

27. R. Puligandla and D. Matesz, 'Appearance and the Laws of Logic in Advaita Vedānta', 80.
28. *Brahma Sūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 2.2.28.
29. *quacidapiyupādhanu sattvena pratītyanarhatvam atyantāstvam. Advaita-Siddhi*, 1 (*caturtha/dvatīya mithyātvad*).
30. Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 441.
31. R. Puligandla and D. Matesz, 'Appearance and the Laws of Logic in Advaita Vedānta', p. 81.
32. J.G. Arapura, *Hermeneutical Essays on Vedāntic Topics*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986), p. 29.
33. *Mandūkya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 3.33; *Brahma Sūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 1.1.5.
34. *Advitīyam, Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.2.1.
35. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 8.1.1.
36. *digdeśakṣālādihedasūnya*, Ibid.
37. *sarvaprāṇācavivarjitā, Praśna Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 5.7.
38. *sarvaśiṣayavivarjitā, Māndūkya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 1.37.
39. *sarvadharmaviśeṣavivarjitā. Praśna Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 5.2.
40. *sarvavyavahārāgocarātita, Kaṭha Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 1.2.14.
41. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.8.7.
42. *Brahma Sūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 1.4.22.
43. Chandradhar Sharma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 2003), p. 279.
44. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 3. 14. 1.
45. H. M. Bhattacharyya, 'Studies in Philosophy' (1st sen), Punjab Oriental Series, No. 22 (Lahore: Motilal Banarsidass, 1933), p. 6.
46. *rajjur api sarvavikalpāśyaspadabhūta, Māndūkya Karika Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 2.32; 3.29.
47. *saccā paramārthodakādi, asaccā marīcyūdakādi, Praśna Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 4.5.

Discussion and Comments

How Empirical is 'Empirical': Some Reflections

The distinction between the empirical and the non-empirical lies at the heart of Western philosophy, right from Plato onwards. And yet, it is not quite clear as to what does the term 'empirical' mean. Normally, all that is apprehended through the human senses is called empirical, but then the 'empirical' would not certainly mean 'veridical' as the illusory is as much an object of sense experience as that which is regarded as non-illusory or veridical. But there is a deeper problem with the definition. How shall one construe or classify that which is the object of apprehension in, say, 'dreaming'? Normally, in dreaming, one vividly apprehends 'objects' with almost the same sensory qualities as one does while one is awake. And yet, it will be difficult to consider the objects experienced in dreaming as empirical in the usual sense in which the term is used in philosophy.

There is another problem with the use of the term. Shall we, or shall we not, apply it to those objects which are supposed to be the 'object' of introspective experience? The distinction between the outer and inner sensibility is generally accepted in philosophical literature, at least since Kant; but it will be difficult to say that the object is apprehended in inner sensibility considered 'empirical' in the same sense as that which is the object of outer sensibility.

The suspicion about the 'empiricality' of that which is the object of introspective observation or inner sensibility is writ large or modern philosophy since the criterion of cognitive meaning fullness was attempted to be formulated as clearly as possible. It was only that which was apprehended by the sense that was considered to be empirical and the well-known story about the formulation of the 'verification principle' always steers clear of anything that smacked of 'objects' of inner sensibility or introspective observation. The so-called debate about verification versus falsification related primarily to logical issues and not to the application of the

term 'empirical'. In fact, the debate was also epistemological as it indirectly centered around the question: what was a strictly 'cognitive attitude'? even though it was neither seen nor formulated in that way.

The story since those days, which seem so far off now, would reveal perhaps even more clearly the issues at stake. The very reality of that which was denoted by the term 'inner sensibility', or even that which is supposed to be denoted by the term 'consciousness' is in question. But if there is no consciousness, then not only would there be no such thing as is conveyed by the term 'inner sensibility' or 'introspective observation', but no 'outer sensibility' either. To talk of sensory qualities such as colours or sounds or smells, etc., would be as unmeaningful as to talk of pains and pleasures, hopes and fears. One cannot have the former if one rejects the latter. The point was argued long ago by Berkeley, though the argument was neither as straightforward nor formulated the same way for it primarily concerned the distinction between secondary and primary qualities and not between those designated by the terms 'inner' and 'outer' sensibility.

In fact, the reduction or translation of all that is apprehended by the senses,—whether it be outer or inner—was attempted by the behaviourists on methodological grounds, and in the service of what they called objectivity in science. But, 'behaviour' too has to be observed and even if we take the help of a camera, or film, it itself will have not only to be observed, but also 'interpreted'. There seems to be, thus, no escape from not only the senses, but also that which 'attends' and not only becomes 'aware' of but communicates and articulates through all the resources at its command, including that of language.

