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RESEARCH ARTICLE**Vol. IV, Issue I, August 2021****Title- APPEARANCE AND REALITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
EARLY GREEK PHILOSOPHER & GERMAN PHILOSOPHER**

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Abstract:

Appearance is an external perception. Reality is the totality of what is and opposed to what merely seems to be. The contrast between appearance and reality is based on the distinction between the way things seem to be and the way they are. In our daily life when we look at a tree from some distance it appears like small but when we look at that tree from nearer than it appears big. So, here we see that the previous appearance of the tree is just an appearance it is not reality. But in the later, we can see that the tree looks big it is the real image of a tree. Because we know that the size of a tree is big. Like this in our life we may also experience many things, but all things are not real. Everything may be change. The problem of appearance and reality begins from the ancient period. Parmenides is the chief exponent of the difference between appearance and reality or in his language Being or non-being or becoming. This paper studies the appearance and reality with special reference to the early Greek and German philosophers. Philosophers have different viewpoints regarding the appearance and the reality. Some says that there is a difference between appearance and reality, though some says that there is no difference between appearance and reality. It has been observed that the dichotomy between appearance and reality begins from the ancient Greek philosophy.

Keywords: appearance, reality, Greek philosopher, German philosopher, dichotomy etc.

The problem of appearance and reality stars from the ancient period. Early Greek philosophers were mainly concerned with the nature of the ultimate reality. They were primarily engaged with the question- What is the basic stuff out of which the universe is constituted? Whether the ultimate reality is static or

dynamic? Various philosophers have argued for different viewpoints for this problem. Some sat that reality is static while some others argues that reality is in a static or contradict flux. The problem of change and permanent in early Greek philosophy is also known as the problem of being and becoming.

While philosophers like Heraclitus consider reality to be flux, the Eleatic philosophers like Parmenides and Zeno think that reality is characterized by flexibility. The Eleatic philosophers like Parmenides and Zeno employ dialectical reason to establish the impossibility of plurality and motion. Heraclitus disagrees with Thales, Anaximander, and Pythagoras about the nature of the ultimate substance, but instead he claims that the nature of everything is change itself. He accepts the view that change is reality, and stability is appearance. He distinguishes between sense and reason, and places truth in rational cognition. The illusion of permanence he ascribes to the senses. It is by reason that we rise to the knowledge of the law of Becoming. Parmenides however says that permanent is fundamental and change is a mere appearance. He makes the distinction between appearance and reality. But he does not use the term appearance and reality. Instead, he uses these terms in different names like sense and reason, Being and not-being and becoming.

Parmenides makes a distinction between appearance and reality. But he uses these terms in different name- sense and reason or being and not-being or becoming. The central theme of Parmenides is that “only Being is not being cannot be.”¹ He argues that the every-day perception of reality of the physical world (as described in *doxa*) is mistaken, and that the reality of the world is ‘One Being’ (as described in *Alethia*). This is “single, ingenerated, undivided whole, throughout, one and unchanging.”² Actually, under ‘The Way of Opinion’, Parmenides sets out a contrasting, but more conventional view of the world thereby becomes an early exponent of the duality of appearance and reality. For him, the phenomena of movement and change are simply appearances of a static, eternal reality. Parmenides is the chief exponent of the distinction between appearance and reality. He makes a distinction between Sense and Reason. For him, the world which is present to us by the sense is the world of falsity and appearance of Becoming, of not-being. True and veritable Being is known to us only by reason, by thought. For him, the senses are the source of all illusion and error. Truth lies only in Reason. Being is reality and not-being or becoming is unreal.

Parmenides claims that the truth (reality) cannot be known through sensual perception. Only pure reason will result in the understanding of the truth of the world. Thus, we find the dichotomy of Being and not-Being, *is* and *is not*, unchanging and motion, truth and opinion, pure reason, and senses and finally reality and appearance in Parmenides. Being is reality and motion is appearance. Being is known through the pure reason and motion is known through the senses. Another important thinker of the Eleatic school is Zeno. He supports Parmenides’ doctrine of Being. For Parmenides, the world of sense is illusory and false. The essentials of that world are two-multiplicity and change. True Being is absolutely one, which has no plurality or multiplicity. Being is static and unchangeable, which has no motion. Multiplicity and motion are the two characteristics of the false world of sense.

