals and universal of universal. This implies that Reality is the object of knowledge, we know it different from individuals or infer it as that which inheres in individuals. Moreover, universe is the object of awareness or consciousness and not an externally eternal object. Śāṅkara Vedantins can not equate the object with consciousness that is not an object but simply the knower of the object. They do not equate thoughts with consciousness, which in their philosophy is the substratum of the former.⁷

To get rid of the logical flaw of the idea of reality of realities they adopt a method of transcendence in which reality is transcendental to the world of individuals and universals.⁸ The transcendence can get shelter ultimately in silence where language and logic do not hold meaning. Metaphysician's construction of transcendental reality different from the reality of our approach through means of knowledge gives place to a different sort of means of knowing which they name intuition. The Reality is always something more or left untouched by those epistemic proofs based on our senses and reasoning and that is why they provide with an epistemological support to their assumption of reality by taking immediacy a source of knowledge different from other sources. Is immediacy the same as intuition? Immediacy is involved in subjective reflection while intuition flashes directly all of a sudden in the mind. The object of intuition is not the soul which in immediacy thesis is a knowing by becoming. Intuition is fallible source of knowledge but the same is not the case with Advaitin's immediacy. Advaitin's argument for the transcendence is immediacy that may have religious importance but that cannot add any object for philosophical reflections; that ultimately leads to cessation of philosophical reflections which are confined to the objects of awareness and the self-conscious activity on them. Why should all philosophical reflections center to a trans-philosophical ontic reality? The immediacy argument in contrast to mediacy argument for which objects of senses are objects of reflection is based on consciousness as the object of reflecting awareness that is consciousness turns to itself as an object of that immediate awareness; but Vedantins will never accept consciousness as an object. Consciousness flashes but the two- the consciousness and its flashes cannot flash simultaneously and are not the same; the subject and the object both at the same time in the same awareness do not flash, each flashing is new but is not so with

⁶*Chāndogyopaniṣad* 6/8/7.

⁷A Dialogue between a Wife and a Husband, Issue-8 (May 2011), Empowerment, Cover Story by Devendranath Tiwari., pp. 1-7, www.visit-the.indian.subcontinent.org/content.

⁸According to Madhyamikas appearance are void of reality and reality is void of plurality (*prapancaśūnya*).

the consciousness. Transcendence from the object world to shift to the subject may be a good move. But can a subject be an object in a cognition? If yes, all arguments and reflections on subject may be directed in the same objective mode as they move in objective reflection. It is not, and therefore Vedantins accept subjective mode of reflection on the subject. They try to differentiate the mode of thinking on the object and subject by introducing immediacy as a mode of knowledge. Immediacy cannot be different from flash of consciousness. They place consciousness as the object of meditation and not of philosophical reflection. The question is: is not the subject become an object in a subjective reflection? How should immediacy, a flash be taken as the consciousness itself? It will lead to a fallacy of taking an action of a thing as the thing itself. Vedantins feel proud of accepting two different modes of reflecting on two different sorts of realities-objective mode for the objects of empirical world we know by sources of knowledge and the subjective mode for the subject we know by immediacy that is transcendental to the former and hence beyond the grasp of the former mode of reflecting on. By that way unconsciously they commit the same mistake of taking the soul as an object in the subjective mode of reflections. This contradicts with their basic assumption that the subject (soul) is never an object; it is always consciousness. *Prakāśānanda* in *Vedāntasiddhānta Muktvāli* has sincerely considered the problem of subject-object dichotomy, and that is why he has tried to solve the problem by assuming that the same reality is dividedly perceived as both the subject and the object.

The uniqueness of metaphysicians lies in their belief in a transcended reality, which they assume as the reality of the physical world also. In Advaita Vedanta the reality is not only immanence but transcendence as well and thus they involve in search of the reality of realities. For fulfilling that aim they apply the logic of abstraction and implication. But the question is: how can the abstraction be non-different in character from that (thing) which is abstracted? The abstracted may be different but it will be altogether a different reality; it is not to say the abstracted one as the reality of the realities which in Advaita Vedanta is conscious light, the reality of the abstractions also. Abstraction depends on the thing abstracted and on the mind as the abstracting agency, but Śankara's 'Absolute' is neither of the two. In case of reality as abstraction the question arises as to which one out of the thing abstracted and the abstraction of the thing is real? The abstraction being last would not and the thing abstracted, being logically false in the Śankara's logic of Advaita, could not be real.