The problems with the interpretation or understanding or communication raise issues which one would hardly know how to classify. Is 'language' something empirical or non-empirical? Or is it only half-empirical, for obviously, it is not grasped by the senses alone. The problem can be made more complex if one takes into account not only the type of entity that language is supposed to be, but mathematical formulae, equations, systems which not only can't be grasped by the senses but which, strangely, are supposed to be necessary for comprehending and understanding what is sensorily

given. Surely, 'infinity' cannot be sensuously grasped as the senses are confined to the 'here' and 'now' and yet mathematicians talk of infinity and even have a symbol for it.

Mathematical entities and relationships have still some sort of an objectivity, embodied and embedded as they are in some sort of signs or symbols. But what shall one say of objects of thought with which thinkers deal with? Leaving aside for the moment those concepts which seem directly to deal with that which is apprehended by the senses, what shall one say about those second-level concepts which seem to deal with concepts themselves. Philosophy is full of such concepts and philosophers are adept at manufacturing them. Imagine the terms 'transcendental' and 'transcendent' coined by Kant, or the term 'thetic' coined by Fichte, or the term 'monad' coined by Leibnitz. These have been the subject of intensive discussion, elucidation, interpretation and criticism; yet, what sort of objects are these? Shall they be regarded as empirical or non-empirical? Or, shall we have to devise some other term for describing them?

It is not only philosophers who invent or discover new concepts all the time but the so-called scientists do the same. The history of all the sciences, including physics, is replete with the continual production of concepts without which not only theories could not be built but even thinking *could* not go on.

This all is well known, but the implications of all this are hidden from oneself by making the distinction between the theoretical and the non-theoretical, the latter term hiding one's inability to find an adequate word for it.

The distinction between the empirical and the non-empirical, however, may not be held to obtain only in that which is the object of sense experience and that which is not. A distinction may be drawn between 'experience' and 'thought'. All that is experienced may be regarded—and has been regarded—as radically different from what is merely 'thought' or just an 'object' of thought. The distinction between 'thought' and 'experience'; though always made, ignores the twin facts that both thought and experience involve an 'activity' which is conveyed by the words 'think-ing' and 'experience-ing' on the one hand and that 'thought' itself can become the subject of thinking and reflection just as 'experience'. In fact

'thinking' is supposed to have both a psychological and 'logical' dimension which have been attempted to be radically distinguished from each other but, both extend that 'thinking' is an activity of the mind, it shares with 'experiencing' certain common properties which, if reflected upon, would suggest a commonality between the two which is supposed to be denied by the distinction. Experience can be clear or confused just as thought can be. And one can get 'tired' of thinking just as one can get in respect of 'experiencing' as there may be too much of it. In fact, the concepts of 'significance', 'meaningfulness' and 'importance' or 'value' apply to both, and both are related to, and conditioned by, 'objects' which they are concerned with. Experience is always—or at least mostly—'experience' of and thinking is always thinking about something.

The point is that the distinctions, though valid, do not and should not result in the type of absolute 'radicality' which they have usually been supposed to have in philosophical thinking up till now. Ultimately, 'thinking' is as much 'experienced', and is as much an activity as anything else. And it is so, both from the view point of the person who 'thinks' and from that of the one who tries to understand the 'thought' of another, whether it be embodied in writing or speech.

The 'empirical' of 'objects' of human creation has been generally ignored and seldom been thought about, even though the epistemological and logical problems relating to them have been discussed in philosophical literature since the earliest times. The reason for this lies perhaps in their what may be called their amphibian character, the fact of their belonging to two 'worlds' at the same time. To the extent they are 'empirical', i.e., they belong to the 'natural' world, they are not cultural objects at all and, thus, can be hardly regarded as having in them that dimension which comes, from their being products of human creativity. Language is perhaps the clearest example of this though art in its multifarious forms attests to this equally. What is, however, surprising is the fact that little attention has been paid to the fact that the body itself proclaims aloud that it does not belong completely to the 'natural' world if inanimate matter is supposed to be its real 'exemplar'. The truth of this statement may perhaps be understood better if

one reflects on dance as an art-form where the body directly displays and embodies living forms that the imagination 'imagines'. It does directly what the other arts do indirectly, i.e., translates, embodies and exhibits something that can hardly be considered 'empirical' in the ordinary sense of the word. The so-called distinction between 'sense' and 'reference' perhaps completely vanishes in a real work of art what the 'sense' itself becomes the referent and cannot be apprehended apart from that which attempts to convey it.

