

PHILOSOPHY
SEMESTER-V(UG)

Examination to be held in the Years Dec. 2019 & onwards

Course No.: PL501 (Theory)

Course Title: Western Philosophy-
Ancient, Medieval & Modern.

Max. Marks : 100

Theory Exam: 80

Internal Assessment:20

UNIT-I ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

- 1.1 Greek Philosophy- A Brief Introduction.
- 1.2 Socratic Method.
- 1.3 Plato- Characteristics of Ideas.
 Concept of Ideal State.
- 1.4 Aristotle- Metaphysical Dualism (Form and Matter).
 Theory of Causation.

UNIT-II MEDIVAL PHILOSOPHY

- 2.1 Scholasticism- Purpose and Characteristics.
- 2.2 St. Augustine- Ethical views of St. Augustine.
 Freedom of Will
- 2.3 St. Thomas Aquinas- Proof for the Existence of God.
 Theory of Knowledge.

UNIT-III MODERN PHILOSOPHY

- 3.1 Rene Descartes- 'Cogito-ergo-sum', Theory of Innate Ideas.
Body-Mind dualism (Interactionism).
- 3.2 Benedict Spinoza-Body- Mind relation (Parallelism)
Pantheism.
- 3.3 Wilhelm Leibnitz- Theory of Monads.
Theory of Evil.
Theory of Pre-establish Harmony.

UNIT-IV

- 4.1 John Locke-Refutation of the doctrine of Innate Ideas.
Difference between Primary and Secondary qualities.
- 4.2 George Berkeley- "Esse-Est-Percipi".
Subjective Idealism.

UNIT-V

- 5.1 David Hume- Theory of Causation
Knowledge of the external world.
- 5.2 Rationalism and Empiricism - A Comparative Assessment.
- 5.3 Immanuel Kant - Synthesis of Rationalism and Empiricism.

NOTE FOR PAPER SETTING:

The question paper will consist of two sections, viz; A and B

Section 'A' will consist of 10 long answer type questions, 02 questions from each unit with internal choice. Each question will be of 12 marks. The candidates will be required to answer 05 questions, selecting 01 question from each unit. Total weightage will be of $12 \times 5 = 60$.

Section 'B' will consist of 10 short answer type questions, 02 questions from each unit with internal choice. Each question will be of 04 marks. The candidates will be required to answer 05 questions, selecting 01 question from each unit. Total weightage will be of $04 \times 5 = 20$

Internal Assessment : 20 marks

Two written Assignments : 10 marks each

BOOKS RECOMMENDED

1. Frank Thilly: A History of Philosophy, Central Book Depoy, Allahabad.
2. Stace: A Critical history of Greek Philosophy, Macmillan.
3. Bertrand Russell: History of Western Philosophy.
4. Lodge: Great Thinkers, Kegan Paul, London.
5. Wright: History of Philosophy Macmillan.
6. Windelband: History of Western of Philosophy Macmillan.
7. Copleston: History of Western Philosophy
8. Zeller: History of Greek Philosophy.
9. Gullery: Plato's theory of knowledge.
10. W.D ross: Plato's theory of Ideas.
11. W.D.Ross: Aristotle.
12. C.R .Morsis:Locke, Berkeley, Hume(Oxford).
13. D.J.O's Conner: History of Western Philosophy.
14. H.Hoffding: History of Modern Philosophy.
15. R.Adamson: Development of Modern Philosophy.

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**GREEK PHILOSOPHY -
A BRIEF INTRODUCTION**

STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Different Periods of Greek Philosophy
- 1.4 Origin of Greek Philosophy
- 1.5 Basic trends of the different ages of Greek philosophy
- 1.6 Characteristics of Greek Philosophy
- 1.7 To sum up
- 1.8 Glossary
- 1.9 Self-Assessment Questions
- 1.10 Suggested Reading and References
- 1.11 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

1.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain the history of Greek philosophy
- To summarise different philosophical problems of Greek philosophy
- To identify the different periods of Greek philosophy
- To summarise the basic trends of the different ages of Greek philosophy
- To elaborate the characteristic features of Greek philosophy

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Greek philosophy begins in the 6th century B.C. It begins when the Greeks for the first time attempted to give a scientific reply to the question: ‘What is the explanation of the world’? Before this era, we have the mythologies, cosmogonies and theologies of the poets, but they contain no attempt at a naturalistic explanation of things. They belong to the spheres of poetry and religion, not to philosophy. Greek philosophy thus emerged out of its conflict with the mythological notions and poetic imagination of the ancient men. It emerged as an attempt to rationalize the mythical world and to defend the logical intellect against the theosophical speculations and fantastic cults.

Greek philosophy is usually divided into the philosophy which preceded Socrates, and that philosophy which succeeded him. In this way, Greek philosophy falls into three periods extending from around 600 B.C. to 600 A.D.

1.3 PERIODS OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

1. **Pre-Socratic Period** (From Thales of Miletus to the Sophists)

This period is the rise of Greek philosophy, which extends from about 585 to the middle of the 5th century B.C. The scene of the philosophy of this period is the colonial world. It flourished in Ionia, Southern Italy and Sicily.

The general tendency of the Pre-Socratic philosophy is to find out the ‘first principle’ of the universe. The philosophers of this period were mainly concerned with the physical world. Their speculation revolved around the basic substance or substances out of which everything else is made. An answer to this question constituted the problem of the following philosophers:

1. **Ionic Philosophers:** Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes.

2. **Pythagoreans:** Pythagoras, Philolaus, Archytas, Eurytas.

3. **Eleatics:** Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno.
4. **Heraclitus:**
5. **Empedocles:**
6. **Atomists:** Leucippus, Democritus.
7. **Anaxagoras:**
8. **Sophists:** Protagoras, Hippias, Antiphon, Gorgias.

Thales : asserted that the basic stuff out of which all else is composed is Water.

Anaximander: a pupil of Thales, maintained that the basic substance out of which everything comes must be even more elementary than water. He asserted a chaotic primitive Matter (heat and cold) as the eternal ground from which in order of time all arises and into which all returns.

Anaximenes: held that the underlying principle of all things is Air from which by rarefaction (fire) and condensation (water, earth, stone), everything else is formed.

Pythagoras: and his followers (Philolaus, Archytas, Eurytas) held Number to be the stuff, the inherent essence and substance of things.

The Eleatics: held that Being i. e. pure being which is comprehended in thought is the general ground of all things.

Heraclitus: regarded Fire as the only ultimate substance of the universe. All comes from fire, and to fire all returns.

Empedocles: regarded four elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air) as the basic stuff. All other kinds of matter are mixtures, in various proportions, of these four.

The Atomists: maintained that all things are composed of imperceptible, indestructible, eternal and uncreated Atoms.

Anaxagoras: maintained that all things are composed of infinitely divisible particles; the universe was caused by mind (*Nous*) acting on matter.

We may say that the earliest greek philosophy was exclusively cosmological or ontological. It enquires into the essence of things. The problem of all philosophers from **Thales** to **Anaxagoras** was the problem of 'being'. Their inquiry was about 'what is the primitive ground of things?' Or, more precisely, 'what natural elements is the basal element of which the natural objects are constituted and from which they originated?'

Sophists: But the teachings of the **Sophists**, who were both the predecessors and the contemporary of Socrates, was exclusively humanistic. The **Sophists** shifted attention from the external world to the problem of man i. e. to human knowledge and conduct. Indeed, the **Sophists** were the professional teachers of philosophy. They taught any subject for which there was a popular demand. They introduced a profusion of general knowledge among the people, called forth investigations into language, logic and the theory of cognition. They also laid the foundation of ethics. **Protagoras** of Abdera was celebrated as a teacher of morals who taught in Sicily and Athens. After Protagoras, **Gorgias** was celebrated as a rhetorician and politician, and **Hippias** as a polymath.

2. **Socratic Period** (which includes Plato and Aristotle also)

With **Socrates**, begins the second period of Greek philosophy, which extends from 430 to 320 B.C. It comprises of three great philosophers of antiquity such as **Socrates**, **Plato** and **Aristotle**. This period marks the maturity of Greek philosophy. The system of Aristotle marked the actual zenith and climax of Greek thought.

Socrates never put down his views in writing. Our knowledge of the teaching of Socrates is derived chiefly from two sources i. e. Plato and

Xenophon. Plato and Xenophon in their dialogues make Socrates the mouthpiece of their own teachings.

Socrates did not merely engage in sophistry. He was not interested in arguing simply for the sake of arguing. He wanted to discover something important, namely, the *essential nature* of knowledge, justice, beauty, goodness, and especially, the traits of good character such as courage, valour and honesty. The method of philosophizing that he followed bears his name, the Socratic method. Socrates compared his method of study with the “art of the midwife”. His method of questioning presupposed a critical attitude to dogmatic assertions and came to be known as “*Socratic irony*”.

Knowledge, according to Socrates, is the thought, the idea of the universal. Ideas are revealed through definitions and are summed up through induction. Socrates himself provided examples of definitions and generalizations of ethical concepts such as justice, courage, etc. Definition of a concept is preceded by a conversation, in the course of which questions bring about contradictions between the interlocutors. Disclosure of contradictions leads to the elimination of fake knowledge, while the quest for real knowledge prompts the mind to search for real truth.

The structure of the world and the physical nature of things, according to Socrates, is unknowable; we can know only ourselves.