In the history of Indian philosophy Buddhists gave utmost importance to a discussion on the concept of reality. Their concern with the discussion is more interesting than any other metaphysician who speculates into reality. They put all possible arguments regarding different sorts of reality that is ontic, epistemic, logical, etc. and make it clear that they are not concerned with reality as it is but with examining the soundness of the arguments given for accepting some or the other sort of reality. They by analyzing and examining those arguments demonstrate that those arguments are not steady. On close analysis they fail to establish what they intend to establish and thus they are meaningless for proving or disproving the reality as such. 'Reality beyond all sorts of expressions or

expressibility' and 'it as fit for all possible sorts of expressions' signify the same meaning that is reality as such is not known determinately; it is by nature (*svabhāvaśūnya*⁹) and definition (*catuṣkotivinirmukta*¹⁰) both in case of the former, that is in Buddhism and by definition (*anantadharmātkamvastu*¹¹) in case of the latter that is Jainism, that reality is not known determinately.

IV

Arguments furnished for proving the reality or which claim to reveal reality indicate only to indescribability of reality which is transcendental to its knowledge. Realizing their limitation or incapability of arguments and proofs some theorists turn their thoughts to skepticism. In the process of exhausting all epistemological options, metaphysicians when they fail to prove the reality of realities germinate mysticism. Śankara's arguments take to a third position, that is, the reality cannot be denied because of it being the denier itself (*ya eva hi nirākartā tadevatasya svarūpam*¹²). Is the denier an ontic being (soul) inferred on the basis of the activities of denying? If it is yes, then the question: is it the same soul, the ultimate reality of Advaita Vedanta? The function and qualities of the reality is not the same what the reality is. Śankara himself accepts a difference between the individual self and the soul. The inference of individual self on the basis of denying activity does in no way prove the soul. What is the object of immediacy? Is it soul or self? If it is self that is known by immediacy, will it not lead to subjectivism? If it is then the problem of knowledge of other mind stands strongly before them and their any attempt to it may culminates in solipsism. Does a philosopher analyze and reflect on the reality separate from knowledge and not on knowledge of that (reality)? While doing so do we not go beyond limit of knowledge? Epistemic proofs indicate a static reality void of any possibility of change or alteration that is a thing- in -itself which, in fact, is beyond reasoning. If things in the world are svabhāvasunya, they cannot be proved by epistemological proofs which are implied to prove only the svabhāva and if the reality as svabhāva is accepted then there is no need for epistemic proofs. If it is not so there must be unanimity in metaphysicians but none of the two agrees on the nature of object they prove. In such a position, in the affair of reality we are left with only alternative to follow them as the wise treat them (*laukikomārgoanusartavyaḥ*¹³) without doubting and putting a question as to why the black is black or why such thing has such a svabhāva.

Different theorists talk about different sorts of reality; they claim to perceive physical, ontological metaphysical, logical, epistemological, aesthetic and other kinds of it. Now the question is: is reality different in nature or is it the same reality which is theorized differently by theorists as per adherence and allegiance

⁹According to Buddhists the Reality is Indescribable, beyond category of statements or language.

¹⁰*Anyayogavyavahārachedikā*, p. 22.

¹¹Śāṅkarakabhāṣya on *Brahmasūtra* 2/3/7.

¹²*Laukiko mārgo 'nusartavyaḥ-Tattvopapllavasinhaḥ* by Jayarasi Bhatta, *Granthaprakaraṇa pratijñā*, p. 1.

¹³See, "The Life Divine" by Sri Aurobindo, Pondicherry Ashram.

to their own construction of a system? I am well aware of the fact that no two theorists agree on the sameness argument of reality. Why is it so? Is the nature (svabhāva) of a thing such that it changes from person to person? Not only do they criticize and refute each other's arguments of reality and think that their construction is the only consistent and comprehensive truth, but they position their system to a place of meditation outside philosophical reflection. If this is the case then no agreement is possible. Those who adhere with the opposite view think that no variation in reality is possible and that it is the theorists who for their own purpose perceive it differently. Even if this view is accepted, we find no two theorists agree on the nature of that one reality. For instance there are a number of absolutists, non-dualists who describe the nature of reality differently. All of the theorists construct some epistemology; give some arguments, instances and justification for showing their conception of reality as objectively true. How can they avoid privatism, subjectivism and solipsism in constructing the metaphysics of their own allegiance?

