

**THE PERFECTLY TRUE KNOWLEDGE**

**By**

**James Theophilus Edwards, Jnr.**

Human beings are mystical in what they perceive as truth, which has caused them to become neglectful of what there really is. Perfection as we think we know it is a myth. In order for anything or anyone to be considered as perfect, two essentials need to exist. The first essential is the *purpose*<sup>1</sup> of that which is deemed perfect to be definite and flawless. The second essential is that which is deemed perfect is unique within its own *nature*<sup>2</sup>. Thus, for something to be perfect it should be impossible for it to be comparable or contrastable with anything. Hence, there cannot exist something that is perfect that has something similar in purpose or in nature.

If these two essentials are not realized, there will then be a realization of *relative perfection*<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, when there is a situation where the two essentials are realized, then there exists *absolute perfection*<sup>4</sup>.

Relative perfection is a situation of acceptance – it will be relative to something of a similar purpose or something of a similar nature. This relative perfection will prove itself to be imperfect, due to it being comparable and contrastable to something else, which is a breach of the essentials of perfection.

A thing is, thus, absolutely perfect whenever it is unique and complete within its purpose and nature. Absolute perfection exists through the realization of both essentials to perfection. With absolute perfection, there can be no substitute. Thus, whatever is absolutely perfect cannot be created, developed, or determined by anything that is imperfect. Hence, an entity that is absolutely perfect cannot be derived or established by

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘Purpose’ in this case refers to the function and expectations.

<sup>2</sup> The term ‘nature’ here is used to describe likeness and physicality (if any) within and of a particular entity, thing, or person.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Relative’ perfection speaks on things which do not constitute all, in any of the essentials labeled to experience perfection as it relates to the particular depiction of perfection that has been discussed.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the particular description of perfection that is being produced, Absolute perfection exists as a situation where both essentials of perfection are being realized. By this, it focuses on the uniqueness and impeccability of the *purpose* and *nature* of an entity.

anything but itself. Something that is absolutely perfect is self-unitary in all attributes. It will create itself, establish and function only by and within itself. Hence, an absolute entity cannot be influenced by any other. Leibniz stated that “*Perfection is the harmony of things, or the state where everything is worthy of being observed, that is, the state of agreement or identity in variety; you can even say that it is the degree of contemplability.*”<sup>5</sup> (PE, 18 May 1715, p. 233-4). Although I agree with him in some ways, Leibniz was looking at perfection as but a state of *natural equilibrium*<sup>6</sup> and not necessarily a state of absoluteness, which seems to be a typical observation by various philosophers. Leibniz’s argument does not represent the level of absolutism which I believe is necessary for there to be a feasible claim towards perfection.

Many thinkers, including myself, have agreed with Aristotle’s suggestion that “for something to be perfect it would be *complete*<sup>7</sup>; there would be nothing to add or subtract” – hence it would be of general completeness. This suggests that nothing we claim to know could ever be absolutely perfect. Neither you, I, “*God(s)*”<sup>8</sup>, the world, nor anything within our reality can I honestly identify as being perfect. However, it is within my

---

<sup>5</sup> This analysis of perfection was written by Leibniz in a letter to Christian Wolf and despite the letters having been shared, was not printed before the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The philosophies and arguments exchanged here widely disseminated in both Leibniz and Wolf’s writings proved to be influential, especially in the construction of the Monadology.

<sup>6</sup> Natural equilibrium suggests a state of balance within nature. However, this too cannot denote perfection as its state is one which holds potential for change, which in itself goes against the essentials of perfection.

<sup>7</sup> Complete in this sense refers to finality, hence suggesting fulfillment and flawlessness. Essentially from this definition of perfection, if something is complete there would be no need for any form of adjustment.

<sup>8</sup> The usage of God(s) here doesn’t refer to that of a particular religion. The term was contextualized to illustrate the extent and absoluteness to which perfection is being viewed, and given that most would tend to agree that all things except their God(s) is/are imperfect, it was used to show the non-association with that belief. After all, to some thinkers, “God is absolutely perfect; for perfection is nothing but amount of positive reality, in the strict sense, leaving out of account the limits or bounds in things which are limited. And there are no bounds, that is to say in God, perfection is absolutely infinite” (PE, “Monadology,” §41)

reason to suggest that there is only one thing that is possible for me to conceptualize as perfect: the *Truth*.<sup>9</sup>

The Truth is everything that is not explained and unexplained to mankind. It is the impeccable explanation for all situations and the absolute answers to all questions asked. The Truth is perfect and exists without any form of relativity as it has realized both essentials towards perfection.