After Socrates, his student Plato and Plato’s student Aristotle were both interested in practically every subject, and each spoke intelligently on philosophical topics and problems.

Plato was an idealist. In defending the idealistic world outlook, Plato actively fought against the materialistic teachings of that time. He widely employed the teachings of Socrates, the Pythagoreans, Parmenides, and Heraclitus. To explain ‘being’, he developed the theory of the existence of immaterial forms of objects, which he called ‘Forms’ or ‘Ideas’. Ideas are eternal, trans-celestial and beyond space and time. Sensible objects are transient, celestial and they depend upon space and time.

Then comes Aristotle, the founder of the science of logic and a number of other branches of special knowledge. His metaphysical theory grows naturally out of his polemic against Plato's doctrine of Ideas. He criticized Plato's theory of disembodied forms but was unable to overcome Plato's theory of Ideas completely.

Aristotle's metaphysical dualism regards both *matter* and *form* as real. Matter is the stuff of all physical objects; form (idea) is the goal for which matter strives. Matter is the imperfect state; form is the perfection. Matter is the particular aspect of a thing; form is the *universal*. Aristotle thus regards all nature as successive transition from 'matter' to 'form' and back.

3. Post-Aristotelian Period (From Stoicism to Neo-Platonism which includes Epicureanism)

The last period i.e. from Stoicism to Neo-Platonism which includes Epicureanism, extends from 320 B.C. to 529 A.D, when the emperor Justinian closed all the schools of philosophy. This period thus constitutes the decline and fall of the Greek philosophical thought. *The essential mark of the decay of Greek thought was the intense subjectivism which is the main feature of all the Post-Aristotelian schools.* After Aristotle the main interest was to equip men for life in a rapidly changing world. Philosophy is no longer the disinterested pursuit of truth, but only the desire of the individual to escape from the ills of life.

From the first Stoic (Zeno of Cyprus) to the last Neo-platonist (Proclus) there is essentially no new principle added to philosophy. None of them was interested in the search for knowledge for its own sake. Philosophy only interests men in so far as it affects their lives. It becomes anthropocentric and egocentric. No one was interested in the wider problems of the universe, but only in the petty problems of human life. Consequently, subjectivism ends in Skepticism i.e. the denial of all knowledge, the rejection of all philosophy.

Briefly, Greek philosophy began in 585 B.C. and ended in 529 A.D. It began when Thales of Miletus, the first Greek philosopher, who predicted exact date of an eclipse of the sun. It ended with an edict of the Christian Emperor Justinian who forbade the teaching of pagan philosophy.

1.4 ORIGIN OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

The history of genuine philosophy started with the thoughts of the Greek thinkers. It is due to this reason that we begin our philosophy with them. They not only laid the foundations upon which all subsequent systems of the western thought are based but they tried to solve almost all the riddles of life with which the western civilization dealt.

The history of greek philosophy refers to an intellectual movement which originated and developed in the ancient times in Greece, Rome, Alexandria and in Asia Minor. The physical environment and the human intellect and will gave men a broader outlook which further strengthened the spirit of reflection and criticism. Due to this approach, this period showed a rapid progress in the field of politics, religion, morals, literature and philosophy.

According to some thinkers, the Greek philosophy originated in the thoughts of Pythagoras and Democritus. Some other thinkers consider Greece as the birth place of Greek thought. It is said that the period of Greek philosophy began in the 6th century B.C. and extended up to the 3rd century A.D.

1.5 BASIC TRENDS OF THE DIFFERENT AGES OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

The historians have divided the history of Greek philosophy into four ages. The characteristic features of each age are as :

- 1) The first period of Greek philosophy extends from about 585 to the middle of the 5th Century B.C. This was known as the pre-sophistic period. The philosophers of this period were naturalists. They considered nature as alive. The Greek philosophy during this period

was monistic. The philosophers of this period dealt mainly with two problems regarding external nature as:

- (a) They discussed the problem of substance or substances of which the natural objects were constituted and their origin.
 - (b) The question of 'change' attracted their attention and they wanted to answer whether the change occurs or not.
- 2) The second period of Greek philosophy was the period of the sophists or Socrates. During this period the attention was deviated from the ontological issues to the problems of man i.e. human knowledge and his conduct. This period belonged to the 5th century which was a period of transition from the metaphysical to the revolutionary and radical outlook. This period was, infact, the period of reconstruction in the history of philosophy. Socrates made efforts to defend knowledge and forwarded his opinion that how the true knowledge can be arrived at by the logical method.
 - 3) Next to Socratic age, came the age of Plato and Aristotle, who discussed almost all the philosophical problems. They discussed the metaphysical problems and the problems relating to man's knowledge. Both Plato and Aristotle constructed the rational theories of logic, ethics and political science. These philosophers were rationalistic in approach. They also gave much importance to mind and considered it a main factor in grasping the reality. The outlook of this period was mainly dualistic as they recognized matter as a factor in reality although secondary to mind.
 - 4) The post Aristotle age extends from 320 B.C. to 529 A.D. This period discussed mainly two problems in detail, religious and moral. Since morality was their main concern, so the question of 'Good' was discussed thoroughly by them. They gave importance to the cultivation of Good conduct along with logic and metaphysics, as they thought that such knowledge destroys ignorance and leads one towards happiness.

After reviewing the characteristics of various ages, let us enumerate the general characteristics of the Greek Philosophy.

1.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

1. Greek philosophy was an inter-mixture of science and philosophy. Sciences were not taken as the separate studies; rather philosophy included the natural sciences like physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, astronomy etc.
2. Philosophy included all the subjects. Only history and geography were not included in it.
3. The Greek philosophers did not distinguish much in the methods used by a philosopher and a scientist. A philosopher even made use of the scientific methods.
4. Greek philosophers did not make much distinction in the spiritual and material elements. But they considered mental as superior to the material.
5. Greek philosophers showed a rationalistic outlook. They considered reason alone as a genuine source of knowledge.
6. Greek philosophers started their enquiry with the existence of an objective world but gradually shifted their attention to the man himself. This shifting of interest from nature to man includes many other problems also. It discusses logic, ethics, psychology etc.
7. The ethical problems of the existence of God and the discovery of highest Good are the main problems which attracted the attention of Greek thinkers.
8. Greek philosophy gives much importance to the problems of religion. The relation of man with God is a fundamental question of enquiry for the Greek philosophers.

1.7 TO SUM UP

Greek philosophy thus falls naturally into three periods. The first may be roughly described as Pre-Socratic philosophy, though it does not include the Sophists who were both the contemporaries and the predecessors of Socrates. This period is the rise of Greek philosophy. The second period, is from the Sophists to Aristotle, which includes Socrates and Plato. This period marks maturity, the actual zenith and culmination of Greek philosophical thought. The third period is of the Post-Aristotelian philosophy which marks the decline and fall of Greek philosophy.

These are not merely arbitrary divisions. Each period has its own special characters. For example, the earliest Greek philosophy is ontological or cosmological in character. The earliest Greek philosophers wondered at the “first” principle of the universe. The problem of all philosophers from Thales to Anaxagoras was the problem of substance; i.e. what is the basic substance of which the natural objects are constituted. The teachings of the earlier Greek philosophers was thus cosmological. But the teachings of the Sophists was exclusively humanistic. The Sophists shifted attention from the ontological problems to the problems of man i.e. to human knowledge and conduct. And the Post-Aristotelian thinkers were absolutely subjective in their approach. In other words, we may characterize Greek philosophy as spiritualistic or idealistic, for it regards mind as the chief factor in the explanation of reality. It is dualistic in the sense that it also recognizes matter as a secondary principle. It is humanistic because it studies man. It is rationalistic as it accepts the competence of reason in the search for truth; and it is critical, for it critically investigates the principles of knowledge.

1.8 GLOSSARY

- **Theosophy** : teaching about God and the world based on mystical insight
- **Cult** : a particular system of religious belief

- **Rhetorician** : a speaker whose words are primarily intended to impress or persuade
- **Interlocutor**: a person who takes part in a dialogue or conversation
- **Skepticism**: the theory that certain knowledge is impossible
- **Subjectivism**: the doctrine that knowledge is merely subjective and that there is no external or objective truth

1.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Give a brief introduction of Greek philosophy.
2. What are the basic features of Greek philosophy?
3. Classify Greek philosophy into different periods.
4. Who are Sophists?

1.10 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Copleston, F. A History of Philosophy. Vol. New York: Doubleday Image Book, 1985
- Zeller, E. Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy. Tr. L.R. Palmer, New York : Humanities Press, 1931
- Thilly, F. A History of Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Book Depot, 1978
- Gomperz, Theodore. Greek Thinker : A History of Ancient Philosophy Tr. Laurie Magnus. London: John Murray Publishers, 1980

1.11 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

- Q1 Do philosophers today have any reason to study ancient Greek philosophy?

Q2 How did Greek philosophy help to form the distinctive goals and methods of philosophy?

Q3 What is the main problem of philosophy for the pre-Socratic philosophers?

Q4 What are the main causes of the decline of Greek philosophy?

SOCRATIC METHOD

STRUCTURE

- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Socratic Method
- 2.4 To sum up
- 2.5 Glossary
- 2.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 2.7 Suggested Reading and References
- 2.8 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

2.1 OBJECTIVES

To summarise the contribution of Socrates as a philosopher

To reproduce the Socratic Method

2.2 INTRODUCTION

Socrates (469-399 BCE) is a unique figure in the history of philosophy. He wrote nothing yet he was a genuine thinker, who through his disciple Plato, has exerted a great influence on the entire development of history of western philosophy.