Some contemporary thinkers like Sri Aurobindo (Raju, 1985, 409) and P. T. Raju (Hick, 1985, 28-36) furnish the logic of infinite, transcendental logic for the transcendental reality which is spiritual or divine. According to them, the reality is infinite in existence and function operative in the universe. This logic, for them, is inherent into the deep structure of human life. All conflicts, opposition and tensions are at level of infra rational and rational thinking on reality but there is no possibility of them at spiritual level of reality which is all positive and negative. Reality and non-reality, existence and non-existence are two poles or forms of the same reality. Immanuel Kant wisely propounded that our mind can know only the things as they appear and not the noumena. He honestly accepted that when the mind tries to grasp the noumena, it is fenced in the antinomies of reason.

Here I refer to Anselm's (Ibid. 37-52) and Aquinas'¹⁴ ontological argument for the existence of God that is, for them, truth also. God is greater than something which we can conceive of as not existing. Therefore, Anselm claims that we would have impossible contradiction if we accept that than which a greater cannot be conceived could be conceived not to exist. It cannot be understood not to exist or even cannot be understood to be capable of not being. Thomas Aquinas believes that truth about God is not an article of faith, but is preambles to the article; it can be known by natural reason. The finite mind can think of such a truth but can neither prove nor disprove. If finite mind contradicts itself by thinking of the denial of the greatest, how can it think of its existence? Any assertion or denial of finite mind is impossible according to their own logic of the greatest. So far the logic of natural reason is concerned, I can say that there are natural reasons who do not believe in God's truth, communities who do not follow any theological orthodoxy and atheists who refute God's existence. The theologian's argument can be of a great shelter, a great article for their solace but is of no philosophical importance. In formulating such arguments and providing such proofs the theologians give importance to formulation of a logic better to say a logic of transcendent in which their existence, their mind is subordinated to their imagination of that logic. The greatest, idea of its existence, logical impossibility of denial of its existence and transcendence from both of the negative and positive

¹⁴Neti neti, *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 2/3/6.

positions are all philosophically important only when their existence as thought is accepted. It becomes a matter of religious contemplation if we believe them as externally existent and independently from thought and language.

V

Some metaphysicians talk about reality as unknowable and *unnamable*. They realize the limit of reason and the epistemic justifications and that is why they place reality to a stage where a mystic can experience that but cannot give word to their experience of it. I cannot overlook this issue only by pushing such type of experience of reality in the realm of religion because many of the philosophers have been found to have their concern with a discussion of that conception of reality. For example, Buddhists may say that the pin pointed particular (*svalakṣaṇa*) is directly known but is not nameable and what is nameable is not reality but mental construction (*vikalpa*). Following Upaniṣadic statement Sāṅkara Vedantins interpret reality as “not this not this¹⁵”. The reality is beyond the grasp of senses, mind and speech. Jain philosophers’ position is altogether different. For them the reality is all the knowable and unknowable, nameable and unnamable. Reality for Jain Philosophers is one among infinite qualities of a substance. One point is very clear to us and that is – that which is known is determinately known and knowledge being determinate is not possible without language which determinates. Taking this point in view one can firmly say that that which is known is expressible or nameable. It is relevant here to refer to Naiyayikas definition of inherence (*samavāya*). *Samavāya*¹⁶ according to them is unnamable, it is *nirupādhika* and hence indescribable. For Naiyayikas the signified (*avācya*) of the signifier (*samavāya*) is indescribable and therefore unspeakable. It cannot be indicated as this or that because of its being a *non-relata*. Now we can say against this view that ‘*samavāya* is *avācya*’ and ‘*avācya* is not a signified’ is a self contradictory statement. *Samavāya* as the signifier (*vācya*) of the signified ‘*avācya*’ is very much speakable. Unknowable will lose its character if it is unknowable at the time – it is cognized thus. Just as a doubtful cognition or doubt is not doubted at the same time, a signifier cannot be a signified. Logically, the ‘reality is unknowable’ is a contradiction and cognitively unknowable reality is the signified of the signifier “unknowable” and is speakable as well. Even silence is a thought, a concept. Had it not been so, a number of books and interpretations on Buddha’s silence would have not been written. There is no reality isolated from the language. A signified, transcendental to its signifier which is unspeakable is an a-philosophical assumption.