Zeno supports Parmenides view by showing that multiplicity and motion are impossible. Like Zeno, Plato is also influenced by Parmenides. For Eleatics, the One and many cannot be separated. Every unity must be a unity of the many. The Absolute must therefore be neither an abstract One, nor an abstract many.

¹Brumbaugh, Robert S., *The Philosopher Of Greece, etc.*, p.51.

² *Ibid.*, p.52.

It must be a many in one. Being cannot totally exclude not-being. They are, just as much as the One and the many, which mutually involve each other. The being of anything is the not-being of its opposite. The being of light is the not-being of darkness. All being, therefore, has not-being in it.

Plato applies this principle of One/Many/Permanent/Change in his theory of Ideas. The absolute reality, the world of Ideas, is many, since there are many Ideas, but it is one, because the Ideas are not isolated units, but members of a single organized system. There is, in fact, a hierarchy of Ideas. Just as the one Idea presides over many individual things of which it is the common element, so one higher Idea presides over many lower Ideas, and is the common element in them. For Plato, Ideas of Universal is real, Ideas of is not real. He makes a distinction between the sensory world and the world of reality. Plato adopts the view of Heraclitus that there is an absolute Becoming, and he identifies it with the world of sense, which contains nothing stable and permanent, but is in a constant flow. The Idea always is, and never becomes; the thing of sense always becomes, and never is. For this reason, in the opinion of Plato, no knowledge of the world of sense is possible. It is not possible for one to gather knowledge of that which changes from moment to moment. For Plato, knowledge is possible only when the subject of knowledge stands fixed before the mind, is permanent and changeless. The only knowledge, then, is knowledge of the Idea. Plato, in his epistemology and ontology, adopts the dichotomy of appearance and reality. He, in his epistemology, draws a separation between 'knowledge' and 'belief' or 'opinion'.

According to Plato, knowledge is linked to truth and opinions are untruth. Plato, in his book *Republic* expounds the distinction between knowledge and opinion as different 'powers' or 'faculties' from which he draws the conclusion that they must have different objects. Plato goes on to explain this alleged difference in the objects of knowledge and opinion by saying that knowledge relates to what is, while the opinion relates to what 'is and is not.' He says that "The main contrast is between knowledge, dealing with the intelligible realm (*episteme-noeton*), and opinion (*doxa*) dealing with what is here called the realm of change (*genesis*), i.e., the physical world"³. This inevitably leads to the distinction between reality and appearance. This also has paved the way for the introduction of the so called 'Forms', the 'eternal, unchanging, absolute realities' which are the objects of knowledge, and they are different from the 'changing and perishing' appearances which are the objects of opinion. What is involved here is a fundamental contrast between the sensible world, the ordinary world revealed to us by the five senses and a separate world of intelligence- a world whose objects must be apprehended by the intellect alone.

Plato further draws a distinction in the realm of sensible and intelligible worlds. The sensible world is divided between the imagination which consists of faint images of things and events in the memory or in the dream. In the sphere of perception, we come across things and events by means of our sense perception. Senses give us objects in terms of their coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be. The sphere of imagination and perception can never give us the 'knowledge' of objects, it is always an 'opinion or belief' about the objects. Plato's rejection of the senses as a source of 'knowledge' comes out with clarity when we see the method of abstraction is applied in it. The whole purpose of Plato's curriculum is to "draw the mind away from the senses"⁴ towards the pure experience of *a priori* reasoning. For this purpose, the intelligible world

³ Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee, (Penguin Books, 1987), p. 404.