Socrates' chief concern was to clarify the problems concerning the genuineness of knowledge. He began his philosophy by attacking sophistry

which undermined the knowledge. He believed that most of the ethical and political problems arise due to the misconception of the meaning of truth. So, clarity of knowledge is the key solution for all the problems. Thus, he said that in order to reach truth, we should eradicate all the confused and vague thoughts from our minds. We should try to find out some common judgement behind all the multiplicities and agree to that. To evolve such universal judgements was the purpose of the Socratic method. This method employed cross examination.

2.3 SOCRATIC METHOD

To discover knowledge, he used dialectical method. He made use of a special style to discover the philosophical ideas. He used to go to the market place and would draw the attention of the persons towards him to discuss the meaning of certain concepts. The main aim behind this enquiry was to find out the real and objective meaning of these concepts. This style of discussing the problems is called dialectical because to all proposed meanings and definitions of concepts, Socrates would bring out the defects in them and then persuade the person to rectify those defects. This method comprised of points and counterpoints continued till some unanimous conclusion or synthesis was found. This method helped in the discovery of objective truths.

The main highlights of the Socratic method are:

- 1) **Methodical** Socrates used to begin his enquiry by pretending ignorance about the universal meaning of a concept. *This pretence of ignorance is known as Socratic Irony.* He pretended as if he did not know anything about the subject under discussion as compared to the other participants. His purpose was to encourage independent and correct thinking in others. His method employed a critical examination of the problem which was to be discussed.
- 2) **Based on Discussion** Another step in Socrates' philosophical method was that it involved conversation or dialogue. The development of

ideas depend upon the exchange of ideas or conversation. The development of the thought or the maturity of mind is totally dependent upon such philosophical discussions.

- 3) **Conceptual** The correct and precise definition of the concepts is the basic factor of correct thinking. A true knowledge is always based on the correct meaning of the concept. When a concept is wrongly apprehended, the knowledge based on it is also wrong.
- 4) **Empirical or based on induction** The daily problems of the world formed the subject matter of knowledge for Socrates. He began his enquiry from some specific and concrete life situations. e.g. Socrates would ask others to define love or friendship and by examining various forms of friendship or love, he would discover something which is commonly applicable to all. Therefore, the enquiry of Socrates was both empirical and inductive as it derived the general conclusions from the particular life situations.
- 5) **Deductive** Lastly, Socrates' enquiry was based on deduction also. Socrates used to begin his enquiry with common place definition and examine all the popular ideas. His aim was the attainment of objective and universal truths which are applicable on the individual life situations also. This was possible through the deductive method only.

2.4 TO SUM UP

To conclude, the dialectical method of Socrates was a practical method of reaching the ultimate truths through conversation and empirical, inductive and deductive reasoning. This method serves as a foundation ground for all types of philosophical enquiry.

2.5 GLOSSARY

- **Sophistry:** A deliberate and conscious invalid argument demonstrating ingenuity in reasoning, usually to mislead someone.
- **Dialectical Method :** A method of argument or exposition that

systematically weighs contradictory facts or ideas with a view to the resolution of their real or apparent contradictions.

2.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Discuss the importance of the Socratic Method.

2.7 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Stumpf, Samuel Enoch. Socrates to Sartre, A History of Philosophy. New York : Mc Graw Hills, 1982.
- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge Classics, 2010.
- Thilly, Frank. A History of Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Book Depot, 1965.

2.8 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Answer the following questions in the space given below. If the space is less use separate sheet for your answers.

Q1 Socratic Method is conceptual. Discuss.

Q2 Elaborate the dialectical method of Socrates.

PLATO: CHARACTERISTICS OF IDEAS

STRUCTURE

- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Theory of Ideas
- 3.4 Characteristics of Ideas
- 3.5 To sum up
- 3.6 Glossary
- 3.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 3.8 Suggested Reading and References
- 3.9 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

3.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain Plato's contribution as a teacher of philosophy.
- To reproduce Plato's theory of Ideas

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Plato (429-347 BCE) belonged to a systematic period of ancient Greek thought. He was one of the most influential thinkers in the western philosophical tradition. He was also one of the great authors in the history of philosophy. He carried on the work of his teacher Socrates and founded

his own school, Academy in 385 BCE. *The Academy lasted over nine hundred years and is often thought of as the first university. Its famous pupil was Aristotle. The most important aspect of Plato's thought is the theory of Ideas or Forms.* Like other Greek philosophers, Plato was puzzled by the question of change in the physical world. Plato found that the world and objects of this world are of transitory nature and they are mortal also. This fact led Plato to think of such a world or universe which is unchanging, immortal, transcendental, real and perfect.

According to him, over and above the world of sense perception, there is a transcendental world of ideas or forms. This world of sense objects is a derivation of the transcendental world just as the moonlight is a derivation of the sunlight. The sensuous world, according to him, lacked originality. So Plato believed in the ontological reality which consists of ideas, forms or concepts.

3.3 THEORY OF IDEAS

Plato's theory of Ideas is based on the reflection on the world of sense observation: that there is nothing which is permanent and immutable since everything is ever changing and subject to decay. *Nothing is permanent in this temporary world; so there can be no definite knowledge based on sense-observation. From this fact, it follows that there must be another world which is the object of knowledge.* This world must be transcendental, ideal and apprehensible by reason, because the sensuous world which is subject to decay cannot be the true object of knowledge.

Plato believed that there must be a transcendental world of forms or ideas. All objects of the world are expressions of concepts or forms which are based on the universal element. Plato further believed that the form or concept is not in the things but exists outside of them. *The forms or concepts exist over and above the particular things. These forms or concepts are ultimately real. The particular things are their copies.* These concepts are beyond space and time; so they form the independent world of their own.

3.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF IDEAS

The Ideas hold the essential qualities which are common to the particulars of that category to which they belong. Plato believed that the Ideas are the basis of all philosophical knowledge; so they are substances. They are the real and eternal archetypes of things, which exist prior to the things. They exist apart from them; so they are not affected by any change to which the individual things are subject. The particulars are temporary and imperfect copies of ideas.

There exist various ideas like the ideas of qualities, actions, tables, chairs, big, small, colour, health, truth, good etc. The idea of good is at the top in the hierarchy of ideas. It is the source of all other ideas. Reason helps in the apprehension of true ideas. The particular things have only temporary reality whereas the ideas or the concepts have permanent reality.

Following are the chief characteristics of Plato's theory of Ideas:

- 1) *Ideas are substantial forms:* Ideas are substances because they are the basis of the things. Substance is that which persists in all the circumstances and is not affected by any factor. It is permanent, unchanging and transcendental. The ideas possess all these qualities; so they are considered as the substances.
- 2) *Ideas are common and universal:* An idea is not a particular thing but the universal element common to all things of that category. For example, the idea of the camel is not this or that camel but the general concept of all the camels. It refers to the permanent features of all the camels. Due to this reason, ideas are called universals also.
- 3) *Ideas are immaterial:* Ideas are not material objects; they are thoughts. The material things refer to the particularities whereas the ideas do not exhibit anything material. There is no common camel with a material body. If it would have been there, then we would have found it somewhere and then it would cease to be a universal. Ideas, thus, are not dependent upon any mind but have reality of their own.

- 4) *A class depicts single idea* : A set of similar objects which have the same essential elements represent a class. The objects of the world have few similarities as well as few dissimilarities also. The similar objects are kept in a class which is different from the other classes. So the objects of the world belong to various classes. For example the sparrow and the crow both belong to the class of birds. So idea of being the bird is the common and single idea of them. The idea of the bird is one although birds are many. There can only be one idea for each class of objects e.g. there can be red roses, red carpets, red pens etc. The red colour is present in all these objects but the idea of redness remains same in all the situations.
- 5) *The Ideas are imperishable*: The ideas are non-transitory as well as indestructible. They do not change. The worldly things come and go but their one universal idea always remains. For example, there are several beautiful things which are subject to decay but the idea of beauty remains forever. Different beautiful objects only give the fleeting expression of the one eternal concept of beauty.
- 6) *Ideas are the basic essence of all things* : Ideas refer to the essential element of a thing: e.g. the basic element of animal is animality and the basic element of man is rationality. The accidental characteristics of man do not refer to the permanent elements or the essential features. They are not included in the description of man.
- 7) *Ideas refer to perfection*: Ideas describe the element of perfection. The individual things are imperfect in many respects but the ideas represent perfection. All particulars are copies of the ideas; so they are inferior to the ideas.
- 8) *Ideas are beyond space and time* : The ideas are not located anywhere in the space nor are they bound by time. If they would have been in space, then they must be found somewhere. This would also make them limited and they would cease to be universal. Similarly, if they would have been bound by time, then they would not remain unchangeable and eternal.

- 9) *Ideas are based on reason* : The ideas can be grasped only by reason because they are not something material. They cannot be apprehended through sensuous knowledge. On the contrary, their knowledge can be attained through reason. Intuition or any kind of mystic experience does not help in the attainment of the knowledge of ideas.