Reality is beyond the grasp of mind and language and for that reason it is called “indescribable”. Even in that case the reality is not void of language “indescribable”, The idea/thoughts/ flashes are secondary reality in contrast with external entities which are ordinarily taken as primary. But philosophically the

¹⁵A precise discussion of on the issue by the same author can be seen in *The Central Problems of Bhartṛhari’s Philosophy*, ICPR, New Delhi, pp. 389-391, 2008.

¹⁶Universal as the Import of words, *The Journal of The Indian Academy of Philosophy*, Kolkata, Vol. XLIII, Nos. 1&2, pp. 33-59.

latter is the only reality to which our knowledge is confined. External reality is implicated or inferred by some similarity as the ontological substratum of the reality that figures in. The moment we accept a thing –in –itself or ontic being inferred or implicated as substratum of thoughts which are only known we stop the serious thinking and destroy the interest of openness of philosophical activities; we deviate from knowing aspect and shift to assuming.

VI

Senses don't grasp thing – in – tself. They can grasp the object for which they are naturally fit; they grasp only sensations, sense-data or as the things appear to them. Epistemic proofs are needed for influencing others and not for knowing the reality. Something can be proved or disproved only when the thing is known beforehand. If, otherwise, there will be no cognitive base and, hence, no cause of incentive for directing those measures towards the object that is to be proved. I see the 'pot' and I know that I know only the sensations of 'pot' I acquired by seeing 'pot' and not the 'pot' thing as such but when somebody asks as how do you know the 'pot' I simply reply that I know it by perception. Here one can note that object of sense contact is 'pot' the thing but the object acquired by sense-data of pot which the mind construct as the knowledge of 'pot'. Senses like eyes can sense only but cannot grasp the thing-in-itself. Despite that we claim to know it by perception. It is clear that the object of perceiving "pot" and the object of knowledge of 'pot' are distinct.

Sense data philosophers observe that the senses can acquire only the sense data and our mind can grasp only them. Is sense data void of language? If it is yes, how can they be known determinately and distinctly so? How can the sense data of "pot" be differentiated from that of "cot"? Isolated from language no existence, no reality, no sense data and finally no knowledge of reality is possible and it is perhaps the reason sense data philosopher thought of reality as logical construct. The logical reality is a construct of mind out of sense data; they can only be represented by language; the representation which is fit to represent the facts that are logical realities. The world is totality of facts and all facts are experiences. Facts are logical realities and are related as representation – represented or as reference – and the facts they refer to. If all facts are logical units and are independent from each other, how can a fact relate or can be related with each other fact? In other words how is the fact of a representation related with the fact of the thing represented? If relation is also an experience it will be an addition to the heap of the facts and can be a relation no more. If relation is the commonness to be found in between the facts then commonness is also an experience and thus it is difficult to accept a relata as relation. The same fact cannot be the relata and the relation, expression and the expressed at the same time? Logical reality is never void of language but the question is: is it a construction of mind or of language or the language itself? Wittgenstein is not very much clear and specific to the solution of these questions.

VII

Reality is defined as Individual or substance qualified by the qualities. If reality is defined so then it must have a name, specific qualities through which it is

identified thus and for which we use pronouns like this, that, all. Advaita Vedantins subordinate such reality having a name and qualities as appearances. Buddhists accept the individual as reality but devoid of name and qualities which are mental construction of the individual; these constructed realities are universal and the reality that is individual or pin pointed particular out of which the mind constructs universal is beyond qualities and description. Individual, as generally taken, is a whole made of parts-qualities, universal, number, gender, etc., and has a name and may be indicated by pronouns,. Individual is subject to birth and death. Brahman in Vedanta's scheme is eternal and hence cannot be an individual suffering from those changes. If it is accepted that individuals are not always changing it may be eternal or that the change may also be eternal, a number of individuals will be of a number of categories – mortal, immortal including static and change. Absolute/Brahman is neither change nor mortal. Immortal static individual is not known. Vedantins accept individual as that inhered by the universal without which the identical cognition of individual as individual will not be possible. Universal inheres in individuals because of they are known distinctly so. Advaita Vedantin's Brahman is neither individual nor universal but a transcendental signified.