⁴ Singh, R.P., *Kant and Hegel: Methodology, Ontology, Epistemology, Dialectic & Ought* (New Delhi: Galaxy Publications, 1990) P.112.

is over-emphasized. The intelligible world is divided into the realms of understanding and reason. The understanding consists of the knowledge of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, physics, etc. This sphere draws the mind upward and forces it to argue with what is extremely abstract and unempirical kind like number, etc., and will not be put off by any attempt to confine the argument to collections of visible or tangible objects. The highest abstraction, in Plato, consists in the sphere of reason which is the expression of wisdom. Wisdom is defined by Plato as the knowledge of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. This sphere is called by Plato as the sphere of eternal reality, the reality unaffected by change and decay. And this brings us to the decisive step in Plato's reasoning that makes it an example of the method of abstraction.

Thus, Plato divides the world into two distinct aspects: the intelligible world of forms and the perceptual world we see around us. The perceptual world consists of imperfect copies of the intelligible forms or ideas. These forms are unchangeable and perfect and are only comprehensible using the intellect or understanding, i.e., a capacity of the mind that does not include sense-perception or imagination. So, in the sphere of epistemology and ontology, Plato adopts the dualism between intelligible and the perceptual world, between reality and appearance. The above Greek philosophers agree on this point that the things, which we know through our senses, are appearance but which is grasped by reason, is reality. Thus, the concept of appearance and reality starts with the ancient Greek philosophy, which Kant receives as historical heritage. Kant discusses the problem of appearance and reality in his ontological and epistemological positions. Kant draws the distinction between noumenon, thing-in-itself and phenomenon. The noumenon and thing-in-itself are synonymous term in Kant's philosophy. But there is a basic difference between them. Noumenon is the spiritualist aspect and thing-in-itself is materialist aspect of his ontology. Thing-in-itself is the ground and cause of appearances. Sensibility and understanding constitute the phenomenal knowledge. Appearance and reality are possible in the sphere of phenomenon. But noumenon and thing-in-itself are free from the applicability of the categories of understanding.

Aristotle criticizes Plato's theory of Ideas. He says that the main problem of Plato's theory of Ideas lies in first seeing that existence is not reality, but then going on to imagine that the reality is an existence. For Aristotle, there is no difference between the world of sense and the world of reality. For him, the world of sense is a part of reality. For him, universal is neither substance nor particular. Substance must be a compound of the two; it must be the universal in the particular. He accepts the reality as the unity of 'form' and 'matter'. According to Aristotle, 'sense-perception', 'wisdom' and 'intuition' are the sources of knowledge. In his view, knowledge begins from experience, but it is not complete. Aristotle talks about three kinds of objects of 'sense-experience'. He says that the term 'object of sense' covers three kinds of objects, two kinds of which are, in our language, directly perceptible while the remaining one is only incidentally perceptible. For him, "... experience is, the knowledge of individual out of universal, and actions and production are all concerned with individuals"⁵. Aristotle holds that 'experience' is indispensable condition of acquiring knowledge.

For Aristotle, 'Individuals' or 'Substance' is the first object of knowledge. Individual is not particular, but it is constituted by 'form' and 'matter' both. Aristotle regards substance as category. By categories, Aristotle means the most fundamental and universal predicates which may be affirmed of anything. He classifies categories as follows: 'substance', 'quality', quantity, relation, space, time, position,

⁵ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book One, The Works of Aristotle, Vol. I. ed. William Benton, (Encyclopedia Britannica Inc, 1952).

state, activity, and passivity. But later, he opines that only substance is the category and others are its predicate. He defines substance, "...substance, in the truest sense and primary and most definite sense of the world, is that which neither predicable of subject nor present in a subject, for instance the individual man or horse"⁶. He divides substance in three kinds. For him, 'immovable substance' or 'pure form' is 'God', who can have knowledge of everything very clearly through intuition. He accepts the reality as the unity of 'form' and 'matter'.

Descartes is influenced by Plato and Aristotle. Both Plato and Descartes accept 'reason' as the only source of knowledge and reject the role of 'experience' in the acquisition of knowledge. But the difference between Plato and Aristotle lies in the fact that they have different ontological positions. For Plato and Aristotle, ideas are real, but for Descartes, God, mind, and matter are real. For him, God is the absolute substance; mind and matter are created by as relative substances. Descartes defines a substance as a thing that does not depend on anything else for its existence. Substance is self-subsisting thing. If we go by this definition of substance, then, we have found that God is the only substance and attribute, and mode are dependent upon God for their existing. Apart from God as the substance, there are also two substances mind and matter. But they are dependent upon God, the only substance in the world. Mind has the property of thought, while extension is the property of the body/matter. Elaborating mind and body as independent substances.

