

VII. A Comparative Philosophy Excursus: Deflating the Two Images and the Two Truths

We all know that straight sticks look bent in water, but aren't. Indian thinkers throughout the ages have known that people who suffer from the ophthalmic condition of myodesopsia (*timira*) see falling hairs and other floaters, though there are none. Young Tibetan Buddhist monks' *Blorigs* texts tell them that the one unique moon in the sky can appear as two to sense perception (*zla gcig zla gnyis su snang ba'i dbang shes*) in certain situations (e.g., when they press on their eyes). It's commonplace: things, situations, and people are often not, in reality, what they seem to be. Pertinently, these ordinary illusions, shams, and scams, are isolated phenomena that sometimes occur in specific situations; people rightly contrast them with specific real states of affairs. Philosophers, however, typically try to extend the illusion-reality contrast to everything across the board, with duly all-encompassing categories. The extension has numerous variants, East and West. But the common thread is that it usually proceeds by analogies with ordinary cases to arrive at a grand scale ontological and epistemological position about how all things are *for* all human subjects and how they *are in themselves*. This is the *Für Sich-An Sich* dichotomy dear to Hegelians and Sartrean phenomenologists, the *ābhāsa-svabhāva* (“[mere] appearance versus intrinsic nature”) dichotomy for Indian Buddhists. It is the stuff of so many works of metaphysics that, in one way or another, contrast appearance and reality. The sweeping dichotomies are couched in philosophers' terms of art that bear a strained relation with the relevant ordinary terms. Indeed, Bas van Fraassen 1999 capitalizes all these terms and rejects strongly what they represent. I, too, see such philosophy-inspired dualities as up to little good. But it is important to give them a run for the money, initially at least, to know how much of East-West cross-cultural philosophy moves in surprisingly similar ways, for better or for worse. That is where the philosophy of Wilfrid Sellars comes in for us, one of the most sophisticated wide-ranging dualisms on the market and one that has a significant similarity with many Buddhist

ideas. Our stance on Sellars may directly affect our stance on Buddhism, and perhaps vice versa. In what follows, I will have to keep textual references brief. The reader is referred to other publications where the key Buddhist Studies data is given more fully.

Wilfrid Sellars, in his 1960 Pittsburgh lectures, entitled *Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man* (see Sellars 1962, 1963), developed a sophisticated philosophy turning on two *images* of the world; the images are, in effect, not just simple ordinary images but complete representations of everything, two worldviews or world-pictures, often called “frameworks,” of the one world. Sellars’s two images are, in effect, his science-inspired version of the well-worn contrast so dear to metaphysics throughout history: appearance versus reality.¹ The manifest image is the world as it appears to us all, the world as we experience it, the world-as-it-is-for-man. First taking shape in pre-history, the manifest image figures in the evolving common-sensical ideas of the ages, and was supposedly made explicit by philosophers, like Aristotle, who provided it with the ontology, categories, and other schematic features of a philosophical system. The world as represented by science, or the scientific image, is, for Sellars, different from the manifest image of our experience, just as the various component atomic particles whirling in empty space are very different from a macroscopic object such as a chair, or just as the ice cube that is manifestly pink all throughout is not indeed so scientifically if we examine each of its colorless individual component parts. There is arguably a great deal that is vital to the manifest, but isn’t in the scientific: colored, odorous, and sonorous things, macroscopic objects, animals, people, and probably a whole lot of other things, including propositions, values, beliefs, intentions, meaning, and subjectivity, to name a few. The two images are complete accounts of the world, in their own ways, but clash, with the one not reducible to the other. Indeed, Sellars himself characterizes the manifest as an “inadequate” likeness of the world from the point of view of the scientific: there are truths *within* the manifest image, but they may well be false in the deeper framework of science: science *best* represents what really is and what is not in the world.²

¹ van Fraassen 1999, §I. 2.

² Sellars 1956, §41: “In the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not” (Sellars 1963, 173).

Buddhists did not, of course, contrast the manifest with the scientific image, but rather contrasted two sets of truths, or existences, which they designated with the Sanskrit term *satya* (Pāli *sacca*; Tibetan *bden pa*; Chinese *di* 諦).³ An urgent philological aside to clear the air before we go any further: Buddhist texts sometimes characterize these *satya* as *statements*—very roughly, those that are just taken to be true and those that are actually, or genuinely true—and other times as *states of affairs* or *sorts of things*—those generally taken to be real and those that are fully real. In what follows, we’ll take the liberty to restrict our use of “truths” to truth-bearers, i.e., statements or beliefs. What is more, this even seems to be the initial way the two truths were formulated historically, in e.g., key Pāli texts that speak of statements that need interpretation (*neyattha* = Skt. *neyārtha*) as contrasted with those that are literally true descriptions of the real. As a famous passage in the commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka* says:

“The Enlightened One, the best of all teachers, propounded two truths, customary and ultimate; we do not see a third. A statement governed [purely] by agreement is true because of the world’s customs, and an ultimate statement is true in that it characterizes things as they are.”⁴

The history as to how the truths came to include entities is complicated. For our purposes, let’s say simply that customary truths describe customary things or states of affairs, and ultimate truths describe ultimate things or states. The distortion is not great, and the simplicity needed.

Now, as we have seen, it is a feature of Sellars’s thought, and indeed an essential part of his scientific realism, that the frameworks or images are in a hierarchy, with one having lesser and the other having greater claim to represent what there actually is. And for most Buddhist schools, this

³ On the history and philosophy of the two truths in Buddhism, see Newland and Tillemans 2011.

