

Antirealisms East and West
Mark Siderits

Metaphysical realism is the view that there is such a thing as the way the world is *anyway*, that the nature of reality has an objective order that is independent of human interests and cognitive limitations. Antirealism is the denial of metaphysical realism. These lectures explore different forms of antirealism found in modern philosophy and in Indian Buddhist philosophy, ranging from the denial of an external world found in Berkeley and Yogācāra, to Putnam's famous brains-in-a-vat argument and Nāgārjuna's claim that all things are empty. The aim is to see if there are any important differences between Western and Buddhist formulations of antirealism. One specific question we will investigate is whether Buddhist antirealists manage to avoid commitment to a verificationism that restricts reality to what is graspable by us.

1. Berkeley's antirealism about external objects
Background reading: George Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge, Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*
2. Yogācāra antirealism about external objects
Background reading: *Buddhism As Philosophy* Chapter 8
3. Dummett on antirealism and truth
Background reading:
Dummett, Michael (1993), 'Realism and antirealism', *The Seas of Language*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 462-78.
Putnam, Hilary (1983), 'Vagueness and alternative logics', *Realism and Reason*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.271-286
4. Putnam's BIV argument
Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History* Chapter 1
5. Buddhist Reductionism as metaphysical realism
Background reading: *Buddhism As Philosophy* Chapters 3,6
6. Nāgārjuna's critique of Buddhist Reductionism
Background reading: *Buddhism As Philosophy* Chapter 9
7. Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka as an antirealism
Moonshadows Chapter 8
8. Antirealism without verificationism?