According to Nagarjunian or Derridian deconstruction the reality or substance if it is a whole made up of qualities will exist no more if the qualities of it are analyzed or separated from that; separated from the qualities it will lose its existence and name as well. If we say that reality is no other than the qualities then there will be no difference between the two –the reality and the quality and that is not acceptable to metaphysicians themselves. Reality –in –itself, if an ontic being, is not an object of philosophical reflection. If they accept it transcendental to cognitive grasp, it is of no philosophical use and if it is separate from the signifier, the language it is not a signified of that signifier. To accept a signified transcendental to its signifier is not only a denial of the power and proper estimation of language but to overlook the seriousness of the problems of cognitive activities like analysis, translation, interpretation of the signified transcendental to the signifier. In case of a signified transcendental to the signifier which is only given in hand, the analysis etc., of the signifier will not be the analysis of the signified and the signified being transcendental to its signifier will always stand at a distance from its signifier. Let me clarify the limit of the sources of knowledge in knowing the individual reality with an instance of perception. Suppose somebody asks me about John's house. I make him known by sayings that see, the house on the roof of which the crow is sitting. The crow, that later on flies away, serves only as indicator; the crow is no more sitting on the John's house despite of that he reaches there. Likewise, the epistemic proofs can indicate to a reality but may not make us known the reality. Indication does in no way mean cognition or revelation of knowledge. Here the duality of indication and immediacy stands as a problem; in each reflection two sorts of knowledge belonging to two different levels in the same cognition cannot be accepted.

VIII

Is the reality Universal? Two major arguments are given against universal. First that 'doing' is performed by individuals; one cannot bring a universal 'pot' when one is asked to fetch a 'pot'. One can fetch only an individual 'pot'. Secondly

identical cognition of an individual is possible only on the basis of individuals and that universals are also known by inference or by implication as inhering in individuals. Here I want to remark that identical cognition of individual cannot be caused by individual itself because individuals vary from one another; they all are independent discrete. Even the instant individual differs in the next moment in an atomic theory. Identical cognition of individuals by resemblance, similarity and group require more than one individual out of which the commonness or resemblance is taken as the cause of identical cognition. There is no possibility of perception and statement of commonness or similarity in case it is either discrete particulars or is non-dual. Even if we accept some commonness or resemblance for logic sake the question arises: how are they different from universal? The individual cannot be the cause of identical cognition of universal because the position will destroy the identity and difference of individual and universal. If there is a reality transcendental or beyond our knowledge, that may be important for a religious purpose but is of no philosophical use. Universal is admitted as the cause of identical cognition by the word individual and exclusion also because of which they are identified thus²⁰. Does universal exist independently of thought and language?

IX

It is clear from the analysis, observation and discussion of the metaphysician's epistemic position made earlier that the reality they speculate is beyond the grasp and the realization of the reality which they claim as the goal of their philosophies is an indescribable stage. They admit themselves that the Reality independent and transcendental to individuals and universals is beyond the limit of proving and argumentation. Buddhists accept that whatever our mind can know is universal, and that they are construction of mind and therefore not real. The Real is not a construction and hence beyond our knowing. I do not understand as to why we should accept the reality beyond what we know. To deny or even to subordinate the reality of what is directly known to us is self-suicidal.

In such a circumstance why should we not concentrate on analyzing cognition of Reality which figure determinately in and by language? That which figures in the mind figures so by language. Our knowledge, philosophical reflections and investigations are not only based on to the intelligible beings but are confined to them also. I shall discuss the issue in following paragraphs but before that I want to point out that intelligible beings are those expressed by language and they are only beings to whom our mind can know determinately. Reality defined as thing-in-itself separate or isolated from language and thought cannot be a philosophical Reality which is always the object of cognition and philosophical reflection. Reality becomes the problem of philosophical discussion only when it figures in the mind and that which figures in the mind is not a thing in itself or ontic reality; it is not individual existing independently from its knowledge. Isolated from language no thought can determinately figure in the mind. Can you have a thought or even think of a reality isolated from language? Even the word 'reality' ceases to have any signification isolated from language. The reality as the language presents it may be an individual or universal, may have a name or unnamed but that can be known thus because they are presented so by language.

