**Is the reason sufficient to know what is real?**

True is a synonym of real. (Dictionary.com) Human try to reach the truth by all sorts of means. We have built our society on knowledge, and we build knowledge on some other knowledge. Either by proof, observation or induction, we build solid ground for more complex abstractions. For example, in mathematics, a theorem is a statement that has been proved, or can be proved. The proof of a theorem is a logical argument that uses the inference rules of a deductive system to establish that the theorem is a logical consequence of the axioms and previously proved theorems. (Wikipedia)

However, we make mistakes, we fail often. We went from flat earth, to building the Geocentric model, Heliocentrism, all the way to big bang theory. The Greek view the world as ever-changing matter shifting from earth to water, wind and fire. We now know that all things are consisted of atoms, and that atoms are far from being the smallest particle. Now, do we know if big bang theory, or quarks and quantum physics are real? Is there a point where we can stop and be satisfied with what we discovered and call it “REAL”? Real is a complicated idea.

**Development**

In continental philosophy, the Real is the totality of reality, the intelligible form of the horizon of truth of the field-of-objects that has been disclosed, and is opposed in the unconscious to the Symbolic (fantasy, dreams, hallucinations): "What has been foreclosed from the Symbolic reappears in the Real."(Wikipedia) Perhaps our reality is a hallucination, our so perceived “REAL” is fundamentally “NOT REAL”. Can we tell the difference with reason? Subjective perceptions are representations of the external world—like a form of virtual reality. In a sense, we are like brains in The Matrix, trapped within our skulls, receiving inputs that are basically simulations of the external world. (Ralph Lewis M.D.)

We might not be able to know, unless by some miracle we wake up from the impeccably realistic dream. Our ability to reason is built on our reality, forged within this cage our tools are flawed by nature. A fish could not see the water in front of it, for it is born in water.

We have come to a saddening conclusion, however let us be optimistic, and assume that our world is not a hallucination, and what we have in front of our eyes is a real world. So that we could have further discussion, and so that my essay would not come to an early halt.

Truth is the property of being in accord with fact or reality. In everyday language, truth is typically ascribed to things that aim to represent reality or otherwise correspond to it, such as beliefs, propositions, and declarative sentences (Wikipedia). So, since true is the property of being accord with fact or reality, we can say that something true can be deduced from truth.

With reason, we can extend what is true and build new knowledge. Knowledge of what is true, that is. However, there must be something true that is not dependent on anything, for us to be able to reason anything out of. Thus, this original truth, is not known by reasoning. Such truth, such as axioms in math and logic, are provided solely by assumption. (Wikipedia) However, this is not as problematic as it may seem, because axioms are either definitions or clearly obvious, and there are only very few axioms. Mathematicians assume that axioms are true without being able to prove them. (Mathigon) Non-logical axioms are formulas that play the role of theory-specific assumptions. Reasoning about two different structures, for example, the natural numbers and the integers, may involve the same logical axioms; the non-logical axioms aim to capture what is special about a particular structure (or set of structures, such as groups). Thus, non-logical axioms, unlike logical axioms, are not tautologies. Another name for a non-logical axiom is postulate. (Wikipedia) In layman terms, axioms are neither true nor false, they are only true if you believe in them.

However, we cannot be so hastily to decide that reason is not sufficient to know what is real. If the reason is sufficient to know what is real, we must make no mistakes if reason is provided. That is, reason alone should clear all false assumptions. For assumption is the mother of all mistakes, stated by political scientist Mr. Eugene Lewis Fordsworthe (so the Internet tells me). So, it should be impossible for false assumptions originate from reason.

Proof by Contradiction is an important proof technique. If we want to prove a statement S, we assume that S wasn’t true. Using this assumption, we try to deduce a false result, such as 0 = 1. If all our steps were correct and the result is false, our initial assumption must have been wrong. Our initial assumption was that S isn’t true, which means that S actually is true. (Mathigon) Wrong assumptions could be proved wrong by contradiction, slowly but surely, we can build and testify the seemingly concrete foundation and therefore cement it. As long as our ability to reason is real, and will never betray us, then yes, we can figure out a lot of false assumptions, perhaps we could erase all of them one day. But clearly, we might not be able to use contradiction to find all wrong assumptions. Since proving something wrong depends on axioms, which is another assumption. There will never be an end to this.

So, let us assume that axioms are indeed true so that we could omit the part when the reasoning is built on false assumptions, such as flat Earth and the classical element theory of Earth, wind and fire. Is the reason sufficient to know what is real? If yes, we can verify anything and tell what is real or not. Unfortunately, these plans were destroyed by Kurt Gödel in 1931. He proved that in any (sufficiently complex) mathematical system with a certain set of axioms, you can find some statements which can neither be proved nor disproved using those axioms. It is also not possible to prove that a certain set of axioms is consistent, using nothing but the axioms itself. (Mathigon)

**Conclusion**

But all hope is not lost, for true is a synonym of real, we can say that if something is real, then it is true. But something that is true, might not be real. Take a look at the liar paradox: “This sentence is false”. It is neither true nor false, if "this sentence is false" is true, then it is false, but the sentence states that it is false, and if it is false, then it must be true, and so on. (Wikipedia) However, it is real. Reason is not sufficient to know what is true. But it might be able to know what is real.

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