⁴ Pāli in *Kathāvatthupparakaraṇaṭṭhakathā* p. 34; *Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā Manorathapūraṇī* I, p. 54:

*duve saccāni akkhāsi sambuddho vadatāṃ varo /
sammutīm paramatthaṃ ca tatiyaṃ nupalabbhati //
saṃketavacanaṃ saccaṃ lokasammutikāraṇaṃ /
paramatthavacanaṃ saccaṃ dhammānaṃ tathalakkhaṇaṃ //.*

hierarchy is clearly essential too: the customary (*saṃvṛti*) is usually taken to be much less representative of reality than the ultimate (*paramārtha*). Indeed, it is frequently said to concern mistaken “appearances” (*snang ba; abhāsa*), or “how things appear” (*snang tshul*) to the benighted, while *paramārthasatya* concerns “realities”/“reality” (*de nyid; tattva*), or equivalently “how things are” (*gnas tshul*), and “things’ mode of being” (*sdod tshul*). Many famous Buddhist authors argued long and hard to show the inconsistency and impossibility of those false (*mithyā*) things or states, relegating them to mere appearance, not unlike what Zeno and Parmenides or the Idealists F.H. Bradley or J.M.E. McTaggart did with motion, relations, or time. Thus, for some Buddhists, partless atoms are the ultimate, while macroscopic objects are merely customary; for others, momentary entities are the ultimate and enduring entities are customary; for some, mind is the ultimate and the appearances of external objects are customary; for some, all things are just customary, the ultimate being the omnipresent Buddha-nature. The asymmetry in the worth of the truths is expressed by saying that ultimate truths are *paramārthasiddha* “ultimately established,” whereas customary truths are only *vyavahārasiddha* “customarily established.” Or similarly, the momentarily existing entities, atoms, or for Idealist Buddhists, the mind, are said to *exist ultimately* (*paramārthasat*), whereas macroscopic objects, enduring entities, external objects and the like are just *customary existents* (*vyavahārasat*)—it is often said that customary existents are not established by full-fledged means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*); they are said to be merely verbal designations (*prajñaptisat*), fictions (*asadartha*); they are merely thought to exist, or “exist in the perspective of mistaken minds” (*blo ‘khrul ba’i ngor yod pa*).

When Buddhists typically say customary existents are mere designations, fictions, etc., I think their point is *not* that customary things are somehow *reducible* to the more real ultimate and hence still existent, just as pharmacological entities exist but would *reduce* without loss of their important properties to the more fundamental entities of chemistry. Instead, most Buddhists are saying that customary existents are illusions, false, and deceptive (*mṛṣāmoṣadharmaka*), mere appearances in which we believe but which are errors nonetheless, and that *that is in fact all they are*, viz., products of ignorance.⁵

⁵ This is a well-known theme of some of the most basic Buddhist canonical literature, such as for example Tōhoku 201, the *Śālistambasūtra*. See the 84000.co translation,

The point about the non-applicability of reductionism is important. Sellars is not a reductionist about much of the manifest. As he makes clear at the end of *Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man*, he held that persons and values were irreducible to the scientific image. Colored objects were too.⁶ But many scholars have thought that Buddhists, especially Abhidharma followers, were somehow reductionist about customary existents. Why deny the seeming consensus about Buddhist reductionism concerning the self and other customary entities? The answer is that most Buddhist talk about the self, whether conceived in a gross fashion as “permanent, one, and independent” (*rtag gcig rang dbang can*) or, more subtly, as a “substantially existent autonomous entity” (*rang rkya thub pa'i rdzas yod*), is not about *façons de parler* that are reducible without significant loss to an impersonal account in terms of the elements (*dharma*). In fact, much will be lost. When you replace medieval medical talk about diseases being caused by demon possession by modern microbial etiologies, this is not a reductionism of one theory to another—instead, you eliminate demons from your medical science largely because you no longer accept their would-be essential, intentional features, like malice and the like, as being responsible for sickness.⁷ Reformulating talk of the self in terms of impermanent, impersonal, causally conditioned *dharms* does not look much like reductionism, either. It will not capture the key

1.29: “Here, what is ignorance? That which perceives these same six elements to be unitary, whole, permanent, constant, eternal, pleasurable, a self, a being, a life force, a creature, a soul, a man, an individual, a human, a person, me, and mine, along with the many other such variations of misapprehension, is called ignorance. The presence of such ignorance brings desire, aversion, and delusion toward objects. Such desire, aversion, and delusion toward objects are the formations caused by ignorance.”

⁶ See the following representative passage from Sellars’s “Science, Sense Impressions, and Sensa: A Reply to Cornman,” quoted in deVries 2005, 223: “...I used my principle of reducibility to argue that whatever manifest objects may be correlated with, they cannot literally consist of micro-physical particles, or be literally identical with wholes consisting of micro-physical particles. For, given this principle, a whole consisting of micro-physical particles can be colored (in the naive realist sense) only if these particles are themselves colored (in the naive realist sense) which, ... ‘doesn’t make sense’.”

⁷ The example is that of Siderits 2015, 11-13, who argues the opposite: for him, the self is *not* like the malicious disease-causing demon that will be *eliminated* by better medical science; it is instead *reducible* to *dharms*.

features upon which Buddhist thinkers invariably insist: people wrongly imagine they have selves that are permanent (*rtaḡ* = *nitya*), acausally independent, personal substances (*rdzas* = *dravya*), and autonomous (*rang rkyā thub pa*) agents.⁸

Indeed, the self is supposedly the main source of suffering and attachment and needs to be somehow overcome precisely because it is such a harmful and seductive unreality. Here is how Jonardon Ganeri characterized the Buddhist view:

“Our Buddhists think that the evolution of the concept EGO brings with it all manner of defilements, and one form of justification for that claim is that the concept rests in this way on an error. Sthiramati’s comment on the first of the *30 Verses* [of Vasubandhu] bears the point out: he says that the concept of self presents only an apparent (*nirbhāsa*) referent, just as the perception of someone with an eye-

⁸ See, for example, the descriptions of gross (*rags pa*) and subtler (*phra mo*) conceptions of the self as given in *Grub mtha’* texts like *Grub mtha’ rin chen phreng ba* of dKon mchog ‘jig med dbang po. See p. 88 *et seq.* in K. Mimaki’s edition. Or see the Sautrāntika (*mdo sde pa*) chapter of *lCang skya grub mtha’* of lCang skya Rol pa’i rdo rje. These Tibetan elaborations of the self have the Abhidharmic views insightfully right. The terms *rtaḡ gcig rang dbang can gyi bdag* and *rang kya thub pa’i rdzas yod du grub pa’i bdag* are Tibetan inventions, but there is no reason to say that the ideas are not Indian. Finally, it seems that too much reductionist mileage has been made about Vasubandhu’s saying in *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (p. 1208, ed. D. Shastri): “Monks, karma exists, ripening [of karma] exists, but no agent is perceived apart from the agreed upon [successive causation of the] elements (*dharmasaṃketa*), [no agent] that [supposedly] discards the present aggregates and connects with other ones.” (*bhikṣavo ‘asti karma asti vipākaḥ kāraḥ tu nopalabhyate ya imāṃs ca skandhān niḥśipati anyāṃs ca skandhān pratisaṃdadhāty anyatra dharmasaṃketaḥ* /). This *sūtra* passage quoted in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* is sometimes cited in its unreliable translation by Stcherbatsky as evidence for Buddhists’ acceptance of a lighter version of self that is, or reduces to, a bundle of impersonal elements. Indeed, that is part of what the philosopher Derek Parfit uses as Buddhist backing for his version of reductionism; see Parfit 1991, 502. Cf., however, the analysis in Ganeri 2007, 162-163. The passage is cited by Vasubandhu in a refutation of the Personalist’s (*puḡgalavādin*) idea of a self that exists separately from the aggregates. It is not, for him, actively *promoting* a light version. It is certainly not saying that common talk of self could somehow be reformulated as talk of the aggregates without very significant change or loss. It is, in my opinion, therefore, not to be taken as evidence for a Buddhist reductionism.

