

# The Theory of Reality: A Critical & Philosophical Elaboration

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## Abstract

Reality is a concept of things which really exist. In philosophy and science reality has discussed elaborately. This essay concerned this elaboration. In a wider definition, reality includes everything that is and has been, whether or not it is observable or comprehensible. A still broader definition includes everything that has existed, exists, or will exist. Reality is often contrasted with what is imaginary, delusional, (only) in the mind, dreams, what is false, what is fictional, or what is abstract. At the same time, what is abstract plays a role both in everyday life and in academic research.

**Keywords:** Reality; Monism; Dualism; Pluralism; Monadism; Atomism; Criticism.

## 1. Introduction

Reality is the state of things as they actually exist, rather than as they may appear or might be imagined. <sup>[1]</sup> In a wider definition, reality includes everything that is and has been, whether or not it is observable or comprehensible. A still broader definition includes everything that has existed, exists, or will exist.

## 2. Theory of Reality

Philosophers, mathematicians, and other ancient and modern thinkers, such as Aristotle, Plato, Frege, Wittgenstein, and Russell, have made a distinction between thought corresponding to reality, coherent abstractions (thoughts of things that are imaginable but not real), and that which cannot even be rationally thought. Reality is often contrasted with what is imaginary, delusional, (only) in the mind, dreams, what is false, what is fictional, or what is abstract. At the same time, what is abstract plays a role both in everyday life and in academic research.

### 2.1. Monism

Monism is the view that attributes oneness or singleness to a concept (e.g., existence). Substance monism is the philosophical view that a variety of existing things can be explained in terms of a single reality or substance. <sup>[2]</sup> Another definition states that all existing things go back to a source that is distinct from them (e.g., in Neoplatonism everything is derived from The One). <sup>[3]</sup> This is often termed priority monism, and is the view that only one thing is ontologically basic or prior to everything else. Monism is of two types:

#### 2.1.1. Abstract Monism

Abstract monism, adhered to by people such as Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), is the belief in "one thing," which holds that the entirety of reality is reducible to one substance, and that any diversity of reality consists merely in different modes or aspects of this one substance. Indian philosopher Shankar also talk about the abstract monism. He said, Brahman is the only absolute reality and the universe is fictitious. There is no existence of pluralism. Brahman and Lives are homogenate. Brahman created the universe from 'Maya' and 'Maya' is the ultimate fate of the universe.

**Criticism:** Spinoza's abstract monism has been criticized which is given below:

1. Spinoza has denied the existence of us as he claimed that the universe of our experience is fictive.
2. It is unfair to distinct monism and pluralism or the harmony. Monism disclosed through pluralism

### 2.1.2. Concrete Monism

Concrete monism, represented by philosophers such as Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716), is the belief in "one category," which holds that there is only one kind of thing, while there are many different individual things or substances within this category. According to the German philosopher Hegel (1770-1831), universe is not fictive, the universe depends on absolute soul and the absolute soul depends on the universe. God and the universe is truth. All substances of the universe are the part of God. According to this theory God exists in and out of the universe. So, this theory is also called Panentheism.

**Criticism:** Concrete monism of Hegel is not also a satisfactory theory so this is also criticized by the next philosophers. For the reaction of Hegel's idealism many philosophers created many doctrines.

### 2.1.3. Monotheism

Monotheism has been defined as the belief in the existence of one god or in the oneness of God [4] as opposed to polytheism and pantheism.

## 2.2. *Dualism*

In philosophy of mind, dualism or duality is the position that mental phenomena are, in some respects, non-physical, or that the mind and body are not identical. Thus, it encompasses a set of views about the relationship between mind and matter, and between subject and object, and is contrasted with other positions, such as physicalism and inactivism, in the mind–body problem. Dualism is closely associated with the thought of René Descartes (1641), which holds that the mind is a nonphysical—and therefore, non-spatial—substance. Descartes clearly identified the mind with consciousness and self-awareness and distinguished this from the brain as the seat of intelligence. Hence, he was the first to formulate the mind–body problem in the form in which it exists today. Aristotle shared Plato's view of multiple souls and further elaborated a hierarchical arrangement, corresponding to the distinctive functions of plants, animals, and people: a nutritive soul of growth and metabolism that all three shares; a perceptive soul of pain, pleasure, and desire that only people and other animals share; and the faculty of reason that is unique to people only.