3.5 TO SUM UP

The idea is one whereas the objects depict multiplicity. The idea is immutable and eternal. It is not affected by any change in the world. The objects of sense and their knowledge is in perpetual flux whereas the ideas are always static. It is the reason alone that gives us the right knowledge of the concepts and helps in the formation of correct thinking. Thus Plato concluded that the concepts exist over and above the particular things. The concepts have ultimate reality whereas the particular things are only temporarily real.

3.6 GLOSSARY

- **Transcendental** :being beyond ordinary or common experience, thought, or belief
- **Imperishable**:not perishable or subject to decay
- **Transitory**: not lasting, permanent or eternal
- **Immutable**: not mutable; unchangeable
- **Forms**: it is the philosophical concept of Plato regarding the perfect and imperfect objects of the world. The perfect belongs to the world of Forms and the imperfect belongs to our world. The imperfect are simply copies of the perfect that exists in the world of Forms.

3.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Give the characteristics of Plato's theory of Ideas.
- How far do you agree with Plato that the Ideas are substances ?

3.8 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Stumpf, Samuel Enoch. Socrates to Sartre, A History of Philosophy. New York : Mc Graw Hills, 1982.
- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.

3.9 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Answer the following questions in the space given below is less use separate sheet for your answers.

Q1 Ideas are beyond space and time. Explain.

Q2 How can you prove that the Ideas are more perfect than the particulars

Q3 Why the sensuous world is not real according to Plato?

PLATO: CONCEPT OF IDEAL STATE

STRUCTURE

- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 The Ideal State
- 4.4 Comparison with the varna system
- 4.5 Criticism
- 4.6 To sum up
- 4.7 Glossary
- 4.8 Self-assessment Questions
- 4.9 Suggested Reading and References
- 4.10 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

4.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain Plato's political thought.
- To elaborate Plato's communist approach
- To reproduce Plato's concept of the Ideal State
- To differentiate between Plato's division of the citizens into three classes and Indian Varna system.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Plato's theory of the state is based on his ethics. Since virtue is the highest good; and the individual cannot attain the good in isolation but only in society, the mission of the state is to promote virtue and happiness and thereby make maximum people as good and useful citizens. Such individuals subordinate their self-interests and think for the larger interest of the society. If all men become virtuous, rational and good, then there remains no need of laws which are to be imposed on men. Since only few people are virtuous, hence laws are necessary for the realization of our true good. *The state thus owes its origin to the imperfections of human nature.*

4.3 THE IDEAL STATE

According to Plato, society is based upon man's needs. These needs cannot be fulfilled alone. These needs give birth to a sense of co-operation among different individuals. Some take to agriculture, some to weaving and others to building houses. As the needs of the individuals grow, the number of these artisans multiply. Of these professions, each individual selects only that concerning which he has maximum capacity. One job for one person is the principle of division of labour. On the basis of the division of labour, *Plato has classified citizens of an ideal state into three classes:*

- (a) *The Guardians*
- (b) *The Auxillaries*
- (c) *Farmers and Artisans*

His ideal state was based upon the following principles:

- (a) *Classification of citizens into three classes.*
- (b) *Establishment of Justice*
- (c) *State controlled system of education*
- (d) *Communist social system*

According to Plato, each soul has three traits-wisdom, spirit and appetite. But these differ in quantity from man to man. A man adopts role in society according to the supremacy of a quality in his soul.

The rulers need wisdom in order to keep proper proportion of spirit and appetite in the state. Thus in a perfect state all the above mentioned qualities of the soul are found in perfect unison. If the individuals belonging to the three classes in a state perform their functions properly, then only a state will evolve in which there will be no class struggle; but only peace and prosperity will prevail.

Justice is realized in a state in which each class attends to its own work without interfering in other's work. Every individual ought to have some work in the state, the one to which his natural capacity is best adopted. Justice is to have and do what is suited to one's capabilities and place in society.

Hence there are as many classes in the state as there are functions of the soul. Those who have philosophical insight embody reason: they ought to be the ruling class; the members of the warrior class possess the element of spirit; their task is defence; the agriculturists, artisans and merchants represent the lower appetites and have as their function the production of material goods. Of the above mentioned three classes in the state, Plato has considered the guardians as the supreme since they represent wisdom in a state. He entrusts the function of administration in the hands of this class. The source of the unity in state is wisdom. *Therefore the guardian class is the most important and ablest class in the state. Plato has called them the Philosophers. Therefore, he cherished the ideal of a Philosopher King.* Plato prescribed communism of family and personal property for the Philosophers so that they may live as members of the joint family, free from the attachment of personal families.

The ideal state forms a complete unity, one large family; hence Plato opposes private property and monogamous marriage, and recommends, for the two upper classes, the communism of property, wives and children.

Communism of property: Private interests clash with those of the community, and must therefore be abolished. The individual can possess no property in the form of material things. Guardians are not allowed to possess or touch silver or gold.

Communism of women and children: Along with the abolition of private property, Plato has recommended communism of women and children for the guardians. Property and family are the two sources of attachment in man. *Plato thought that if the guardians were freed from both the bondages, then they will become unselfish.* The right to progeny was given to wise and able persons. They should be mated with women having similar qualities thus giving birth to good children. Plato suggested marriage festivals in which the ideal men were freely allowed to mate with the ideal women. Children resulting from such matings were to be brought up by the state and the parents had nothing to do with them.

The ideal society forms a complete unity, one large family; hence Plato opposes private property and monogamous marriage and suggests the communism of property, wives and children.

The state, for Plato, is an educational institution. So it must have its foundation in the highest kind of knowledge i.e. philosophy. Since the state is to be founded upon reason, its laws must be rational, and rational laws can only be made by rational men i.e. philosophers. The rulers must be philosophers. And since the philosophers are few, we must have an aristocracy, not of birth, or of wealth but of intellect. *The first operative principle of the state is reason, the second is force and the third is labour. These refer to the three classes of the rulers, the warriors, the workers and the artisans. The virtue of the ruler is wisdom, of the warriors is courage and of the masses is temperance. Plato calls these three as gold, silver and copper. The harmonious co-operation of these three classes produces justice.*

The rulers must not cease to be philosophers and stop studying. This is rendered possible by taking turns. The duty of the warriors is the protection of the state, both against the external enemies and against the irrational impulses of the masses of its own citizens. The masses will engage themselves in trade, commerce and agriculture.

To what rank a citizen belongs is not determined by birth, nor by individual choice. This will be determined by the officers of the state who

decide after seeing the capabilities of the individual. As they have to decide the numbers required for each rank, the magistrates also control the birth of children. Parents cannot have the children without the sanction from state. For the destruction of evil, the children of bad parents, not sanctioned by the state, will be destroyed; weak and sick children will also not be allowed to live. Children are immediately taken from the custody of their parents as soon as they are born. They are kept in the state nurseries. Means are adopted to see that after removal to the public nurseries, parents shall never again be able to recognize their own children. All the details of educational curriculum are decreed by the state. The education according to Plato, aims at developing wise rulers and virtuous citizens. In brief, Plato aimed at evolving ideal citizens and able rulers through a system of education.

4.4 COMPARISON WITH THE VARNA SYSTEM

Platonic classification of the citizen into three classes is very much similar to the Indian classification of society into the different varnas viz. The Brahmins, The Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas.

Differences :

- (1) But while according to Plato, those who do not fall in any of these classes are slaves, the shudras of Indian varna system were not slaves.
- (2) While Plato has named the tendencies as Gold, Silver and Copper; the Indian varna system consider their qualities as Satvika, Rajasika and Tamasika.
- (3) The Indian system entrusted the function of administration to the warrior class in consultation with the Brahmins; but in Plato's state, the rulers were not warriors but philosophers.
- (4) In ancient Indian system, the ruler had to often wage war and had to be warrior himself. But the job of philosopher in Plato's system is not to fight himself.
- (5) In Indian system, the philosopher was not the king himself but a close advisor of the king in different affairs of the state.

But inspite of being different, they are similar in the respect that the function of the rulers according to Plato was to achieve good in society and to serve people. Similarly the function of Brahmins was to serve the people through education and teaching.

4.5 CRITICISM

(1) *Impractical ideal:* The ideal of a philosopher king is far from being practical because it is difficult to find such a person who is equally conversant in philosophy, mathematics, psychology, economics, law, political science and social life.

(2) *Sanction to authoritarian ruler:* Plato's sanction of total power to the ruler tends to make him authoritarian.

(3) *Lower status of the people:* The provision of unlimited power to the ruler will inevitably lead to a lower status of the people who will be deprived of even their fundamental rights.

(4) *No distinction between philosophy and administration:* The personality traits born due to philosophy are hinderances rather than help in the function of administration. Therefore, we can not hope that a philosopher will be a better administrator.

(5) *Absence of people's contribution in administration:* Plato did not make any provision for the role of public opinion in a state. It is very difficult to run a state without the consideration of the public opinion.

(6) *Plato's communism of property is a bane :* The demand of foregoing personal property in the interest of society in general imposes the autocratic tendencies. The national income will also reduce when the two upper classes will not have personal property as they may not work hard. Moreover man has a natural tendency of possessiveness. If all personal property is abolished, he will be left with no incentive in his life. The artisans and businessmen were allowed to retain personal property. It means that the guardians are used as a means for the good of other sections of the society.

(7) *Communism of women and children is against morality :*

(a) By elimination of the state, Plato unintentionally sought to destroy the very foundation of morality.

(b) The provision of marriage for the layman and the negation of it for the two higher classes may lead to inequality between the two sections.