disease presents only apparent hairs and circles. It is ‘metaphorically designated’ (*upacaryate*) because it is said to be there when it is not, as if one were to use the word ‘cow’ when there is an ox” (Ganeri 2011, 185).

This is textually accurate and, I think, bodes badly for reductionism. Of course, one may have some reasons to prefer *another* idea of the self as less extreme—perhaps taking *manas*, or *manovijñāna* (“mental consciousness”), or something else, like *svasaṃvedana* (“reflexive awareness”), as a “minimal self.” And perhaps a lightweight version, inspired by some Buddhist ideas and unburdened with a heavy load of illusory attributes, would seem to be a more philosophically anodine replacement. Perhaps some such light version of self might even be somehow reducible to *dharmas*. But let’s be clear: common human beings’ actual concepts of self, as depicted by most major Indian Buddhists, are loaded with pernicious, vitiating falsities. They are hardly anything light and reducible.

Indeed, we can go further: it seems that neither the main Ābhidharmikas, nor Dharmakīrti, nor the main Indian Idealist Buddhists were reductionists about things customary, be it selves, carts and other macroscopic objects, time, universals, etc. Most are better seen as *error theorists*, regularly claiming that the customary goes back to people’s ignorance and habitual “karmic tendencies that have no beginning” (*anādivāsanā*). They may have differing elaborations of that error theory—seeing the mistake as one of imputing permanence, real universals, or externality, etc.—but the common feature is that customary truths are “truths” for those who are thoroughly in the wrong, i.e., pseudo-entities with irredeemable features. There is even a very strong push to get rid of *all* customary objects; when one attains the state of the Noble Ones (*ārya*) and first understands correctly on the “path of seeing” (*darśanamārga*), one no longer experiences any of them until one gets out of one’s meditative state and must deal with the world of ordinary people. *Nirvāṇa* and “the attainment of cessation” (*nirodhasamāpatti*) are like that in most schools, too, be they Theravāda, Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, or Yogācāra.⁹ In short, despite all the respect

⁹ See Griffiths 1986 on the Buddhist elimination of objects, and indeed all intentional mental activity, in the attainment of cessation.

I have for my philosophical colleagues who try to find a sophisticated Buddhist reductionism, I think that it is probably going to be a dead end if we stay in keeping with the spirit of Buddhist canonical texts.

An East-West issue emerges: the manifest-scientific dichotomy—and, I would maintain, the Buddhist dichotomy between two truths—has a hard time resisting dialectic leading to discardability: we seem to have to regard the manifest and the customary as inferior, or even false, irreducible to the scientific/ultimate (which is true), and therefore to be *discarded*. Van Fraassen takes Sellars in that way but doesn't endorse it himself; instead he rejects the Sellarsian philosophy of two images *because, inter alia*, it leads to discardability of one or the other. And there is a similar specter of elimination to the Buddhist's two truths.

Most partisans of the images or the two truths would protest that they *never* would advocate, nor somehow bring about actual elimination on a wide scale. Sellars was not himself an eliminativist, and Buddhists only countenanced actual elimination in the meditative states of elite, high-level practitioners, as it was generally feared that if ordinary people somehow eliminated the customary they might think that reincarnation, karmic retribution and the like would also be wiped out, with disastrous ethical consequences. Nonetheless, a would-be Sellarsian philosophy or Buddhism that would *have to end up* discarding the manifest/customary is more than just a slanderous caricature: it exposes potentially serious consequences inherent in the dichotomies. If the scientific image is the deepest, complete account of the world, then it is indeed hard to see why it shouldn't, over time, take precedence over the irreducible world-qua-appearance, i.e., the manifest image, and displace it; if the ultimate is the deepest, truest, complete picture of how everything is, then why shouldn't it, too, displace the irreducible customary? More generally, if framework Φ yields a deeper complete picture of the world than Ψ and Ψ clashes irretrievably with Φ , then why would rational individuals keep a place for Ψ ?

Sellars himself has a complex position, repeatedly emphasizing that practical reason—the domain of the manifest—cannot and should not be discarded by theoretical reason—the domain of the scientific.¹⁰ The full

¹⁰ See deVries 2005, 161: "Should we then give ourselves over to scientific truth and abandon the manifest image altogether? No, because in the end practical reason retains primacy over theoretical reason."

stereoscopic picture of human life supposedly requires both. He often says that the manifest is needed pragmatically because the scientific depends on the manifest (since we could not have had science's theories without our experience and its world-picture). Whereas there are right and wrong views in terms of reasons and criteria *within* the manifest and its schematizing philosophies, there is no scientific reason—i.e., a reason *within* the scientific world-picture—for accepting the whole of the manifest, with its internal differentiations and views on what is true or not. Thus, there is only *pragmatic* necessity to accept the scientifically inadequate manifest.¹¹ Furthermore, while the scientific picture only describes what is so, the manifest tells us what ought to be and is essential to rationality in that any attribution of knowledge or other mental states to someone involves locating those states “in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says” (Sellars 1956, §36). The idea has been taken up by thinkers like John McDowell, who argues against the “bald naturalism” of the exclusively scientific as lacking the provisions for “logical space,” that is, the normative features inherent in ethics, in epistemology, and reasoning, and, more generally, essential to a world with meaning for humans.