The Truth holds the explanation to life and death, human existence and creation, time and space. It holds the explanation to nature and all its composites. The existence of the Truth lies beyond the current reality of human beings; hence, it cannot be distinguished by any human being. The Truth possesses the authentic explanation to all things, living and non-living. The Truth logically defines all situations, simple and complex.

The existence of the Truth is the lone entity of absolute perfection, and it is the genuine explanation of the genesis of life and inevitable climax of death. The Truth cannot be determined by anyone because it is not similar to anything else in existence. The Truth is determined by perfection, authenticity, logics, rationality and itself. Thus, it could be considered as the perfect authentic rational explanation for existence.

Many consider the Truth to be anything that is conceptualized as reality. They assume that Truth is any concept that is presumably real, but in fact, a man's reality is his own truth and as such it is 'non-general'. To them, Truth is not perfect; it is a conceived perception which makes it relative. If we should incorporate the Truth into our misguided

---

<sup>9</sup> I have referred to the Truth as an entity and not necessarily a subject of basic eventual fact. Thus, it does not refer to Truth in the common terminology of "true and false", but instead it could be classified as a being within itself.

perceptions on knowledge, we would thus realize that our knowledge is but only ignorance.

Knowledge requires “proofs” that were deduced on the judgement of particular individuals who will as such spike the “knowledge” now made with their own level of subjectivity from their personal understanding and individual reasoning. Hence, the typical depiction of knowledge that we consider as significant is relative to that of another. Therefore its credibility will not only be one that is questionable but also it will never be accurate as all these observations are subjected to errors.

Is it possible for there to be perfect belief? Belief is a perception that is conveyed as being Truth making it more of an acceptance, and if that is the situation then knowledge is the perfect acceptance or the perfect perception. Nevertheless, regardless of how the notion could be played with, the notion of knowledge from this aspect and interpretation will bring about a contradiction within its own self.

Human beings have, on most occasions, conducted themselves in a fashion suggesting or insinuating that they are knowledgeable – believing that they know. But most claims of knowledge are nothing more than accepting something as true. What, then, is it that we have accepted? It cannot be that we have accepted and replaced knowledge with knowledge, as this would only be depicting a contradiction. .

Then what is it that human beings have been posing to *know*<sup>10</sup> throughout their existence? What then is the reality that human beings think of themselves possessing? I

---

<sup>10</sup> The terms ‘Know’ and ‘Knowledge’ are one which I have taken in a stricter manner. Thus it doesn’t accommodate the basic premise to which knowledge is seen and refuses to accommodate the traditional view to something which is a “justified true belief. In essence, from an absolute perspective, knowledge cannot exist through mere justification.

agree and support Locke's distinction between that of 'assent' and that of 'knowledge'<sup>11</sup>. Despite him expounding on what testimonies he thought were knowledge from what were not, he still managed to point out the attachments between assents and faith. Still, it is unfortunate that he fell short in realizing that there is no knowledge for him to testify to.

If human beings gain their 'knowledge' through empirical evidence, wouldn't these evidences provide some form of subjectivity towards the information which is gathered? Also, if one should believe that his knowledge is based on reason, then who is he to say he knows and another knows not?

Basically, the battle regarding empiricism and rationalism is but a petty debate as none of the two armies have yet to understand the nature of knowledge opting instead to argue about the path to knowledge. Let us further observe knowledge from the philosophical perspective of John Locke. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he proposed that knowledge is a derivative of sensory institution and/or intuition leading him to suggest the following:

the greatest part of our knowledge depends upon deductions and intermediate ideas: and in those cases where we are fain to substitute assent instead of knowledge, and take propositions for true, without being certain they are so, we have need to find out, examine, and compare the grounds of their probability... (IV, xvii, 2).

However his argument is lacking in consistency as it totally disregarded induction, which is logically inapplicable. This led me to Bertrand Russell. Russell in his *Fact and Fiction* argued that "deduction is powerless without major premises, and that its major premises

---

<sup>11</sup> Throughout his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke made clear distinctions between knowledge and assent. In addition, he went on to identify the elaborate the route to which knowledge exists and stated it as being a measure of empiricism. "For if any one may, then, by the same reason, all propositions that are true, and the mind is capable ever of assenting to, may be said to be in the mind, and to be imprinted: since, if any one can be said to be in the mind, which it never yet knew, it must be only because it is capable of knowing it; and so the mind is of all truths it ever shall know..." (I. 1. 5., p. 40)

must therefore have some independent source” (Russell 1961, p. 44). Russell thought the conceptualization of deductive reasoning was more like child’s play and that induction is necessitated.

Nevertheless, I did not see either Locke or Russell providing a genuine measure of attaining knowledge, as they both seemingly lack a clear understanding of what knowledge is, and the base to which knowledge exists. In essence I honestly believe that the ideas of both deductive and inductive theories are derivatives of idle philosophies.