(c) Communism of women aimed at improvement of the progeny is, however, against the law of genetics. Plato himself believed that wise and able parents may not give birth to intelligent children. Therefore, the artificial mating may not be of any use and is against the law of genetics.

(d) Abolition of family and marriage only suggests an immoral society.

(e) The institution of family provides the ideal situation for the growth of children. No one loves other's children as much as he loves his own. Plato's provision of general parentage will only result in the general neglect of children. The state of the women and the communism of property is against the fundamental values of any human society.

(8) *No importance to producer class :* The producer class has not been given a proper place in the ideal state; Plato has not advanced any scheme for its education and evolution.

(9) *Slaves neglected :* Plato has absolutely neglected slaves in his ideal society. Unless something is done to improve their status, an ideal state cannot be realized.

4.6 TO SUM UP

Plato's ideal state is the dream state based on the principle of justice. It is frequently called as utopian. But the unrealizability of the ideal state does not, in Plato's opinion, detract from its worth as a guide in the organization and administration of actual societies. This is a state in which virtue remains the ideal and the education of the morals will be a primary goal of the state.

4.7 GLOSSARY

- **Utopia:** an ideally perfect place, especially in its social, political and moral aspects.

4.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Explain Plato's concept of the Ideal State.
- What do you understand by the communism of property according to Plato?
- Enumerate the chief objections against the theory of the Ideal State.

4.9 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge Classics, 2010.
- Stace, W.T. A Critical History of Greek Philosophy. Madras : Macmillan India Limited, 1982.

4.10 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

Q1 Compare Plato's Ideal state with the Varna system.

Q2 Point out the similarities between Plato's Ideal state and the Indian Varna system.

Q3 What are the basic objections raised against Plato's communism of women and children ?

Q4 What are the limitations of a philosopher ruler ?

ARISTOTLE: METAPHYSICAL DUALISM - FORM AND MATTER AND THEORY OF CAUSATION

STRUCTURE

- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 Dualism of Form and Matter
- 5.4 The Theory of Causation
- 5.5 To sum up
- 5.6 Glossary
- 5.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 5.8 Suggested Reading and References
- 5.9 Exercise (answer the Questions)

5.1 OBJECTIVES

- To reproduce Aristotle's thought
- To explain his views regarding Dualism of Form and Matter
- To differentiate between the approach of Plato and Aristotle

5.2 INTRODUCTION

Aristotle (384 – 322 BC) was the pupil of Plato, who reconstructed the whole philosophical thought of those times. He was a master of dialectic.

His philosophy included almost all the sciences and humanities such as logic, mathematics, physics, biology and psychology, metaphysics and ethics, politics and aesthetics. He was ‘master of those who know’. It has been said that *Aristotle wrote as many as 400 books as: Organon, On metaphysics, Nicomachean Ethics, On the Constitution of Athens, On the Soul etc. He did not appreciate Plato’s outlook regarding the transcendental nature of forms and the reduction of the external world merely to appearance.* He criticized his master’s theory of Ideas on several grounds. He said:

- 1) The ideas, since they are abstract, cannot account for the existence of the particular things.
- 2) The motion and change cannot be explained through ideas as they are static.
- 3) Ideas come prior to particular things; so they are unable to explain their existence.
- 4) Ideas represent nothing more than the reduplication of things.
- 5) The statement that things are the copies of ideas conveys nothing.
- 6) The relation between ideas and things leads to infinite regress which does not let us stop anywhere.
- 7) The theory of ideas extracts the basic essence from the things and then nothing remains.

Thus, Aristotle based his philosophy on the criticism of Plato’s theory of Ideas.

5.3 DUALISM OF FORM AND MATTER

According to Aristotle substance must be a compound of the two viz. the universal and the particular. Aristotle gave the name ‘form’ to the universal and ‘matter’ to the particular. The gulf between form and matter has to be bridged.

Unlike Plato, Aristotle talks of the reality of both form and matter. He considers form as not apart from things but inherent in them. Form is

not transcendent but immanent. *Form and matter are eternally together. Matter combines with the form to constitute individual things.* Everything grows and evolves under the control and direction of its form. The world of sense is not unreal according to Aristotle. It is the real world in which both form and matter exist. The compound of universal and particular results in the individual thing. So every individual substance is the admixture of both matter and form. *Aristotle differed from Plato, who asserted that form is separate from the matter and the real essence of things is form alone.* Aristotle said that the universal and the particular are fused into a complete unity of the individual.

Both form and matter have their individual importance. All particular happenings occur due to the existence of matter. e.g. the change of a seed into sapling, then to the tree and fruit, all occur due to change in the matter which is the ground of the qualities. This particularizing principle is matter. Aristotle considers it inseparable from form. He conceives both as co-existent. Thus when we say an object changes its form, we do not mean that the form changes but on the contrary, we should say that matter has assumed different forms i.e. one form or the other or the series of forms. The form which it already has does not change but a new form takes the place of the old form.

Aristotle believed that the forms are not subject to decay. The different forms have always existed. Neither matter nor forms disappear. Matter is the substratum of forms. The unity of both the form and matter is responsible for the rich and growing world which we visualize around us.

Substance, according to Aristotle, is a compound of both form and matter. Neither of them can exist without the other. The compound of universal and particular results in the individual things or beings. The essence of a particular thing is constituted by its form. Plato thought that form and matter can be separated but Aristotle did not agree to it. He considered both form and matter as permanent because both are the eternal principles of things according to him.

An object has two aspects - material and formal. We cannot conceive of any object if any one of the two is missing. Aristotle considered God at the top in the scale of forms. Each substance except God is a mixture of both form and matter.

Matter assumes different forms. In case of any change, the new form fashions the matter. We experience that the individual objects change. But there must be something underlying change; something that persists in the change and something to which the different qualities pertain. This particularizing principle of individuation is matter according to Aristotle. It is not some self-sufficient substance of the early materialists; rather it is matter which is inseparable from the form.

Closely allied to the antithesis between form and matter is the principle of potentiality and actuality. As form and matter are inseparable yet distinguishable aspects of a single substance, potentiality and actuality are the stages in the development of a substance. The potential is the earlier and actual is the later stage of development. The mutual interaction of these two results in the actualization of the world.

Both form and matter give rise to individual things. Each individual moves and undergoes change, grows and develops under the direction of forms. The world is not a shadow but it is real. *Aristotle substituted potentiality and actuality against form and matter. Matter is the principle of potentiality and the form is the principle of actuality.* Every form is real like the platonic idea, but instead of being outside, it is in the matter. Form causes the thing to move and realize an end or purpose.

The co-operation of form and matter can be more easily explained through the artistic activity of man. An artist with the help of plan in his mind and tools in his hands, constructs a piece of art and so realizes the purpose. This is an example of the co-ordination of both form and matter.

Normally we consider just one cause of a thing. But according to Aristotle, four causes govern the thing. For example, if we have to see the

cause of the making of a chair, we would say that it is the carpenter. But carpenter could not have produced the chair if he did not have the idea and material. Therefore, besides carpenter, the material required is also a factor in the coming into being of the chair. A formal cause is also required in addition to the material cause and the carpenter. In addition to the material cause and the carpenter, a chair would not be produced unless somebody needs them or unless some purpose is met. Thus the operation of the four causes produces a thing. The four causes are:

- 1) The material cause
- 2) The efficient cause
- 3) The formal cause
- 4) The final cause

The next effort of Aristotle is to reduce the four causes into two. He says that the three causes viz. the material cause, the efficient cause and the final cause melt into one and the formal cause remains unreduced. So in the end form and matter alone exist.

In nutshell we can say that the absolute is universal, but the universal does not exist apart from the particular.

5.4 THE THEORY OF CAUSATION

The development process, according to Aristotle, has been described in terms of the antithesis between potentiality and actuality. As form and matter are inseparable yet they are distinguishable aspects of a single substance. Potentiality and actuality are the stages in the development of a substance. Aristotle rejects the transcendency of forms and brings them from heaven to the earth: he says that forms are not apart from things but inherent in them and not transcendental but immanent.

Both form and matter give rise to individual things. Each individual moves and undergoes changes, grows and develops under the direction of forms. The world is not a shadow but it is real. Aristotle substituted potentiality and actuality against form and matter. Matter is the principle of potentiality; and form is the principle of reality or actuality.

Further, Aristotle gives antithesis of potentiality and actuality as governed by causes. That is why Aristotle puts forth the developmental theory of causation to explain the position regarding form and matter, potentiality and actuality.

Aristotle has offered a unique conception of causation. This can be explained with the help of the following example: A chair or table is an effect. Now, what caused the chair or table? We normally say that the carpenter made the chair or table; therefore carpenter is the cause of the chair or table. But carpenter could not have produced these objects if he did not have any material. Therefore, besides carpenter, the material required is also a factor in the coming into being of chair and table. However, even with the material and carpenter, both available, a chair or table cannot be made unless there is an idea or form of these objects in the mind of the carpenter. Yet a chair or table would not be produced unless somebody needs them or unless some purpose is met. Thus, Aristotle has recognised four causes as follows:

- (a) The material cause
- (b) The formal cause
- (c) The efficient cause
- (d) The final cause

(a) *The material cause* : By the material cause, Aristotle understands the relatively undifferentiated stuff from which the thing in question is made. Aristotle illustrates material cause by the formless bronze from which the sculptor plans to fashion his statue.