Some will say that Buddhists are indeed pragmatists and accept customary existents for a utility payoff. I have argued against the philosophical feasibility of a general utilitarian account of the genesis of objects and states in some detail elsewhere and will not repeat those discussions in any detail here.¹² Could a Buddhist use practical reason in a different and perhaps more Sellarsian way to keep the specter of elimination at bay? I am thinking of arguments for the practical indispensability of the customary/manifest to understand the ultimate/scientific. These are not utilitarian arguments that gross objects etc., are fictions retainable because they come out well in a calculus of happiness: they are arguments to show that the inadequate manifest/customary is presupposed in deliberations about the more adequate and deeper scientific/ultimate.

¹¹ “Thus, although methodologically a development *within* the manifest image, the scientific image presents itself as a *rival* image. From its point of view the manifest image on which it rests is an ‘inadequate’ but pragmatically useful likeness of a reality which first finds its adequate (in principle) likeness in the scientific image.” Sellars 1963, 20.

¹² Tillemans 2016, Introduction.

A potential argument of this sort is to be found in an intriguing textual passage in Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* XXIV.10 and Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* thereupon:

“But, unless one accepts what is customary in the world—what is expressed, expressions, consciousness, and objects of consciousness—one cannot teach ultimate truth.... To show this [Nāgārjuna] thus states: The ultimate is not taught unless one bases oneself upon the customary....”¹³

To unpack this passage, let's go back to talking about two complete but rival frameworks Ψ and Φ . How does this passage help combat the specter of elimination of Ψ ? Candrakīrti and Nāgārjuna can be read, relatively trivially, as simply saying that Ψ is a needed tool along the way to one's understanding the deeper framework Φ and that it *could* (or should) be discarded once Φ has been adopted. This line of argument does not, then, make a *lasting* place for the manifest/customary. Didactic conservation is at most a temporary respite.¹⁴

More charitably, the Buddhist authors could also be read as saying that important features of Ψ just *cannot* be discarded *whenever* one is reasoning about, or speaking about, the true/ultimate framework, on pain of undercutting the preconditions for Φ to be understandable and adoptable at all. On the first interpretation talking about things in the inadequate terms of framework Ψ is justified only as a starting point in the teaching of some type of truer, deeper, framework. At some point, one will go beyond it and think of Φ free of Ψ . The second interpretation is stronger: there are several features of the manifest/customary, such as propositional

¹³ Sanskrit in La Vallée Poussin's edition of *Prasannapadā* 494.8-12: *kiṃ tu laukikaṃ vyavahāram anabhyupagamyā abhidhānābhidheyajñānajñeyādilakṣaṇam aśakya eva paramārtho deśayituṃ ...pratipādayann āha / vyavahāram anāśritya paramārtho na deśyate /*. French translation in May 1959, 229.

¹⁴ Nāgārjuna's disciple Āryadeva would seem to lend support to this interpretation. See Āryadeva's *Catuḥśatakaśāstrakārikā* as cited in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā*, ed. L. de la Vallée Poussin, 370: *nānyabhāṣayā mlecchaḥ śakyo grāhayituṃ yathā // na laukikaṃ rite lokah śakyo grāhayituṃ tathā //*. “Just as one cannot make a barbarian understand by any language other [than his own], so, too, ordinary persons cannot be made to understand without [using] what is mundane.”

attitudes, thoughts, universal properties, persons, reasons, and norms that *must* remain so long as we are thinking about the scientific/ultimate. Without propositional attitudes, for example, it would be impossible to believe or know that this framework is the most adequate; without good reasons we could not defend its being so;¹⁵ without persons there would be no-one who knows it. I have argued (Tillemans 2016, chapter XI) that this interpretation takes Buddhists as offering transcendental arguments for the broad outlines of the customary: the customary is presupposed as a necessary condition for thought about the ultimate.¹⁶ More generally, important features of Ψ are necessary conditions for Φ 's intelligibility and will thus have to remain. They would be pragmatically justified, not because of simply being needed temporary steps on the road to something better, but because their elimination would incur a type of contradiction, a kind of practical self-defeat. If scientific positions or ultimate truth led to elimination of the manifest/customary, those positions would themselves be unbelievable, unjustifiable, and unassertable.¹⁷

This much will have to do for a Buddhist-inspired attempt to bolster Sellars' appeal to practical reason. It would be a partial counter to elimination, although it is unclear to me precisely how many of the

¹⁵ One could see that strategy as interestingly similar to Lynne Rudder Baker's defense of mind and propositional attitudes: a scientific view like that advocated by Churchland 1981, which outright eliminates the manifest, commits a type of auto-refutation, a "cognitive suicide." See Baker 1987, 1998; see Tillemans 2016, chapter XI, 212 *et seq.*

¹⁶ I was following a lead of Dan Arnold 2008, who, I think, convincingly showed Nāgārjuna as using a transcendental argument going in the opposite direction, i.e., as arguing that the customary presupposes the ultimate. Arnold reads *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* XXIV.20 as showing that customary truth has as a necessary condition the fact that things have no intrinsic nature; there can be nothing which things would be in themselves and continue to be irrespective of all extrinsic factors, like various causes, human influences, and the like. The customary world-picture—in which things change, perform functions, are identifiable under concepts and language, etc.—could only work if things, in final analysis, had no such intrinsic natures.

¹⁷ Candrakīrti, in his commentary to this verse, makes it clear that his final aim is a direct, non-conceptual understanding of the ultimate free from "conceptual proliferations" (*niṣprapañca*). This means an understanding where unrealities (customary truths, language, discursive thought) are thoroughly relinquished—*atattvaṃ hi parityājyam*. The question that occupies us, however, is whether *discursive* thought about an ultimate requires that the customary be conserved. The second interpretation says it does.

features of the manifest image and customary truth would be saved in this way. Propositional attitudes, persons, reasons, and justifications could be, but I don't know how well and how much we would recuperate features like macroscopic objects, secondary qualities or much of ethics and aesthetics, or the flow of time, or "logical space." It is also unclear to me whether this interpretation would have gotten an approving nod from Sellars himself.¹⁸ Let us leave those matters on hold. Instead, the time has come to ask more seriously whether the Sellarsian two images and the usual Buddhist approach to two truths are worthwhile to pursue further philosophically *at all*. I think that so long as we have an irreducible hierarchy, with the manifest/customary being false or fictions and the scientific/ultimate being real, the specter of elimination will not go away. There is, however, another problem that is just as serious and won't easily go away either: the specter of unintelligibility. Those two specters, as we shall see, make me want to look elsewhere, away from philosophies that cultivate frameworks.