When I was first introduced to the thought that “if **S** knows that **P**, then **P** is true”<sup>12</sup>, where **S** being a knower and **P** being a proposition that is true, along with the infertile definition of knowledge which suggests that knowledge is a “justified true belief”<sup>13</sup>, I thought it all made sense. It was after that I realised the *misconceptions of both fallacies*.<sup>14</sup>

If I were to take the premises that are posed to entertain knowledge whereas: [**P** is true] → [**S** believes that **P**], one would realize that the main property within this is that of **P**, as **S**’s belief would be conditional towards **P**. In other words, it is as to say, **S** belief is given by the validity of **P**, thus making **S**’s position a subject of **P**’s status. Now, if this were to be true, no claims regarding **P** should produce a dispute. If another factor were to be placed within this equation, say **U**, where [**P** is true] → [**S** & **U** MUST believe that **P**], and for all cases where **S** and/or **U** fails in accepting **P**, then **P**, should be

---

<sup>12</sup> This statement was used to justify a definition towards knowledge, which suggests that for something to be known it must first be a belief which is justified and true, thus making it factual and irrefutable.

<sup>13</sup> This definition was initially used to Plato in the *Theaetetus* in describing knowledge. It has been both heavily acknowledged and criticized by many throughout the years. One of the most well known critique of this definition is that of Edmund Gettier, whom in his 1963 publication “Is justified True Belief Knowledge?” Gettier highlighted inconsistencies within the statement which he thought made the statement implausible. He himself went on to propose a counter argument which I did find plausible yet incomplete.

<sup>14</sup> The misconception of both fallacies refers to the errors which are being discussed with regards to the definition and illustrative justification of knowledge.

rejected to be true (but not necessarily false) which will as such compromise the confidence of doubtlessness within **P** which thus forces knowledge to take precedence. For example, if someone should look at a wall, suggest that the wall is green, and hold justifiable reasons in suggesting that the wall is green, then for it to be considered as knowledge all observers of that wall must all conclude that the colour of the wall is green. If at any time there arises an opposition by another observer in determining that the colour of the wall is indeed green, then the possibility for the wall to be known as green will thus be compromised. In essence, any debate whatsoever on a person, or thing, denotes lack of truth, hence, knowledge of that person or thing to which there is a debate.

So, let us test this idea with any possible situation of truth to see its applicability. By now I expect that one will realize this equation will never be satisfied where all parties will have a non-conflicting acknowledgement of a 'fact'. In essence, the naturalness of doubt has totally compromised the existence of knowledge if one were to observe knowledge as being justified true belief. In an effort for such a theory to be applicable, only one person or being would have to be in existence.

Thus, the misconceptions of both fallacies – in both definition and justification of knowledge -- suggest that knowledge is not a true justified belief but instead a justified misconception. Firstly, in observing these fallacies more in depth, I came to acknowledge the non-pragmatic approach which was taken upon crafting this definition. Logically, that which is true does not need justification or need be classified as a belief. A belief is but a mere perception, and by this, knowledge is subjective and inter-changeable with time and



people. Thus, a true belief cannot exist. Either it be objectively perfectly true or subjective and false – but defiantly not both.

Secondly, “if **S** knows that **P**, then **P** is true” is also a fallacy. It is inconsistent for **S** to know **P** and **S** not have a justifiable reason in accepting **P**. As such, it would be more fitting to say that if “**U** accepts **R**, then **R** is a belief<sup>15</sup>” and by this **U** would have justified reasons in accepting **R**, whether the reason is one that is conscious or not, but still, it would not make **R** essentially true, it would only make it a belief that is accepted.

Thus, I came to realize that knowledge as it is seen as a form, which I would like to describe as *paradigm acceptance*.<sup>16</sup> **U** should have adequate and justifiable reason(s) for accepting **R**, thus making **R** become a paradigm that is accepted with reasonable justification(s). Paradigm acceptances are of two kinds. The first type of paradigm acceptance is *social paradigm*<sup>17</sup> and the second is *natural paradigm*.<sup>18</sup> Social paradigm is rooted on the acceptance of concepts that have been socially embedded as a way of thought. Natural paradigm, on the other hand, is based on a more natural and individualistic platform that is perceived to exist through the natural capabilities of a person. In essence, natural paradigm is a combination of sensual and *a priori* institution.

---

<sup>15</sup> This statement outlines and substantiates the claim which stems from a previous claim suggesting that knowledge as it is understood is a belief. From this, it suggests that what we have thought of as being knowledge is a justifiable accepted paradigm that is not necessarily true, but instead it's a generally held belief.

<sup>16</sup> Paradigm Acceptance speaks in a general manner outlining the acceptance of generally accepted beliefs that has been claimed to be knowledge.