How can an unconditioned reality be accepted at all as the object of philosophical reflection? It is peculiarity of human mind that it thinks determinately even about those beyond its grasp. As all thinking is thinking in language, the unconditioned is thought of as conditioned by language and is communicated accordingly as of this or that form, one, many, diversity, changing, unchanging, etc. it is relative to language that they flash as many relatively to one and likewise. What then is a reality we know in a cognitive enterprise? The reality which is the object of our knowledge and philosophical reflection is confined to intelligible reality. Our doing is based on external things, but our knowing is confined only to the intelligible reality. Any amalgamation of the two is a-philosophical. External things cannot be grasped; it does not become the object of knowledge. Reality ceases to be so if isolated from thought and isolated from language no thought is possible. All thoughts are intelligible beings, beings expressed so by language. The term 'being' is used for the existences belonging to past, present and future because they are existences flashed forth by language. The being here is neither the thing-in-itself nor abstraction of it but is revealed unit, the flashing of the given concepts that figure in different capacities and forms like being, non-being belonging to past, present and future, substantive, action, etc. Substantive can be presented as action and vice versa by the language only. For example take the substantive 'batting' as in the expression 'batting is good'. The language presents it in different capacity of 'action' as in the expression 'he is batting'. Our cognition and philosophical reflections are confined only to these beings; the term 'philosophic being' is most appropriate term and is synonymous to intelligible beings which are of the nature of awareness or cognitive units.

In Lanugage's different units – that is words, case terminations, suffixes, prefixes, particles, pre- and post-positions, letters, etc. –are concepts; they are of awareness in character; they are universals because identical cognition by them in their different occurrences and instances is accomplished; the meaning they reveal in the mind are also universal. The mind can grasp only universals, and they are realities. No reality, no thought, no language-token is possible isolated from language. Taking reality as that which figures in the differing capacities of subject and object (intelligible-being), and the unsolvable controversy of the dichotomy of substantially independent realities, then the transcendental reality, subject and object, can be removed. Reality independently from thought and thought from language can become the object of philosophical reflections only when they figure in the mind as and when presented so by language and in such a situation, epistemological proving gets a subordinated import

Flash of consciousness is universal and cannot be equated with consciousness itself. If we say that consciousness-in-itself is inferred or implicated as the ontic substratum of universals then that will be an individual. But most of the philosophers and religious thinkers will not accept the Ultimate reality as individual also. For them individuals and universals are the manifestations of the Reality. In such a position the reality is not an object of reflection; it is beyond the objects we know with which religious seekers occupy themselves.

X

It will not be a complete discussion on reality if I do not clarify my position on knowledge and truth. Knowledge is popularly defined as justified true belief. This definition of knowledge has got much popularity after Gettier. I perceive a strong difference between the knowledge and truth. A belief is not converted to knowledge if it is justified and this does not happen if it is not. If justified belief is knowledge then all philosophical attempts will dedicatedly aim and be directed to justifying beliefs and in that order there will be primacy of epistemological efforts and proving. Some may produce justifications and grounds of justifications of reality while others may find fault with them and it may perhaps give some an incentive to mystification and to some other to skepticism. This is what has been done so far by the theorist in the name of philosophizing reality.

Knowledge is light that expresses the objects. There is difference between the knowledge and its objects. Knowledge is foundational in each of its flashings. There is no 'otherness' in knowledge. Otherness is the quality of objects of knowledge. The same object that flashes in cognition may flash in a different cognition also. For example the object of knowledge expressed by the expression 'John is hard working' is the object in a cognition revealed by the expression spoken by the same or by different person at different time. Knowledge is awareness or self awareness of the thoughts or objects flashed in knowledge.