Here is what I mean by the "specter of unintelligibility." Bas van Fraassen argued, *inter alia*, that the manifest—and I would say also customary truth, as it is usually understood by Buddhists—is a framework populated by odd *intensional* entities, so odd that there is a serious problem of intelligibility. Intensional entities are those for which usual identity criteria do not hold. They are typically meanings or properties, or they are objects of propositional attitudes: people usually have incomplete knowledge and understand things under a limited or even wrong perspective, and the "object" *as it is appears* to their thought is, thus, not easily identifiable with the object in the world. If we start to talk about complete, grand scale frameworks, like manifest images or customary truth, those odd intensional entities are not just occasional objects of propositional attitudes, modal contexts, and the like: they are everywhere in the framework. In a very real sense we do not understand what is *in* those frameworks.

¹⁸ Cf. deVries 2005, 11: "A leitmotif that runs through a great deal of Sellars's writing is that what is prior in the order of knowing need not be prior in the order of being, and that certainly applies in his view to the relation between the manifest and scientific images." If this is right, Sellars's position may be more in keeping with our first interpretation of the passage from Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti.

Worse, given such frameworks, truth, too, becomes “truth-within-the-framework” and about the intensional entities. Indeed, the manifest/customary are not just series of simple descriptions and claims about things or states in the world—claims that may be right or wrong in the banal fashion in which we make true and false claims about garden-variety things. Instead they are always descriptions and claims about things/states *as they seem to be* to certain people—ordinary people or even classical metaphysicians for Sellars, and, for Buddhists, ignorant ordinary worldlings (*pr̥thagjana*) with their mistaken minds. These entities, in short, are things-for-X, things-as-they-seem-to-X, and not just things *tout court*; the claims concern things-as-they-seem and are true or false depending on how well they capture these things-as-they-seem-to-X.

This extreme intensionality is a recurrent stance in two truths formulations. Even Candrakīrti not infrequently adopts it, as we see in a famous passage from his *Madhyamakāvātāra*:

“All things bear two natures constituted through correct and false views. The object (*viśaya*) of those who see correctly is said to be ‘reality’ (*tattva*) and the object of those who see falsely is said to be a ‘customary existence’ (*saṃvṛtisatya*).”¹⁹

The object of those who see falsely is an intensional object, a thing that doesn’t really exist but only “exists” in the mind of the mistaken, an object-qua-mistaken-appearance. And the hierarchy is clear, too, as is the reliance on frameworks. Indeed, elsewhere in *Madhyamakāvātāra* Candrakīrti alludes to the idea of different world frameworks, depending on whether one is a spirit, a god, an animal, or a human, with right answers

¹⁹ *Madhyamakāvātāra* of Candrakīrti, chapter VI, verse 23. The Sanskrit is found in Prajñākaramati’s *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjikā* 361: *samyāṅmr̥ṣādārśanalabdhabhāvam / rūpadvayaṃ bibhrati sarvabhāvāḥ // samyagdr̥śām yo viśayaḥ sa tattvam / mr̥ṣādr̥śām saṃvṛtisatyam uktam //*. Note that I have translated *labdhabhāvam* as “constituted,” literally “whose being is gained.” This is in keeping with Louis de la Vallée Poussin’s French translation: “les choses portent une double nature qui est constituée par la vue exacte et par la vue erronée.” The Tibetan *rnyed pa* (= Skt. *labdha*), if taken as “[whose being] is found,” could (if taken literally) yield a more problematic interpretation of the verse, meaning that the two natures are in some sense *found* by two types of perceptions, as if they were somehow already there in the objects.

“internal” to the frameworks and pertaining to the objects-as-perceived by the denizens of worlds—pus for the spirits, water for humans, ambrosia for the gods, etc.²⁰ Such framework-relativity in Madhyamaka is not much different from what we find in Buddhist Idealist texts like the *Vimśatikā* of Vasubandhu, which in verse three cites the example of the *pūyanadī* (“the river of pus”) as illustrating how consensus about appearances occurs across all beings of a like kind, without there being external objects.

Talk of frameworks and “objects” internal to them is rife, too, in Buddhist literature on epistemology (*pramāṇavāda*). These Buddhists regularly speak of several such “objects” and their role in conceptual thinking—in scholastic elaborations of the positions of Indian thinkers like Dharmakīrti and Dharmottara, we find objects of thought classified as “appearing objects” (*snang yul*), “grasped objects” (*gzung yul*), “objects of determination” (*zhen yul*), and “objects-as-they-are-grasped” (*‘dzin stangs kyi yul*). As I have tried to show (Tillemans 2020), if these objects-that-appear, objects-as-they-are-grasped, and the like are entities at all, they present huge problems of intelligibility. Even more usual formulations of identity criteria for intensional entities do not hold—the ideas of identity (*ekatva = gcig nyid*), whether developed by Dharmakīrti and his successors or by Tibetan writers on *pramāṇa* (*tshad ma*), demand that there is a different entity for each word, even when the words are synonyms. The Indo-Tibetan Buddhist idea, then, is that these objects *will be* different when they just *seem*, or appear (*snang*), different to the thinker. They will, e.g., *seem* different to the thinking subjects because words for them vary in different languages or because the thinker apprehends them with different information about each, and so forth. This is extreme intensionality, what I have termed “ultra-intensionality,” and it is pervasive in the prevailing Indo-Tibetan Buddhist philosophies of language and logic, i.e., in the Buddhist theories of *apoha*.²¹

²⁰ *Madhyamakāvātāra* VI.71b: *chu ‘babs klung la yi dwags rnag blo yang* / “And the spirit’s (*preta*) cognition of pus regarding a river.”

²¹ On the “exclusion theory” (*apohavāda*) in Buddhist philosophy of language, logic, and metaphysics, see Siderits, Tillemans, Chakrabarti 2011.