(b) *The formal cause* : It is the pattern or the structure which is to become embodied in the thing when it is fully realized: it is that which the thing essentially is. The formal cause of a statue is the general plan or idea of the statue as conceived by the sculptor.

(c) *The efficient cause* : It is that through which the thing is produced. The efficient cause of the statue includes the sculptor, chisels and other instruments used by the sculptor in his work.

(d) *The final cause* : The final cause is the end or purpose towards which the process is directed. It is that for the sake of which the thing is made. In sculpturing it is the final and fully realised and completed statue.

Thus, Aristotle holds that we must not make the mistake of supposing that each individual thing has only one type of cause whether it be a natural object, a living plant or an animal or a manufactured article. Everything can be explained by means of the four causes.

5.5 TO SUM UP

Aristotle's philosophy shows that form and matter are the two ultimate realities. The form includes the pattern and matter is the substratum in which the qualities inhere. Form and matter co-exist. All motion and change occur due to the union of form and matter.

5.6 GLOSSARY

- **Dualism:** a view which holds that two equal but opposed ultimate, irreducible principles are required for the explanation of reality. Good and evil, mind and matter are dualism.

5.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Explain Aristotle's views on Form and Matter.
- On what grounds did Aristotle criticise Plato's theory of Ideas?
- Describe the theory of causation.
- What are the four causes explained by Aristotle?

5.8 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Zeller, E. Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy. Tr. L.R. Palmer. New York : Humanities Press, 1931.
- Stace, W.T. A Critical History of Greek Philosophy . Madras : Macmillan India Limited, 1982.
- Sharma, Ram Nath. History of Philosophy. Delhi : Kedar Nath Ram Nath, 1950

5.9 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Answer the following questions in the space given below. If the space is less use separate sheet for your answers.

Q1 How did Aristotle prove that the reality is not form but matter also?

Q2 How did Aristotle prove that form and matter co-exist?

Q3 What is meant by the principle of potentiality and actuality ?

Q4 Aristotle's views were dualistic. Explain.

Q5 What is meant by the efficient cause? Explain.

SCHOLASTICISM - PURPOSE AND CHARACTERISTICS

STRUCTURE

- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 Purpose of Scholasticism
- 6.4 Characteristics of Scholasticism
- 6.5 To sum up
- 6.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 6.7 Suggested Reading and References
- 6.8 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

6.1 OBJECTIVES

- To establish the impact of church
- To explain the meaning and purpose of scholasticism
- To elaborate the features of scholasticism

6.2 INTRODUCTION

After the establishment of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, there began a period of philosophical reconstruction in which the dogmas were the

guiding principles. This Christian philosophy of the middle ages demonstrates the authority of the Christian dogmas and helps in the construction of the theory of world and life on a Christian basis. The thinkers who performed this service were called 'Schoolmen' and their system 'scholastic philosophy'. *Christian dogmas were the main source of the scholastic philosophy.* The methods used by these philosophers bore the stamp of the Greek philosophy. The schoolmen accepted the truths of Christianity without questioning them. The mind's freedom was only upto the extent till it did not come in conflict with the established truths of Christianity.

6.3 PURPOSE OF SCHOLASTICISM

Scholasticism is the dominant philosophy of the middle ages which is based on the doctrines forwarded by the Christian church. With the conversion of the educated classes to Christianity in the Roman Empire, the Christian clergy had gradually assumed the intellectual leadership and have become the custodians of learning. As the representative of God on earth and the source of revealed truth, the church became the guardian of education and the censor of morales. It was believed that the church receives the truth directly from God. So there is no need of any other agency. Human reason is limited and can not reveal the truths. The individual is subordinate to the church in his religious beliefs and practices. The church is a link between the individual and God. The church is superior to the state also.

The philosophical thought of this period mirrors the spirit of the times in assigning a leading role to tradition and authority. The subject matter of the scholastic philosophy is derived from the Christian dogmas.

The 'schoolmen' as the scholastic thinkers were known as, showed a different approach from their predecessors who were the Greek thinkers. The aim of the Greek philosophers had been to give a rational explanation of the universe. The schoolmen, on the other hand, accepted the truths of Christianity without questioning. They placed philosophy in the service of religion and made it only a handmaiden of theology. Speculative philosophy, if it conflicted with theology, was immediately considered as discarded.

The freedom of thought was only upto the limits whereby it did not clash with the Christian dogmas. Later on efforts were also made to liberate philosophy from the religious dogmatism. This was the beginning of the rationalistic movement in scholasticism. But this rationalistic movement was condemned by the clergy who did not like the awakening movement.

The purpose of scholasticism was to give the philosophy a firm ground in Christian dogmas as well as to establish the supremacy of these dogmas. The mind was left free to the extent so far as it did not clash with the established truths. Since dogmas were the established truths, so whole of the Christian philosophy got inspiration from them. Under no circumstances, there was permission to reject the dogmas. The Christian philosophers considered the dogmas to be the guiding principles of life. The church forefathers cast these in a philosophical mould in order to give them a shape of methods and concepts of Greek philosophy. The philosophical thought of this period assigns a leading role to tradition and authority. *The scholars of this period tried to unite philosophy and the doctrines of the church.* They endeavoured to harmonize the two by reading the Christian faith into their philosophies and vice-versa. They considered faith to be the beginning and the end of their enquiry and theology as the crown of all knowledge. They believed that in crucial situations when the reason becomes silent, the truths of religion are to be believed. Philosophy finds no place when it is in conflict with theology.

The schoolmen disagreed with all the thinkers who rejected the authority of the established truths. Like the Greek philosophers, they approached the problems but with a pre-conception of goal. They began their knowledge with the known truths and then connect them to the rest of knowledge so as to make it intelligible.

The schoolmen believed that the truths of religion agree with reason; so there can be no conflict between divine revelation and human thinking. Faith was a dominating feature of these thinkers. Thus schoolmen decided not to oppose dogma and consider any proposition as true if it agrees with

the existing faith. But in case if a dogma has to be challenged, the thinker gives the doctrine of two fold without weakening the existence of the dogma. He has to satisfy himself that both the propositions are true even though contradictory but he will under no circumstance reject the dogma.

6.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOLASTICISM

Following are the chief characteristics of scholasticism:

- 1) Scholasticism made use of the deductive method in proving the authenticity of propositions.
- 2) The scholastic philosophy mainly revolved around the transcendental realities like the God, the angels and the saints. The interest of the schoolmen was the realm of spirits as compared to the phenomenal things.
- 3) The study of theology was most important. Natural Sciences occupied a secondary place.
- 4) The schoolmen failed to undertake an empirical study of the subjects like psychology and ethics. They were not concerned with the question as to how the soul acts; rather they were concerned with the ultimate nature and destiny of the soul. The empirical pursuit, according to them, contributes very less to the understanding of the destiny of soul.
- 5) The questions of ethics cannot be answered by the worldly notions. The highest good according to the scholastic thinkers is the blessed life in God.
- 6) Empirical means fail in disclosing the secrets of the divine life. The divine grace is showered only on those on whom God Himself wills to shower.
- 7) The standard of right and wrong is the obedience to the will of God. God's will cannot be questioned nor can it be understood by any empirical experience. It is only disclosed by divine revelation.
- 8) Theology occupies the top place in the scholastic ethics.

- 9) The world, the schoolmen believe, cannot be perceived by senses. It can only be apprehended by rational thought. Logic, in its deductive and syllogistic form, is most important in the pursuit of truth.
- 10) The scholastic thinkers contributed very less to the theory of knowledge as distinguished from logic. They did not indulge themselves in the problems concerning the possibility and the limits of knowledge.

6.5 TO SUM UP

To conclude, we can say that the scholasticism was a very important philosophy of the medieval times which laid emphasis on the importance of church. It considered church as the representative of God on earth and the source of revealed truth. The church to them is the guardian of education, the censor of morales and a last resort in the intellectual and spiritual affairs.

6.6 GLOSSARY

- **Scholasticism:** the philosophy of the medieval cathedral schools which attempted to support Christian beliefs with elements of Greek philosophy and with the use of syllogistic reasoning
- **Clergy:** the body of all people ordained for religious duties, especially in the Christian church
- **Theology:** the study of God and of God's relation to the world

6.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Explain the beliefs of schoolmen regarding the Christian dogmas.
- What is meant by scholasticism? What is its purpose?
- What message does scholasticism convey?

6.8 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Sharma, Ram Nath. History of Greek Philosophy . Delhi : Kedar Nath Ram Nath, 1950
- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.

6.9 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Answer the following questions in the space given below. If the space is less use separate sheet for your answers.

Q1 What are the salient features of scholasticism?

Q2 Explain the main message given by scholasticism.

Q3 Explain the characteristics of scholasticism.

