

ISSN 0975-8461

Philosophy and the Life-world

Vidyasagar University Journal of Philosophy

UGC-Care Enlisted Journal



VOLUME : 23

2020-2021

Ethics of Debate: An Indian Perspective

Philosophy of Grammar : Some Reflections

Putnam on the Magical Theory of Reference

**The Nature of Self / Soul in Existentialism and Hindu
Philosophical Systems: A Brief Comparative Estimate**

Abortion and Morality: An Interest Based Approach

Is Perceptual Experience a Kind of Perceptual Belief?

**Possibility of Complex Phenomenal State in Consciousness:
A Philosophical Debate**

Education of Women: Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi

মহামারী প্রতিরোধে যোগের ভূমিকা

রাসেলীয় গাণিতিক যুক্তিবিজ্ঞান : একটি পর্যালোচনা

Philosophy and the Life-world

UGC-Care Enlisted Journal

ISSN: 0975-8461

Vidyasagar University Journal of Philosophy

VOLUME : 23
2020-2021



Department of Philosophy
Vidyasagar University

Medinipur-721 102 ■ West Bengal ■ India

Philosophy and the Life-world

Volume : 23

CONTENTS

Ethics of Debate: An Indian Perspective Raghunath Ghosh	9
Philosophy of Grammar : Some Reflections D. N. Tiwari	16
Putnam on the Magical Theory of Reference Kanti Lal Das	34
The Nature of Self / Soul in Existentialism and Hindu Philosophical Systems:A Brief Comparative Estimate V. N. Sheshagiri Rao	45
Abortion and Morality: An Interest Based Approach Tapan Kumar De and Suparna Nandi	55
Is Perceptual Experience a Kind of Perceptual Belief? Sumana Bera	67
Possibility of Complex Phenomenal State in Consciousness: A Philosophical Debate Bharat Malakar	77
Education of Women: Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi Nilava Patra	86
মহামারী প্রতিরোধে যোগের ভূমিকা দুপেত্র চন্দ্র মাস ও বিপ্লব বারিক	93
রাসেলীয় গাণিতিক যুক্তিবিজ্ঞান : একটি পর্যালোচনা অমিত পান	100
Contributors	107

Contributors

- Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, Senior Fellow, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, India.
- Prof. Devendra Nath Tiwari, Professor, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi-221005, Uttar Pradesh, India.
- Prof. Kantilal Das, Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal, Dist. Darjeeling-734013, West Bengal, India.
- Prof. V.N. Sheshagiri Rao, Professor, Department of Philosophy, Mysore University, Mysore-570005, Karnataka, India.
- Prof. Tapan Kumar De, Professor, Department of Philosophy, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore -721102, West Bengal
- Smt. Suparna Nandi, Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Philosophy, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore-721102, West Bengal.
- Dr. Sumana Bera, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore -721102, West Bengal
- Dr. Bharat Malakar, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Mahishadal Girls' College, Mahishadal-721628, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, India
- Shri Nilava Patra, Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Philosophy, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore-721102, West Bengal
- Prof. Bhupendra Chandra Das, Professor, Department of Philosophy, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore-721102, West Bengal
- Shri Biplab Barik, Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Philosophy, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore-721102, West Bengal
- Shri Amit Pan, Assistant Professor, Government General Degree College, Dantan-II, Kashmuli, Poralda, Paschim Midnapore-721445, West Bengal.

Putnam on the Magical Theory of Reference

Kanti Lal Das

Abstract: The concept of reference is the main contention of epistemology and metaphysics in general and semantics in particular. It is through the reference of the linguistic expressions that one may come to know about the world or reality or ontology. It has been acknowledged that language does refer and the referential function of language is helpful to know about reality. However, the paradigm of reference remains a bone of contention to the philosophers. Putnam uses the metaphor 'brains in a vat' to expose the magical theory of reference. According to Putnam, the magical theory of reference is a big default of reference. He, therefore, attempts to overcome the default of reference through the analysis of the metaphor 'brains in a vat'. The main strategy of this paper is to exemplify the philosophical insight and significance of the metaphor 'brains in a vat' while solving the problem of reference.

Keywords: epistemology, metaphysics, reference, brains in a vat, linguistic expression.

Hilary Putnam, (1926 -2016) the proponent of internal realism, uses the metaphor 'Brains in a vat' to solve the problem of reference *in the realm of metaphysics and epistemology*. Reference is the key issue in epistemology, metaphysics, and in the philosophy of language, particularly in semantics. In the case of reference, language plays a pivotal role. The simple truth is that *language does refer to*. There is no question about the referential function of language. But the serious philosophical and epistemological questions are: what does language refer to? What is the locus of language? Is language reference? Is the language reference is something different from language? Is language refers to something extra-linguistically? Are language and the object as refereed by language different? Is reference *is* independent of the mind? Is reference *is* ontologically neutral? These are some serious philosophical questions that need to be taken care of. Further, the concepts of truth and meaning are associated with the concept of reference. Linguistic philosophers, in general, have attempted to solve the problem of meaning and truth by reference. The world or reality as such is represented by reference. Thus the issue about the relationship between *language and reality, language and ontology* is taken care of by the whole host of linguistic philosophers. As the epistemological and metaphysical foundation is dictated by reference, it seizes significant ground of philosophy. Considering the significance of