In short, there are recognizable features that come back in various forms when Buddhists, including most Mādhyamikas,²² philosophize in terms of world frameworks, error theories, and double truths. The problem in all such thinking, Sellarsian or Buddhist, besides the specter of elimination, is that it is hardly intelligible *what* we are referring to, if it is things-as-they-seem-to-X with truths about them being merely internal to a framework. Of course, it would be quite intelligible to say simply that people often *think wrongly* that they are talking about straightforward things, and that it turns out they are not talking about anything at all. But Sellarsians and Buddhists *aren't* saying that. They take people's thoughts and language as about nothing (fully) real, but *also* somehow about odd things-as-they-seem-to-X, denizens-of-the-manifest-image, objects-qua-appearances, or what have you. And those are also somehow "objects" whether X thinks about them rightly, whether what X thinks about them corresponds to the way these "objects" are or not. It looks like that is how it is with Sellars's manifest image and the debates about things within it and that is how it is with most Buddhist understandings of customary truth and Buddhist debates about "internal" truth and falsity, i.e., about the customarily right (*tathyaśamvṛti*) or customarily wrong (*mithyāśamvṛti*). Frameworks, their hierarchies, their internal objects, worlds and the rest look increasingly unpromising.

That being said, they die hard. Of course, people regularly (and harmlessly) talk about "my world," "your world," "things for me," and the like. A.R. Luria famously described the experiences of a brain-damaged individual in *The Man with a Shattered World*, and Oliver Sacks, in books like *An Anthropologist on Mars*, described his patients' fascinatingly and oddly structured worlds. That much phenomenology need not be a problem. But a philosopher who tries to take such phenomenological descriptions as also ontologically charged and about genuine *worlds*, frameworks, or what have you, is on murky grounds especially if the latter are supposedly

²² Of course, there are several Tibetan interpretations of Madhyamaka and anything and everything Candrakīrti wrote. See e.g., Vose 2009, Tillemans and Tomabechei 1995. But most rightly recognize how much emphasis he placed on the customary being erroneous and "objects" for the ignorant.

inhabited by objects-as-they-are-for- X , as opposed to objects-as-they-are-for- Y .²³

Let's try something quite different. Can we do better, conserving a place for science, human experience, Madhyamaka Buddhist truths and the like on a level playing field with no frameworks, no hierarchy of truths, no fictions (useful or otherwise), and no odd internal objects? Some years ago, Graham Priest, Mark Siderits, and I argued that deflationism is the most plausible approach to truth in a rationally reconstructed Madhyamaka philosophy.²⁴ We could have gone further: there are deflationist accounts of existence, objects, meaning and reference that could fit well into such a reconstructed Madhyamaka Buddhist philosophy. Deflationism is a package deal and we could have, and probably should have, availed ourselves of more of the package. The result would have been a level playing field with no frameworks, hierarchies of truth, odd objects, and truths internal to frameworks.

Here are the basics. Deflationary theories, broadly speaking, make do with interlocking formulae that bring out uncontroversial features of how one uses terms like "truth," "reference," and "existence." As is regular practice in deflationism, we use angled brackets to designate the proposition that p (i.e., the thought that such and such is so) and the constituents of the proposition, viz., singular and general concepts. Thus, deflationists trivially explain truth with equivalences along the lines of $\langle p \rangle$ is true if and only if p ; or in the case of reference they say that the singular concept $\langle n \rangle$ refers to x iff $n = x$; and $\langle n \text{ is } F \rangle$ is true iff $\langle n \rangle$ refers to n and the general concept $\langle F \rangle$ is true of n . As for existence, they can get there from deflationary truths: if $\langle n \text{ is } F \rangle$ is true, then we can infer that n is F and then infer that there is an x such that $x = n$. Or we get there from reference: $\langle n \rangle$ refers iff there is an x such that $x = n$.²⁵ A deflationary approach, as the term suggests, is thus to be contrasted

²³ For an attempt to make objects of thought and worlds for X intelligible nonetheless, see Crane 2001.

²⁴ Priest, Siderits, Tillemans 2011.

²⁵ The above formulations are those of Thomasson 2014 in keeping with those of Paul Horwich. They are certainly not unusual. See Armour-Garb and Beal 2005; Christopher Hill 2006. The mutually implicative nature of the key semantic terms is brought out in Thomasson 2014, Horwich 2004, 73f. There is a deflationary account of meaning, too.

with accounts of reference, truth, meaning, and existence that involve “substantive” properties that one should discover and investigate to form generalizations of the sort $\langle p \rangle$ is true if and only if $\langle p \rangle$ corresponds to facts (or is made true by reality, is useful to believe, is verifiable, etc.), or $\langle n \rangle$ refers to x iff $\langle n \rangle$ bears relation R to x (i.e., is causally connected to x , is intentionally linked to x , etc.), or Fs exist iff Fs are causally efficient (or figure in our best science, etc.).

Truth is thus defined by an infinite series of equivalences $\langle p \rangle$ is true iff p , whether we are talking about important and subtle matters of science or religion, or the ordinary truths of daily experience. We don’t, for example, have one set of propositions that are true because they are useful to believe and another distinct and rival set that are true in some deeper and different way, like correspondence to the realities of science or metaphysics. The concepts of existence and reference are also simple. Objects that exist or are referred to are not those that are somehow in a privileged class because of substantial properties or relations. Instead of hierarchical frameworks, what remains is a level playing field with no substantial positions on the real sense of “existence” or the real sense of “truth.” And the facts and realities we discuss are what Paul Horwich 2006, 194 terms “deflationary facts” (as opposed to “REAL facts”), i.e., those “to which we are committed merely by making assertions and accepting the equivalence of ‘ p ’ and ‘it’s a fact that p .’” They are real in an ordinary sense and are not illusory (cf. the banal distinction between illusion and reality mentioned at the start of this paper), but that is all.