Descartes accepts the independent existence of matter and mind both, he, nevertheless accepts the supremacy of mind over matter. Epistemologically he declares that mind can know only its own ideas, which are the intermediaries between consciousness and external world. Descartes, in his philosophy first negates the existence of material world, but afterwards he accepts the existence of self, God and then the material World. According to Descartes, there is one substance i.e., God and the idea of God is innate. Locke criticizes Descartes innate idea and says that substance is unknown and unknowable. According to Locke, 'sense-experience' is the only source of knowledge. Locke rejects rationalism.

For Locke 'sense-experience' is the only source of knowledge, which he divides into two kinds of i.e., sensation and reflection. For him the ideas of sensible qualities like yellow, white, heat, are produced by sensation. He says that "This great source of most of the ideas we have, depending wholly upon our senses, and derived by them to the understanding 'I', I call sensation"⁷. According to Locke, there are some ideas which are produced by the internal perceptions of mind. These internal perceptions, for Locke, are reflections. For Locke mind is not the source of ideas as it is like 'white paper'. We gather our knowledge through experience. He divides qualities into primary and secondary. He holds that primary ideas are inseparable from body or matter as such viz. solidity, extension, figure, motion or rest and number, while secondary qualities are nothing in the objects themselves but power to produce various sensations in us by their primary qualities viz, the bulk, figure, texture, and motion etc. While stating the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, Locke says, "... the ideas of primary qualities of bodies are resemblance of them, and their patterns do really exist in bodies themselves, but ideas produced in us by these secondary qualities have resemblance of them at all"⁸.

⁶ Aristotle, *On Categories, From the Work of Aristotle*, Vol.I, p. 06.

⁷ Locke, John, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed, John W. Yolton, (London: Dent, 1961), p.34.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Locke accepts the material objects and mind both. In his view, mind can know only its own ideas, it cannot probe into the external material reality, because it is not given in 'sense-experience'. The fact is that unless there is an interaction between mind and body, mind cannot know body. For Locke substance is unknown and unknowable because they are not perceived by 'sense-experience'. Locke accepts the existence of external material world but at the same time he declares it to be unknown and unknowable which paves the way for mysticism and religion. There is a similarity between Locke's concept of substance and Kant's concept of thing-in-itself. For Locke substance is unknown and unknowable like this Kant's thing-in-itself also is unknown and unknowable, thus they pave the way for mysticism and religion and negate the possibility of the knowledge of objective reality.

Berkeley criticizes Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities. Berkeley says that primary and secondary qualities are dependent on objects. Solidity, motion etc. are not possible without color and test. For Berkeley 'sense-experience' is the source of knowledge. For him, mind can know the ideas only. He denies the notion of innate ideas. For Berkeley the external material objects are nothing but it is composed of sensible qualities, and he considers all qualities as dependent on mind. Consequently, the material reality, in his view, is mental existence. He says that "I do not argue against the existence of anyone, anything that we can apprehend either by senses or by reflection. That the things I see with my eyes and touch with my hands do exist, really exist, I make not the least question. The only thing whose existence, we deny is that which philosopher calls matter or corporeal substance. And in doing of this, there is no damage done to the rest of the mankind, who I dare to say, will never miss it. The atheist indeed will want the color of an empty name to support his impiety"⁹. Berkeley denies the existence of the material/reality, which is unknowable.

For Berkeley what is unknown, and unknowable cannot exist. While rejecting Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities, Berkeley says that color, sounds and rest of the sensible secondary qualities had no existence without the mind, they stripped this substratum of material substance of their qualities, leaving only the primary qualities over figure, motion, and such like, which they still conscience to exist otherwise than a spirit or mind which then, it follows that we have no longer any reason to suppose being of matter.