But imagination is '*imaging*' and *imaging* is creating an image which is sensuously apprehended without the senses. Dreams are perhaps the clearest and the most confusing example of this. Whatever is 'experienced' in a dream is not, by definition, apprehended by the so-called five senses which we are supposed to have and yet, as far as 'appearing' is concerned, they 'appear' and are 'experienced' as much as those what one apprehends in that state of consciousness which is generally described as 'waking'. Yet, this 'empirical' of dreams does not confer on them any 'reality' and, if properly reflected on, would render it difficult to identify the real with the empirical.

'Dreams', however, are not the only example which question the identification of the 'empirical', i.e., the sensuously apprehended or rather those qualities which are generally considered to be 'sensible' with the 'real'. The same seems to be true of what are generally called 'art objects' which, unlike dreams, have a palpable 'externality', located as they are in almost the same space and time as the so-called empirical objects are and yet they are supposed to have a 'space' and 'time' of their own which though located almost in the same space and time which the empirical objects are supposed to occupy, are yet different from theirs. The phrase 'virtual' which is generally added to those 'spaces' and 'times' which the art objects are supposed to occupy does not make the problem any clearer. In fact, the 'representational arts' create an even more insoluble problem for the notion of 'empirically' as they are visually apprehended almost in the same way as the empirical objects are.

At a still different level, the literary arts in particular and language in general raises the same problem though, perhaps, in a more complex way. Are the verbal signs that are apprehended,

including the images, empirical or not? This is even more important as the entire question of 'truth' and veridicality of an informative or declarative statement rests, ultimately, on that which is sensuously experiential. In other words, without the empirical content of these statements, no verification or even falsification is possible.

The relation of language to the cognitive enterprise of man has not been sufficiently explored or investigated or questioned. Nor has it been seen that language inherently destroys the distinction between the 'real' and the 'imaginary' and somehow makes the 'imaginary' palpable. Not only this; at still another level, it creates 'objects' of thinking which are generally called 'conceptual' in character. But should these concepts, which are 'objects' of thinking, be considered as empirical or not? After all, these are as much objects as the 'objects' of sensuous apprehension and subject to the same kind of investigation as the latter are supposed to be. It is true that a distinction is usually made between concepts—which are called empirical concepts—that have an element of 'transcendence' in them in the sense that their content is never completely exhausted by the sensuously apprehended objects which they are supposed to represent.

But, even if one grants this distinction, the problem would still remain in respect of those concepts which are regarded as non-empirical. Why should they be considered as non-empirical? Take, for example, the concept of 'justice' or that of 'honesty' or that of 'infinity' or those innumerable concepts which philosophers and theoreticians invent in order to 'understand' any subject-matter. Mathematics and logic are the obvious examples but there is perhaps no subject whatsoever which does not invent and elaborate concepts distinctive to itself which become subject of investigation, discussion and dispute amongst those who are involved in the study of that particular field of knowledge.

At a deeper level still, shall we call the activity of thinking itself as empirical for, after all, one does engage in it and one stops. Is it, or is it not like other activities in which man engages such as walking or talking? And, if the latter are empirical, then why should the former not be regarded as such? But if 'thinking' is regarded as an empirical activity, then shall not its object or product also be regarded as such?

Ultimately, the question is: Shall consciousness and self-consciousness be regarded as empirical as anything else or a radical distinction be made between these and that which is apprehended only by the external senses? But the distinction between the 'external' and the 'internal' itself is made by consciousness and, if so, the distinction between the empirical and the non-empirical may also be drawn by consciousness itself. But if the distinction is drawn by consciousness then the distinction is bound to be provisional and where the line shall be drawn will depend upon the convenience and the purpose for which the drawing of the boundary is done. Perhaps it is time that the distinction which has played such a fundamental role in philosophical thinking be seen for what it is, i.e., a purely contingent distinction drawn for certain pragmatic purposes where cognitive interests play only a subsidiary role, and the role, it should be recognized as marginal only.

DAYA KRISHNA

Debating the Visual: Reflections on the Ontology of Film in the Hindu Context

In her impressionistic essay, filmmaker Rajula Shah¹ described the way according to which an illusion of the wind's rustle was produced for the screen: A silk scarf waved in front of the microphone made a sound which, later on, when interwoven into the multilayered work that is the film itself, sounded like the wind. What does a silk scarf have to do with the sound of the wind? Assuming that a scarf, as rustlingly as might be, is not the wind; assuming that film spectators are unable to trace the material origin of the sounds and impressions presented in front of them, and recalling similar cases, Shah makes a decisive conclusion regarding the nature of the medium: 'Truth, alas, seldom worked in a lie that was cinema'.² The screen is blank: the filmic work is capable of endless manipulations, and thus, cinema becomes the arena where a powerful illusion is being performed. Under the camouflage of appealability, enchantment and fascination lies a reality which is basically false and, therefore, invalid.