Of course, this account doesn’t mean that various truths and existence-claims will not be contested or that they will become purely subjective affairs. There will be head-on clashes about difficult problems of subatomic physics, where one claim is that x exists and the other is that x does not exist; $\langle p \rangle$ will be true or not true irrespective of whether people believe it is. On the other hand, in typical longstanding philosophical controversies—whether numbers, tables, chairs, people, minds, and thoughts exist—existence will follow trivially from the truth of propositions like $\langle 5$ is a prime number \rangle , \langle Sally is sitting on a chair \rangle , and the like. The result of the deflationist package, then, is what some term “easy ontology.”²⁶ Others speak of using existential quantification simply as a logical structure

²⁶ Thomasson 2015.

without Quine-style ontological commitment.²⁷ In any case, the upshot is that one can just as well say that there is something that is January, or that January exists, chairs exist, atoms exist, and so do numbers, thoughts, moral qualities, abstract entities, absences, and people; it even matters little whether they are reducible or not to other things—they exist, we unproblematically refer to them, and we think true thoughts about them. This liberality also has direct bearing on our investigation of the dualities of manifest/scientific and customary/ultimate: if one is deflationist across the board, one is unburdened with odd entities in inferior experiential or customary frameworks. There is no need to introduce frameworks—hierarchical or otherwise—relative to which they exist in an internal way.²⁸

A radical deflationism across the board, accepting only deflationary facts, no grounding reality, and no *substantial* accounts of truth, existence, and reference, could not only be a way out of the twin specters of Sellars’s philosophy; it would be a promising Madhyamaka. Laura Guerrero 2013 used the deflationism argued for in Priest, Siderits, Tillemans 2011 to rationalize customary truth in Dharmakīrti. We can go further and apply it to *both* truths for the Madhyamaka. Indeed, if we take a Buddhist position like that of the Tibetan Mādhyamika thinker Tsong kha pa (1357-1419), both customary and ultimate truths are established by genuine means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). It is important to see how unique, and not typically Indian, this position is: customary truths are *not* simply widely accepted errors with things only “existent in the perspective of mistaken minds” (*blo ‘khrul ba’i ngor yod pa*), which is the more usual Indo-Tibetan interpretation, be it in Candrakīrti or other Buddhists. The other subtle point, on which he differs from most Indian and Tibetan thinkers is that both truths are only *customarily established*; whether an ultimate truth or a customary truth, neither is better grounded, better established, or captures anything *ultimately established* or *ultimately existent*. The formula that

²⁷ See Fine 2009.

²⁸ Frameworks are, alas, regularly used by Buddhists to protect dogma as true internally. But they aren’t just the stuff of philosophy and religion. They are often beloved of anthropologists who think that they are investigating rival conceptual schemes/frameworks of different cultures. Linguists are sometimes attracted by Benjamin Lee Whorf’s hypothesis of a specific and inherent metaphysical framework in each language, making translation between certain languages impossible. A major critical study of their intelligibility is Davidson 1984.

dGe lugs pa debaters know says it all: *don dam bden pa yin na don dam par grub pas ma khyab* / “If, or because, something is an ultimate truth it does not follow that it is ultimately established.” In fact, to be more precise, something stronger and more surprising follows traditionally: *don dam bden pa yin na don dam par ma grub pas khyab* / *don dam bden pa yin na don dam par yod pa ma yin pas khyab* / “If anything is an ultimate truth it follows that it is *not* ultimately established; if anything is an ultimate truth it follows that it is *not* ultimately existent.” As Newland 1992, 94 put it:

“The distinction between being an ultimate (*don dam yin*) and ultimately existing (*don dam du yod*) is critical in Tsong-kha-pa’s system. Emptiness is found, known, and realized by a mind of ultimate analysis, and therefore it is an ultimate truth. However, emptiness is not ultimately existent because it is not found by the ultimate mind analyzing *it*.”

Guy Newland is right: this is critical to understanding Tsong kha pa. We misunderstand or ignore it at the peril of wrongly making his Madhyamaka accept formulae along the lines of “the ultimate truth is that (because everything is empty (*śūnya*)) there is no ultimate truth” and then perhaps moving to rather murky paradoxes like “The ultimate truth is both ultimate and not,” or “the ultimate truth, emptiness, is that there both is and is not an ultimate truth.” Such formulae might arise from acceptance of what is a relatively common Indo-Tibetan idea in non-Madhyamaka and some Madhyamaka Buddhism alike, viz., that ultimate truth (*don dam bden pa = paramārthasatya*) is ultimately established (*don dam par grub pa = paramārthasiddha*) and ultimately existent (*don dam du yod pa = paramārthasat*). But that is precisely what Tsong kha pa’s school did *not* accept in their Madhyamaka.²⁹ Tsong kha pa and his followers, of course,

²⁹ See Tillemans 2013 (= 2016, chapter IV). For the position that Candrakīrti and Nāgārjuna were “dialetheists” and thus accept some true contradictions, see Deguchi, Garfield, Priest 2008—the ultimate truth paradox is taken there as a core example of Madhyamaka dialetheism that cannot and should not be explained away. My argument in Tillemans 2013 is precisely that it was avoided rationally by thinkers like Tsong kha pa. The volume dedicated to Buddhist dialetheism is *Philosophy East and West* 63.3, 2013, ed. Koji Tanaka, which contains rejoinders by Deguchi, Garfield, Priest.

never admitted their originality and significant differences from India and indeed extol their Indian conformity. Nonetheless, original they were.³⁰

In sum, truths are established and not just believed in, customary things exist and are not just errors, but no truth is better grounded, better established, or “truer” than another. It is only the procedures for establishing the truths that differ—two kinds of analysis (*dpyod pa = vicāra*)—as well as their subject matters, viz., respectively, all worldly, scientific or religious states of affairs and the lack of any real intrinsic nature, or ultimate status of any of them, i.e., their emptiness. Instead of a contrast between mere false appearance and reality, the Madhyamaka now focuses predominantly on something much like a distinction between a harmless, ordinary realism (more exactly, the acceptable part of an ordinary conception of truth and reality) and metaphysical realism, embracing the former and rejecting the latter.³¹ While deflationism, by itself, does not

³⁰ We have a considerable number of key dGe lugs pa ideas where Indian sources are being used in a strained and implausible manner. The two that stand out the most starkly are the interpretations of Śāntideva’s *Bodhicāryāvātāra* 9.140 to justify the idea of “recognizing what is to be refuted” (*dgag bya ngos ’dzin*) and the use of passages from Bhāviveka to justify the position that Svāntarikas accept that customarily things are what they are because of inherent natures (*tha snyad du rang bzhin gyis grub pa*). See Williams 1995 on *Bodhicāryāvātāra* IX.140, Eckel 2003 on the Indian “sources” for *tha snyad du rang bzhin gyis grub pa*. See Tillemans 2016, 58 for another example, viz., Tsong kha pa’s breaking down of the rigid separation between “worldlings” and Noble Ones (*ārya*). Finally, many of Tsong kha pa’s famous *dka ’gnas brgyad* (“eight difficult points [of the Madhyamaka]”), though often interesting and even important Buddhist philosophy, are also hardly supported by Indian texts—as adversaries such as Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge rightly did not fail to point out.