For Berkeley objects exist when they are being perceived. That is to say, "To be is to be perceived" '*Esse est percipi*' is the basis of the philosophy of Berkeley. He says that "The table I write on, I say exists, that is I see and feel it; and if I were out of my study, should say it existed meaning thereby that if I was not in my study might perceive it, or that some other spirit, actually does perceive it. There was an odour, that is it was smell, there was a sound, that is, it was heard; a colour, a figure, and was perceived by sight or touch. This is all that I can understand by these and the like expressions"¹⁰.

Hume develops Locke's empiricism in his book *Treatise of Human Nature*. The chief problems that occupy Hume are those of the origin and nature of knowledge. For him, all knowledge comes from impressions and ideas. Our knowledge is limited to the world of phenomenon, we know nothing about

⁹ Berkeley, George, *The Principles of Human Knowledge, From George Berkeley's Philosophical Work, Intro and Notes by M. R. Ayers*, (London, Melbourne: Pub. Everyman Library, Dent, 1975), p. 73.

¹⁰ Berkeley, George, *The Principles of Human Knowledge, From George Berkeley's Philosophical Work, Intro and Notes by M. R. Ayers, etc.*, P. 78.

ultimate's, substances, soul, external world. Ideas are faint copies of impressions and impressions are lively perceptions. He says that "All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, impressions and ideas."¹¹

Like Berkeley, Hume also denies the existence of matter. For him, we have no impression of matter, therefore, matter does not exist. Like this, he also denies the existence of soul, God. For him, mind is a series of ideas, feeling and volitions. There is no permanent self because we have no impression of any permanent soul. For him, God does not exist because we have no impression of God. We believe in God to fulfill our aspirations. The idea of God is man-made. He rejects all metaphysical entities. He rejects universal and necessary truths. He admits only particular and contingent truths, which are given by experience.

From the above discussion we can say that, early Greek philosophers are mainly concerned with what are reality and the nature of reality. In modern period, philosophers discuss about the knowledge of reality. Rationalist philosophers claims that the ultimate reality is known through reason; what the empiricist philosophers consider that the ultimate reality is known through experience. Appearance is something which is opposed to reality in Kant. For him, there is a difference between appearance and reality or between phenomenon and noumenon. Noumenon constitutes realm of the spiritual wherein lies the basis of Kantian morality and it is free from the applicability of the categories like quantity, quality, cause effect etc. Phenomenon is the sphere of actual and possible scientific knowledge wherein the categories have their applicability. Kant writes, "Appearances, so far as they are thought as objects according to the unity of the categories are called phenomena. But if I postulate things which are mere objects of understanding and which, nevertheless, can be given as such to an intuition.... Such things would be entitled noumena."¹² For him, when we want to know anything, the concept of object is required, and this cannot be formed without the use of categories. According to Kant, all our knowledge pre-supposes a unity of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness pre-supposes the consciousness of object, and consciousness of object pre-supposes the use of categories. These categories are applied to the world of phenomenon only. It is not applicable to the world of noumenon. For any kind of knowledge sense experience and reason both are required. We have experience about the world of phenomenon only. We have no sense experience about noumenal world. That's why Kant says that noumenal world is unknown and unknowable.

Hegel criticizes Kantian unknown and unknowable thing-in-itself. For Hegel, appearance is related to reality. Appearance is like a screen before reality. Reality is one with appearance, through appearance Reality express itself. Hegel to overcome the Kantian distinction between thing-in-itself and the appearance or between the reality and the appearance draws the analogy of force and its expressions. Just as the force revealed through its expressions, similarly the thing-in-itself has revealed through its appearances. He criticizes Kantian unknown and unknowable thing-in-itself. For Hegel, there is no unknown and unknowable thing-in-itself behind the veil of appearances. Though thing-in-itself and appearances are opposite, but they carry each other within them, and they are only one unity. Hegel agree with Kant in the point that supersensible world is something that exists beyond the sensuous world. Like Kant, Hegel never

¹¹ Hume, David, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book I, ed. By D. G. C. Macnabb, (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1987), p. 175.