<sup>17</sup> A Social paradigm is that which has been accepted as knowledge but is not of one's own subjective observations. In that, it's of a cumulative nature which tends to exist throughout generations as “knowledge”, thus making it widely accepted and often times not debated on, but instead being indoctrinated to sustain its doctrinal existence. Also, social paradigms could be seen as rationalistic knowledge.

<sup>18</sup> Natural paradigm exists through an individual's subjective and judgmental observations. This is based on an individual's own interpretations and unlike a social paradigms, this is more of the nature of empiricism.

Ultimately, its interpretation is one of a similar liking to that of an empiricist, and to a small extent; something similar to that of ‘transcendental knowledge<sup>19</sup>’.

Things that are known [knowledge] are things that can be *proven*<sup>20</sup>. But what is proof? Can anything be proven? It is sadly unfortunate the way in which human beings go about thinking and providing proof. The methodology of human proof for knowledge is of a highly subjective and will inevitably create limitations whenever it becomes generalized. I also refuse to think of the idea that human beings growing to know. I do believe, however, that human beings can only grow and gain experience. However, I do not believe knowledge should be equated to experience.

Society dictates that knowledge must be in accordance with the paradigms of society, thus, society has drafted a parameter for the existence of knowledge which as such, has allowed the entire notion of knowledge to be a complete misconception to just about all who have had the thought of themselves being knowledgeable.

It is through the laws that govern society that a human being will be forced to accept, adapt and conform to what is given to him by his society. As such, the perception of knowledge would only become a reflection of societal directives, hence allowing me to conclude that society is one of the chief dictators of what is thought of by human beings as being knowledge.

Hence it is not necessary that people were born with or have acquired knowledge of any kind in any way. It is through the limitations and influences of society along with

---

<sup>19</sup> Transcendental knowledge is the theory of knowledge that was chiefly introduced by Immanuel Kant who saw knowledge as being a mixture of experience and *a priori* institutions.

<sup>20</sup> Determining events and/or situation through empirical-scientific analysis. Thus, it is claimed to be verified without doubt.

society's doctrines that human beings have acquired and built on conveyed ideologies that are being dictated to them.

If anything that is perfect is never possibly flawed and if human perceptions are centred around error, then because knowledge through its nature is perfect it can never be open to question or be flawed. Hence what I have observed and considered as "knowledge" to human beings is not knowledge, it's but mere intellectual ignorance.

Knowledge is Truth and the Truth is never relative. Truth is absolute which makes it perfect. Since it is not possible for human beings to know anything, then it can be concluded that the Truth is not known by any human being through their perception of what they think of knowledge to be.

It is however in the grasp of human beings to rationalize situations and deduce logical explanations. But irrespective that these deductions may be logical, they can never be the Truth. Yet these deductions have been and will continue to be accepted by human beings because it is human nature to accepting of things that are presented to them within the parameters and recommendations of society.

Therefore, it is through the power of the mind that human beings are able to be rational, and hence they are capable of understanding. Understanding is but only the climax of human accomplishments throughout their existence.

Human beings have lived a life that has been dominated by perceptions. They will conceptualize situations through observation within the realm of their society in an effort for them to deduce a universal understanding of what they have attempted to observe.

In essence the idea that is being coined by human beings as knowledge is nothing but mere perception. In extension, it is only through the physical entailments of human

beings that the perception of knowledge exists. These perceptions will be pronounced to human beings as reality and individual Truth to whoever holds the perception that is being generated.

These perceptions will present themselves unto human beings as Truth and hence as knowledge. However, this human reality is a perception that is neither true nor false. For this perception to be false it will need to be proven false. For something to be proven false there would be the assumptions that it is absolutely true, but can human beings identify Truth? No, they cannot. Human knowledge is then the acceptance of human's perception that is made into reality through the nature of human beings together with the influences of society.

Everything that human beings have thought of themselves as understanding and knowing are mere perceptions. Perceptions that will then become reality, Truth, and knowledge, thus making everything that is conceived by human beings to be but only a make believe existing reality.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Armour, Leslie. The Concept of Truth. Assen: Royal VanGorcum Limited, 1969.
- Harris, R. W. Reason and Nature in the Eighteenth Century. London: Blandford Press, 1968.
- Joad, C. E. M. Essays in Common Sense Philosophy. London: The Swarthmore Press Ltd., 1919.
- Leibniz, Gottfried. The Mondadology. London: Oxford University Press, 1898.
- Locke, John. An Essay Conerning Human Understanding. London: The Clarendon Press, 1894.
- Plato. The Theaetetus and Philebus of Plato. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1906.
- Russell, Bertrand. Fact and Fiction. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1961.