³¹ In traditional Buddhist texts we find several well-attested terms that are used equivalently to depict what I am calling “the metaphysically real” (as contrasted with what is real in the ordinary sense). For example, the Sanskrit *satyatas* (really, truly), *dravyatas* (substantially), *vastutas* (in terms of real entities), *svabhāvena* (by its intrinsic nature), Chinese *zhen* 真, *shi* 實, or *shi you* 實有 (truly, substantially), and others. In Tibetan we also have very important and suggestive terms that, to my knowledge, do not come from Sanskrit and do not have equivalents in Chinese texts: “what is established from its own side” (*rang ngos nas grub pa*) and “in terms of its own exclusive mode of being” (*rang gi thun mon ma yin pa ’i sdod lugs gyi ngos nas*). All of these terms form a kind of semantic circle of interlocking and mutually implicative concepts. It might thus be objected that this seemingly inevitable circularity would preclude us properly *understanding*

rule out adherence to metaphysical realism and intrinsic natures, it does at least undercut one of the major arguments for it, viz., that without such grounding in reality truth claims become arbitrary and subjective. Metaphysical realism may have an obsessive hold on our thinking, but at least, technically speaking, it turns out to be unnecessary, for we don't need to define truth or reference substantively in terms of a privileged relation with the metaphysically real, or define existence as membership in that reality. "Everything makes sense to one for whom emptiness [i.e., the absence of the metaphysically real] makes sense."³²

I grant fully that the obsession with grounding is stubborn and *does* need more than *just* limp-wristed deflationism if the obsession is to be relinquished. Here's a brief postcard-like sketch of what I think that "more" should be. There are two Madhyamaka strategies: (1) argue directly against other people's realist metaphysics to show that their positions are incoherent and that their arguments all fail to establish the grounding they seek to establish—in short, use a series of negative metaphysical reasonings case by case; (2) tease out the sources and the seductiveness of the needless obsession with grounding. I am much more optimistic about the second. I have little problem admitting that Nāgārjuna's negative arguments against the Indian philosophies of his day will themselves be contested at pretty much every step of the way. They were so contested in the past by intelligent non-Buddhists and probably will be now by many analytic metaphysicians. I would venture to say that a considerable share of such arguments probably have a very limited shelf-life, turning

the Buddhist idea of "metaphysical realism." One could, however, reply that at least *some* important circles are benign. To go back to a classic article of Paul Grice and Sir Peter Strawson, there are arguably a number of key "family-circles" where individual terms cannot be defined except in terms of members of the same group—these include moral terms, like "morally wrong," "blameworthy," "breach of moral rules," etc., as well as the circle of terms that famously—and, arguably, quite unfortunately—bothered W.V. Quine in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" (Quine 1951), i.e., "analyticity," "synonymy," "necessity," etc. There are no doubt others. Thomasson 2014 speaks briefly of Grice and Strawson 1956 in connection with the deflationist family-circle of interlocking terms; Fine 2009, 175 considers the concept of reality and other ontological concepts to be in an escapeless circle but holds that this fact does not preclude comprehension. One would have to say something similar about the Buddhist circle.

³² *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* XXIV.14: *sarvaṃ ca yujyate tasya sūnyatā yasya yujyate /*.

as they do on Sanskrit grammar or notions whose extensions beyond their historical context are unconvincing. Even if they were to successfully cast doubt on third century Indian ontologies, it is hard to see that they would tell against *all* ontologies past and future. Turning to the second strategy, this is where a Tibetan contribution to Madhyamaka excels. The original feature of the Tibetan tactic of recognizing what is to be refuted (*dgag bya ngos 'dzin*), viz., versions of metaphysical realism, is that it is not nearly so dependent on a plethora of negative metaphysical reasonings. It uses other more introspective, or phenomenological means, to bring the needless (and pernicious) realism out into the open, a difficult task. Indeed, this is not unlike Wittgenstein's bringing seductive "superlative facts" out into the open. To those who, like me, see diagnosis and clarification of the numerous misguided demands for superlative facts as vitally important, not just theoretically but on a personal and ethical level, this is good philosophy and fits into some of the subtler issues of our time.³³ *Bons baisers du Tibet.*

Postscript

A word on what we can predict as *consequences* of deflationism. Grand scale dualities like appearance and reality, or ontology in general—and hence much of analytic metaphysics—will probably have little place for the deflationist, be she Mādhyamika or philosopher of science. She makes localized differentiations between ordinary cases of illusion and reality and stays quietistic about the dubious metaphysical extensions. Nonetheless, a level playing field, for a deflationist about manifest/scientific dichotomies or Buddhist two truths, will not be a peaceful one. As I had mentioned there will be head-on debates about various truths amongst physicists, geographers, economists, politicians, biblical scholars, and others.

It is sometimes said that a deflationist approach in Madhyamaka will sacrifice much of traditional Buddhism.³⁴ Many of the more extreme ideas of Mahāyānist bodhisattva ethics will indeed probably not fare well. Buddhists who use elaborate scholastic reasoning to attribute one's wealth and poverty to one's deeds in previous lives, for example, should expect

³³ On superlative facts and the introspective techniques to recognize what is to be refuted, see Tillemans 2016, 40 *et seq.*

³⁴ See MacKenzie 2009.

head-on debate. Indeed, Buddhist ethics is, and always was, in a head-on clash with rival views: Buddhists themselves intended their views on reincarnation and karma to rival those of the materialists of their time, i.e., the Cārvāka, who accepted neither. Many present-day Buddhists stress that their same canonical positions *should* clash with modern views, too. A deflationist's liberalization of the idea of existence and his resultant easy ontology will not protect Buddhist truths when the positions are rival in this way.

At some point we need a working account of what constitutes a head-on clash between positions. No doubt, it is not going to be easy to formulate precisely when an argument is head-on between rival positions—there will be shaded areas and there will be many cases where issues of rivalry or compatibility themselves become the important subjects of debate. A minimal claim: all-encompassing frameworks are not the way to go. They have long been used to shield dogmas or long-standing beliefs as somehow still “true” *within* a protected context. Nothing is gained by that obscurantism.

ASPECTS OF INDIGENOUS GRAMMATICO-
LINGUISTIC THOUGHT