**ST. AUGUSTINE: ETHICAL VIEWS,
FREEDOM OF THE WILL**

STRUCTURE

- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Introduction
- 7.3 Ethical views
- 7.4 Freedom of the will
- 7.5 To sum up
- 7.6 Glossary
- 7.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 7.8 Suggested Reading and References
- 7.9 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

7.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain the ethical views of St. Augustine
- To summarise his views on the freedom of the will

7.2 INTRODUCTION

St Augustine was a fourth century philosopher. He was a priest and the most influential teacher of Christian church. He is known for his significant contribution to western philosophy along with Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas. He held that human beings are dependent on divine grace. He created a theological system, in which philosophical problems were discussed. His

philosophy guided Christian church for centuries. Augustine's philosophy, although not very systematic, touches almost all the major aspects of the philosophical field. His philosophical ideas were influenced by Plato, Aristotle and other Greek philosophers, besides saints of Christianity. The central idea in his philosophical system is the doctrine of trinity, which he has treated exhaustively. His philosophical approach is the result of his personal quest for wisdom and happiness. There are many some of the problems dealt with in detail by St. Augustine: one such

7.3 ETHICAL VIEWS

The supreme goal of human conduct is a religious, mystical ideal i.e. the mind's union with God in the vision of God. Such union cannot take place in an imperfect world but only in a future life, which is the true life. Our earthly life is a pilgrimage to God. But in comparison with eternal blessedness, it is not life but death. The eternal blessedness can be achieved in the next life only. So he believes in *contemptus mundi* (evil world) on the one hand and *amor Dei* on the other. But his views are more positive and less negative. Thus he rejects that there is anything like absolute evil.

In his account of the virtues, he also suggests a way in which the ethical dualism between the highest other worldly good and our day to day morality may be bridged. *By love we are united with God; hence love is the supreme virtue, the source of all the other virtues. Temperance or self-control is love of God as opposed to love of the world; fortitude is the overcoming of pain and suffering by love; justice is the service of God; and wisdom is the power of right choice guided by love of God. Love of God is the basis of true love of self and of others.* It alone makes the virtues as genuine virtues Unless inspired and prompted by this love, they are nothing but 'splendid vices'.

The love of God is the work of divine grace acting within man's soul, a mystical process taking place through; the sacraments of the church under the influence of God's power. Faith, hope and charity are interdependent and are all essential to conversion. There is no love without hope, no hope without love and neither love nor hope without faith.

In his teaching, lies the possibility of a more positive attitude towards earthly life and human institutions that seemed possible under the ideals of primitive Christianity. The early Christians showed a negative attitude towards human institutions such as marriage, the affairs of state, war, administration etc. *Augustine wavers between the ascetic ideal and the worldly ideal*. He recognizes the right to property but he disagrees with the communistic teachings of the old Fathers that all have an equal right to property. He also regards rich and poor alike as capable of salvation. Nevertheless he looks upon the possession of private property as a hindrance to the soul and places a higher value upon poverty. The same dualism can be seen in his estimate of marriage and celibacy. Marriage is considered as a sacrament, yet the unmarried state is the higher. His conception of the state reveals the same dualistic tendency. The earthly state is based on self-love and even contempt of God (*contemptus, Dei*); the city of God is achieved by love of God and contempt of self. The temporal state is, indeed, an ethical community whose mission is to promote justice and achieve happiness. The goal of the state is relative, while that of the church is absolute. Hence the state is subordinate to the church.

In short, St. Augustine envisaged a two fold ideal. The highest good or perfection is a transcendent good which is very difficult to attain while leading the earthly life. A relative perfection can be achieved by the performance of external works like prayer, fasting etc. Yet the supreme goal is asceticism or renunciation of the world i.e. withdrawal from social life.

Idealism is the most important feature of his ethical teachings. The highest values in the universe are not to be found in the material aspect of existence, but in the spirit. The highest part of man is not his body but the spirit.

In nutshell, for Augustine, ethics is an enquiry into the supreme good and the way of attaining it. His ethics is influenced by Greek philosophy.

7.4 FREEDOM OF THE WILL

St. Augustine held that man, in the person of Adam, was free to sin or not to sin. God created man not only free, but also endowed him with supernatural gifts of grace, immortality, holiness, justice and freedom from rebellious desire. But Adam disobeyed God and thereby not only lost the divine gifts, but corrupted the entire race. He transmitted his sinful nature to his offspring and also to the next generations as he represented the whole human race. Along with the sinful nature, punishment was also transmitted to the coming generations. So, now it is impossible for man to not to sin. Adam's sin is original and hereditary. As a result, the entire human race stands condemned and no one can be saved from the punishment except by the mercy and bestowed grace of God. God alone can reform the corrupted man.

No one can freely do even the good work. *Only those whom God selects for getting His grace can do the good work. The human will does not achieve grace by an act of freedom, but rather achieves freedom by grace. God alone can change the human soul to regain the love of God which it had before Adam's fall.*

The knowledge and love of the highest good, or God, restores to man the power to do good work and the power to turn away from the life of senses. Love of the good is synonymous with freedom; only the good will is free. Good will is the free gift of God but this gift is not showered on all.

It is a mystery to know that why God chose some for eternal happiness and others for eternal punishment. Augustine says that there is no injustice in His choice since man has, by original sin, forfeited his claim he may have had to salvation. Now only God's grace can save the man.

Man was free to choose eternal life but he did not choose it; God knew that he would not and therefore decided whom to save and whom not. Again, we encounter an example of Augustine's conception of the absolute power of God. He is unwilling to limit divine freedom even in the slightest degree; God can do as He pleases with man, and He has settled from all

eternity what is going to happen to every individual. Man, in the person of Adam, has had his chance but he abused that privilege. God knew man would abuse it; but since man was under no compulsion to do wrong, no individual has a right to complain if he is not among those chosen for the eternal blessings. Nevertheless, if a man truly loves God, if he has the good will, he will be redeemed.

7.5 TO SUM UP

Augustine had ardent faith in God and His grace. He said that it is man alone, who is responsible for his fallen state.

Sin implies guilt, guilt implies responsibility on the part of the guilty person; only a being who is free to choose between right and wrong can be a sinner. Hence, if man sinned, he must have been free. The same conclusion was reached in another way; God is absolutely good and just; therefore He cannot be responsible for sin. Man himself must be the author of sin, and hence free. Adam was free to sin or not to sin; his sensuous nature, which is evil, prevailed, and he chose sin. However the divine grace can help him in the redemption.

7.6 GLOSSARY

- **Evil** : evil is the privation of perfection due to a being
- **Doctrine of Trinity** : it means that there is one God who eternally exists as three distinct persons – the Father, Son and Holy spirit
- **Sin** : An immoral act considered to be a transgression against divine law

7.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Discuss the ethical views of St. Augustine.
- Give St. Augustine's views on the freedom of the will.

7.8 SUGGESTION READING AND REFERENCES

- Fuller, B.A.G. A History of Philosophy. Bombay : Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. 1955

- Sharma, Ram Nath. History of Greek Philosophy . Delhi : Kedar Nath Ram Nath, 1950
- Turner, Willam. History of Philosophy. New Yark : Ginn & Company, 1929.

7.9 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Answer the following questions in the space given below. If the space is less use separate sheet for your answers.

Q1 Is it possible to attain salvation while leading this life according to St. Augustine ?

Q2 What is the power of 'love of God' according to St. Augustine?

Q3 Some persons are chosen and some are not chosen for the divine grace according to Augustine. Why?

Q4 Good will is the free gift of God. How ?

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS: PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

STRUCTURE

- 8.1. Objectives
- 8.2. Introduction
- 8.3. Proofs for the Existence of God
- 8.4. To sum up
- 8.5. Glossary
- 8.6. Self-Assessment Questions
- 8.7. Suggested Reading and References
- 8.8. Exercise (Answer the Questions)

8.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise the theological problem of the medieval period.
- To elaborate St. Thomas Aquinas' proofs for the existence of God.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

Thomas Aquinas (1225 - 1274), an Italian philosopher is the most important figure in Scholastic philosophy and one of the leading Roman Catholic theologian. His theologian views are best expressed in his work *Summa Theologiae*. In this work, Aquinas, with great care, distinguishes

between truths that are known by faith; truths that are known by reason; and truths that are known by both faith and reason. Aquinas thus does not confuse religious faith with philosophy. According to him, if our thinking proceeds from principles that we accept on religious faith, then our thinking is theological. And if our reasoning proceeds from what is evident in sensory experience, then our thinking is philosophical.

Indeed, Aquinas' most important contribution is his account of the relationship between faith and reason and the independence of philosophy from theology. Philosophy, Aquinas holds, consists of truths that our unaided reason can discover by reflecting on our worldly experience. Theology, on the other hand, begins with truths that have been revealed by God through scriptures and accepted by faith and from these revealed truths, draws further religious truths. Thus Aquinas holds that philosophy is based on precepts of reason; theology is based on truths of revelation held on faith.

But Aquinas does not maintain that faith and reason contradict each other. Rather he strongly believes in the harmony of faith and reason. Aquinas claims that reason is capable of refuting objections to the truths of faith. It also helps in rationally proving the existence of God. According to Aquinas, reason (Philosophy) supplies insights into the nature of religious claims that otherwise defy human understanding. For instance, while God's infinite "goodness" can not be fully grasped by the finite human beings, reason applied properly helps one to construct an analogy between that which is knowable (i.e. the goodness seen in human experience) and that which is unknowable (i.e. the perfect goodness of God). Thus philosophy (reason) provides the basis for defending the truths of religious claims.

8.3 PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

There were many thinkers and saints before Aquinas who held that the knowledge of god's existence is naturally innate in man. But Aquinas felt it necessary to establish proofs for God's existence as it was not a self-evident truth.

For Aquinas, God is pure form, pure being, pure actuality and pure existence. We have knowledge of God by faith, but, according to Aquinas, we can also get knowledge of God by reasoning.