### **Criticism**

There is no doubt that the nature of dualism bubbling to the general people because we experience about substance and mind. But the importance of dualism is very narrow to the philosophers. Substance or body and mind are the two distinct entities but they can interact upon each other. But how they can interact upon each other. Descartes took help to the Pineal gland which is a substance but how it can be joined body and mind is not clear in the discussion of dualism.

### 2.2.1. Ditheism

Ditheism is the belief in or theory of the existence of two gods or of two original principles, one God and one evil. This theory is viewed in ancient Parshi and Israel. They think the dark is the look of evil and bad things and light is the look of God or good things.

### 2.3. *Pluralism*

Pluralism is a term used in philosophy, meaning "doctrine of multiplicity", often used in opposition to monism ("doctrine of unity") and dualism ("doctrine of duality").

In metaphysics, pluralism is a doctrine that there is more than one reality, while realism holds that there is but one reality, that may have single objective ontology or plural ontology. In one form, it is a doctrine that many substances exist, in contrast with monism which holds existence to be a single substance, often either matter (materialism) or mind (idealism), and dualism believes two substances, such as matter and mind, to be necessary.

In ontology, pluralism refers to different ways, kinds, or modes of being. For example, a topic in ontological pluralism is the comparison of the modes of existence of things like 'humans' and 'cars' with things like 'numbers' and some other concepts as they are used in science.

#### 2.3.1. Materialistic Pluralism or atomism

Atomism is a natural philosophy that developed in several ancient traditions. The atomists theorized that nature consists of two fundamental principles: atom and void. Unlike their modern scientific namesake in atomic theory, philosophical atoms come in an infinite variety of shapes and sizes, each indestructible, immutable and surrounded by a void where they collide with the others or hook together forming a cluster. Clusters of different shapes, arrangements, and positions give rise to the various macroscopic substances in the world. References to the concept of atomism and its atoms are found in ancient India and ancient Greece. In the West, atomism emerged in the 5th century BCE with Leucippus and Democritus. In India the Jain, Ajivika and Carvaka schools of atomism may date back to the 4th century BCE. The Nyaya and Vaisheshika schools later developed theories on how atoms combined into more complex objects. Whether Indian culture influenced Greek or vice versa or whether both evolved independently is a matter of dispute. <sup>[5]</sup>

#### 2.3.2. Spiritualistic Pluralism or Monadism

German philosopher Leibniz (1646-1716) was the pioneer of spiritualistic pluralism. According to Leibniz the universe is not made by materials but the absolute reality or thing. According to Greek materialists argued that the universe is made of material substance. But Leibniz denied this argument he told the universe

is made of absolute things. These active things are the principle things of the universe. These are vast, active, in severable and spiritual.

### 2.3.3. Pragmatic Pluralism

William James (1842-1910), is the forerunner of pragmatic pluralism. Criticizing Hegel's monism, he claimed that the universe is not created by God or the absolute things. If it the universe seems to be blocked. There will be no independence and harmony. He assumed that the universe is the unity of vast materials. Variation is the main characteristic of the universe. These various materials didn't make harmony together. James with his pragmatic mind had tried to observe the nature of the universe.

### 2.3.4. Neo-Realists Pluralism

Neo-realist's pluralism is the opposite of idealism. Neo-realists have criticized the monism of the idealists and told that the universe has an active and independent reality. There are mind and independent materials in the universe. According to them there is no organic unity in the world the vast of the reality is true. Some of them believed that not mind or absolute things are the prime thing of the universe but only the neutral entities which somewhere are physical and somewhere are seemed to be mental.

### **Criticism:**

The fundamental function and the discussion of its characteristics insist that, according to this theory the universe is the unity of innumerable substances. This theory has numbers of criticisms too.

Firstly, atomism is one kind of materialism. All misattributes of materialism are within this. This theory is characteristically valued, so this theory cannot describe body and mind logically.

Secondly, Pragmatic pluralism represented the whole universe dispersedly but there is a harmony between the things of the universe. There is a harmony in the disharmony.

### **3. Conclusion**

Reality is often contrasted with what is imaginary, delusional, (only) in the mind, dreams, what is false, what is fictional, or what is abstract. At the same time, what is abstract plays a role both in everyday life and in academic research. For instance, causality, virtue, life, and distributive justice are abstract concepts that can be difficult to define, but they are only rarely equated with pure delusions. Both the existence and reality of abstractions are in dispute: one extreme position regards them as mere words; another position regards them as higher truths than less abstract concepts. This disagreement is the basis of the philosophical problem of universals. The truth refers to what is real, while falsity refers to what is not. Fictions are considered not real.

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