Reality is often taken as truth. Is truth a thing-in-itself or a quality of it? Metaphysicians equate the truth with reality and reality as transcendental substance. In my view truth is not an ontic being, it is not the quality of external things. No truth is in-itself. It is always a quality of statements. If somebody asks— Is it true to say that Kalidas wrote Raghubansam? I simply reply yes, it is true. Is it true to say that Shakespeare did not write Raghubansam? I simply reply, yes, it is true. This shows that truth is the value of the statements. For correspondence theorists it is a quality of a statement; a statement is true if the object denoted by the statement has a corresponding thing in the world of experience. For coherence theorists a statement is true if it coheres with or is consistent within a set of statements. For pragmatists it is based on the utility, effects or follows up as per the statement. It is not the truth of reality independent from knowledge and language. The greatest idea of its existence, denial of its non-existence, and transcendence from both of the negative and positive positions, are philosophically important only when their existence as thought is accepted. Thought and language are infused. Truth is the quality of language and hence of thought. Truth of a reality independent from thought and language may lead to contemplation.

XI

Isolated from language the question of truth does not arise. The cognition or flash revealed in by language is always a veridical cognition because communication is accomplished by it independently of verification, falsification or any criteria of testability. The cognition revealed by language is veridical. Therefore there is the possibility of its further examination through logical measures of testability for men who seek verification, confirmation, etc., for proving the veridical cognition as valid, invalid, true, and false on the basis of availability or absence of references in the

empirical world. I am of the view that philosophy is a cognitive activity par excellence, and philosophical objects are confined to intelligible beings or to objects we know. When we go beyond or infer that which is not intelligible, we turn to metaphysical outlook or to religion and then there is a demand of inference and other epistemological proofs for convincing others. I do not deny the metaphysical way of reflections on religious assumptions. I simply want to emphasize the difference between metaphysical/religious and philosophical knowledge. Religious knowledge presupposes some metaphysical construction based on our allegiances which require epistemological justification, and that is why it turns to meditation or practice. Philosophical knowledge presupposes nothing, it is the knowledge of the objects revealed or expressed in the mind and is independent of our physiological, religious and other allegiances. When we do not find any problem for further reflection, we stop philosophical reflection either by accepting it as such or by denying it. The objects of knowledge are distinct, and different types of objects are distinctly known by the knowledge itself. Metaphysical/religious knowledge demands epistemic proofs for convincing others about it, while philosophical knowledge is confined to the analysis and interpretation of cognition for digging out the problems for clarity and conception. In brief, the philosopher's concern is not the thing-in-itself but the thoughts/concepts as they figure in the mind; is not practice but the problem which makes him self-conscious to remove it. The problems that make one self-conscious are expressed by language. Philosophical reflection is not only based on but is confined to what and how language presents this reflection to intelligible beings.

If reality is taken as externally existent, it cannot be non-existence and vice-versa at the same time. If 'pot' is taken an externally existent, it cannot be non-existent and, thus, the expressions like 'pot is non-existent (*ghaṭonāsti*)' will not be possible. The external existents can be revealed neither as existent or as non-existent nor as existent and non-existent both at a time. As intelligible being figures equally as being and as non-being by respective words. It is not true to say that the concept/idea or being figures positively and non-being do not figure or figure negatively in case of negative assertions. All concepts/ideas figure positively as idea in the mind, and so is the case with the idea of non-being because of which it is known thus.

Summing up, I can say that Realty as external entity, independently of and separate from language and thought, is all important for faith persuasion but philosophically, intelligible objects are the only reality which we know, and only they are the objects of knowledge and philosophical reflection. Reality ceases to be so isolated from language; there is no reality which is not intelligible. Our knowledge is confined to the intelligible reality, the reality that figures in the mind, infused with language. It is of awareness in nature; it can be analyzed, interpreted and justified by reason and serves as the cognitive basis of all functions of reasoning.

Language presents reality as signifier-signified, individual-universal, subject-object, substantive-action, accessory, etc., and they are known distinctly as they flash. If something is real and I do not know it – how can I say or even assume it so? Accomplishment of cognition and communication are the criterion because of which not only substantives which denote accomplished character but an action of a non-finished character is also known. No reality can get the value of being reality if it is beyond knowledge. It cannot be the part of practice and cannot serve for the welfare if it is not revealed determinately by language. It is intelligible

being, the truth void of confusion, and if it is not clear or if there is any confusion, it causes incentive for further philosophical reflections for clarity and wisdom. If it is clear it serves as the cause of incentive to our do's and don'ts. Transcendental, expressible, non-expressible, describable- indescribable, being, non-being – all are known thus because language presents them so. The being expressed in the mind by language can be presented as being and non-being as well, and that is why negative sentences exist independently of positive sentences and communication by those different sentences is made possible.

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