¹² Kant, Immanuel, (1973), *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by N.K. Smith, London: The Macmillan Press, pp. 265-6.

says that supersensible world is unknown and unknowable. For Hegel, supersensible world is the true world. Our consciousness cannot grasp this supersensible world. To overcome the distinction between appearance and reality Hegel takes the help of logic. In the deductive logic two syllogisms are connected by a middle term, similarly Hegel applies 'appearance' as the middle term between thing-in-itself and appearance. This middle term unites the two extremes thing-in-itself and appearance.

Hegel has employed the method of Dialectic to overcome the opposition between Appearance and Reality. He tries to reach absolute truth with the help of dialectical method. For him, if man wants to know the Absolute, then he must have knowledge about his own self. Man is the vehicle of self-knowledge. Through this self-knowledge, man knows himself and his world as they really are. This self-knowledge is expressed in art, religion, and philosophy, which constitute the domain of absolute Spirit. He applies dialectical method not only in the field of epistemology and ontology but also in the sphere of morality as well. He says that the transition from abstract right to morality and from morality to the ethical life is through the application of his dialectical method.

According to Hegel, through self-consciousness we know the reality. Man is the vehicle of this self-comprehension of spirit or the *Geist*. Therefore, that the spirit knows itself requires that man come to know him and the world as they really are as an emanation of the cosmic spirit. This self-knowledge is expressed in art, religion and philosophy that constitute the domain of the Absolute spirit. There is a form of life which man must attain to be an adequate expression of the cosmic spirit. That form of life, Hegel believes is the social form of life. Man cannot live a life of his own. He must live in a collective form of life. That is, he lives in the family or in a society and finally he must be a part of a larger life called, the state. For self-realization freedom is required. Man can realize himself when he thinks freely without any bayous or anything.

After that Bradley also says that there is a relation between appearance and reality. For him, Reality is one organic whole. It expresses itself in appearances. For Bradley, Reality is above all relations. For him, Reality is supra-relational and supra personal. For him, the Absolute Reality is one. He accepts the existence of the thing of the external world. For him, the objects of the earth are really appearance of reality. The appearances of daily life are not unreal, but they are partially real. Reality is unintelligible without appearances. Appearances belong to reality. There are degrees of reality in appearances.

In conclusion we can say that different philosophers have different viewpoints regarding the difference between appearance and reality. Some says that there is a difference between appearance and reality, though some says that there is no difference between appearance and reality. We have found that the dichotomy between appearance and reality begins with the ancient Greek philosophy. Early Greek philosophers were mainly concerned with the nature of the ultimate reality. Some philosophers say that reality is static while some others argue that reality is in a state of consistent flux. The problem of change and permanence in early Greek philosophy is also known as the problem of being and becoming. According to Heraclitus, change is reality, and stability is appearance. But for Parmenides, permanence is fundamental, and change is a mere appearance. He makes a distinction between appearance and reality. But he uses these terms in different name-sense and reason or being and not-being or becoming. Zeno supports Parmenides view by showing that multiplicity and motion are impossible. Like Zeno, Plato is also influenced by Parmenides. For Eleatics, the One and many cannot be an abstract One, nor an abstract

many. It must be a many in one. Being cannot totally exclude not-being. They are just as much as the One in many. Which mutually involve each other.

According to Kant, reason cannot resolve the gap between appearance and reality. Reason can provide only an idea of the unconditioned and it cannot present the unconditioned into reality and when reason tries to know the unconditioned, then there arises a conflict between the idea of the unconditioned and the reality of the conditioned. Kant regards this conflict as an antinomy and this gap remains in Kant's overall philosophical system. Hegel with the help of reason tries to resolve the gap between appearance and reality. Hegel has identified rational with real. For him reality is eternal, unchangeable and a systematic whole. For him, appearance and reality cannot be separated. They are opposed and yet they are identical. The key concept of Hegel is identity-in-difference or difference-in-identity. In this way, the barrier between appearance and reality is overcome in Hegel's philosophy. Appearance is a part of reality. Though there is a difference between appearance and reality, but it appears only in experience world. Reality is not separate from appearance. Appearance is a part of reality. Reality or God makes the appearance world and reality express its existence through the appearance world.

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