Aquinas holds that we can know about God rationally through what God is not. *Knowledge of God is available through a negative way - the via negationis. According to him, while we cannot grasp God's nature, for instance, we can comprehend our own finitude and understand by means of our rational faculties, the ways in which God is not like us.* But we can know this only if the idea of God is required by human reason, and this means that the idea of God must be required in explaining the world of our experience.

In his *Summa Theologiae*, St. Thomas Aquinas puts forth five ways, the *Quinque Viae*, in which the idea of God is required in explaining the world. Each of the proofs tells us that some aspect of the universe we experience requires the existence of something else that is unlike anything in the universe and in our experience. In other words, we may say that each of the proofs proceeds by pointing to some aspect of the world we experience: its motion, its causality, its contingency, its imperfection, or its unthinking order. Each proof then argues that this aspect of the world cannot account for itself. Each aspect demands the existence of something - of a Divine Being - that is utterly different from the objects we experience. Aquinas makes use of a number of proofs employed by Aristotle, Augustine and the Arabian philosophers.

The five proofs of St. Thomas Aquinas presented in the *Summa Theologiae* are:

1. The Argument from Motion/Movement/Change:

According to Aquinas, the *first* way to prove that God exists, is to consider the fact that there is motion in the world. That everything is in motion. Aquinas argues that everything that is moved requires something to move it. If something is moved, it must be moved by something else, since

every effect implies a cause. Now if that by which something is moved is itself moving, then it, too, must be moved by something else, and that by something else again. But, Aquinas argues, this cannot go on to infinity because then there would be no first mover and this may result in *ad infinitum* in the causal series. Therefore, it follows that *there must be an initial mover, which is unmoved. And this first unmoved mover is God.*

2. *The Argument from First Efficient Cause:*

Aquinas argues that in the observable world, we discover an order of efficient cause, but no case is found of something efficiently causing itself. A thing cannot be the cause of itself, since to be a cause it would have to exist prior to itself and this is impossible. Thus nothing causes itself. Indeed everything is caused by something else. But it is not possible for a line of efficient causes to extend to infinity. However if the line of causes extended back to infinity, then we would find no first efficient cause; and so there will be no final effect and no intermediate efficient cause in existence in the universe, which is obviously false. So, according to Aquinas, it is necessary to admit that there is a first efficient cause. And this we call God, that exists *per se*, by itself; that does not need anything else through which it exists.

3. *The Argument from Contingency and Necessity:*

The *third* argument begins with the idea of contingency and necessity. It proceeds as follows: we find in nature things that are contingent. They come into being and cease to exist. Aquinas argues, if everything were contingent, then eventually everything would have ceased existing. If this happened, then even now nothing would exist. But this is not the case. It follows that not everything is contingent. There must exist something the existence of which is *necessary*, that is, forever. Thus there must be some necessary being. And this Necessary Being causes the existence of all other contingent beings but itself is self-caused. This necessary being is God. *A necessary being must be postulated as the source of the existence of contingent beings.*

4. *The Argument from Degrees of Perfection:*

The *fourth* way of St. Aquinas to prove the existence of God is based on the degrees of perfection that we find in things. According to Aquinas, among the natural things in our world some are more or less good, true, noble and the like. But to say that a thing has more or less of certain perfection, is to say that it resembles to a greater or lesser degree of something which perfectly exemplifies that perfection. *So there must be something which is most perfectly good, true, and noble.* Consequently, which most perfectly exists and is the source of these perfections, namely, pure goodness, absolute truth, highest nobility and the like is, God.

5. *The Argument from Order/Design in the universe:*

The *fifth* way of proving God's existence is based on the order in the universe. Aquinas holds that all natural things act for an end or purpose. That is, they function in accordance with a plan or design. Their activity is always aimed at achieving the best. But they cannot do so on their own account; nor their activity is produced by chance. Aquinas argues that they must be directed by some being that has knowledge and intelligence, just as an arrow is directed toward its target by an archer. Therefore, *there must exist an intelligent being who directs all natural things towards their respective end. This Being, according to Aquinas, is God.*

8.4 TO SUM UP

St. Thomas Aquinas, thus, deduces the existence of God from the very general facts about the universe. Each of the ways of St. Aquinas to prove God's existence tells us something about God.

The *first* proof implies that unlike anything in the universe, God imparts motion to everything without moving Himself

The *second* proof implies that unlike anything we know, God causes everything to exist, Himself is uncaused Cause.

The *third* proof tells us that unlike anything in the universe, God can not cease existing because His existence does not depend on anything else.

The *fourth* proof tells us that unlike anything in the universe, God is perfect goodness, perfect truth, perfect nobility, and perfect existence.

And the *fifth* proof tells us that God is supremely wise and intelligent in whom all the order in the universe originates.

8.5 GLOSSARY

- **Contigent:** depending on something else in the future in order to happen

8.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What are the five ways St. Thomas Aquinas advances to prove the existence of God?
- In what ways does St. Thomas Aquinas show a greater integration of philosophy and theology?

8.7 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Thilly, Frank. A History of Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 1984.
- Copleston, Fredrick. A History of Western Philosophy. Vol. I. New York : Doubleday Image Book, 1962.
- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.

8.8 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Answer the following questions in the space given below. If the space is less use separate sheet for your answers.

- Q1 How does St. Thomas Aquinas justify that we can know about God rationally through what God is not?

Q2 What does St. Thomas Aquinas mean by ‘God exists per se’?

Q3 What is the fallacy of ad infinitum in the causal series which makes an argument unsound?

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS: THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

STRUCTURE

- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Introduction
- 9.3 Theory of knowledge
- 9.4 To sum up
- 9.5 Glossary
- 9.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 9.7 Suggested Reading and References
- 9.8 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

9.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain Aquinas' Theory of Knowledge

9.2 INTRODUCTION

St. Thomas occupies a very important place in the medieval philosophy. His system is typical of the movement. Its fundamental aim is to demonstrate the rationality of the universe as a revelation of God. In its general outlines, it agrees with the Augustinian metaphysics and accepts it as the guiding principle.

Philosophy, according to St. Thomas, passes from facts to God. So, doctrines like the trinity, original sin, the creation of the world in time etc. cannot be demonstrated by natural reason but they are the matters of faith. St. Thomas rendered a genuine service to philosophy by eliminating such questions from the field of philosophy. His followers went a step further in also withdrawing rational or natural theology from the jurisdiction of reason, thereby turning all problems concerning God over to faith.

9.3 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

The Thomistic theory of knowledge is inspired by Aristotle. True and genuine knowledge, according to Thomas Aquinas, is the conceptual knowledge. But concepts have their basis in sense perception. He believes in the dictum that there is nothing in the intellect that came automatically and was not in sensation. So genuine knowledge is comprised of concepts; its origin and foundation is perception. He believes in three faculties of the soul:

- (1) *Faculty of sensation*
- (2) *Faculty of active intellect.*
- (3) *Faculty of potential intellect*

The faculty of sensation provides us with the raw materials of our knowledge; through it we know the particulars or what Aquinas calls 'Sensible species'. It is through sensation that the soul receives copies or forms of particular objects.

But in order to be known or received by the potential intellect, which is entirely independent of the body or hyperorganic, the sensible copy must be freed from everything material or corporeal.

This function of elimination and abstraction is performed by the faculty of active intellect. The active intellect fashions the sensible copy into an intelligible copy by abstracting such elements from it as do not conform to the nature of this intellect. The soul can assimilate only that which conforms to its nature.

The intelligible species or intelligible copy is not the copy of a particular object in space and time. It does not have any accidental qualities like a reference to colour, taste or smell : rather it has a reference to the essential qualities only. Through it, the potential intellect knows or conceives the universal notion of a thing.

Aquinas believes that mind could not know if it did not have the capacity of forming universal notions nor could it know if it were not for sensation. So sensations formulate an occasion for it. *Aquinas' teachings take in to consideration the role of both the sensational and conceptual aspects of our knowledge, of its particularity and its universality.* He also emphasizes the active or spontaneous nature of our thinking, which is the source of its a-priori character. The mind is predisposed to act in certain ways; knowledge is implicit in the mind and is made explicit when the mind is aroused to action by sensation.

Through the action of external objects on the soul, the raw material of knowledge is received and elaborated by the higher faculties of the mind into conceptual knowledge. Hence genuine knowledge or science has its basis in sense perception, in experience and we can know only what we experience. Consequently, the philosopher starts thinking deeply and considers this world as the starting point of his enquiry. Thinking in such a manner gives rise to metaphysics. The metaphysician does not think about the particulars but he thinks about the universals. The universals can only be there, where there are particulars with common qualities. But Aquinas believes that it is not possible to have the genuine knowledge of the spiritual beings as there can be no universal notion of the spiritual beings, angels and human souls.

Matter is the principle of individuation. In the case of man, it is because the soul is connected with a particular organic body that he is this particular person. But in case of angels or human souls, such principles of association with matter do not prevail. Their substance or nature, that through which they are what they are, is not matter and form, but form alone; they

owe their individuality to themselves. Hence, to attain their knowledge is not possible.

9.4 TO SUM UP

Thus St. Thomas Aquinas held that sensation is the act of the total human person, body and soul; and not an act of the soul using body. Also there are no inborn ideas to be found in man: all his ideas come to him through his senses.

9.5 GLOSSARY

- **Hyperorganic:** higher than, or beyond the sphere of the organic.
- **Soul:** it is the immaterial part of a person, regarded as immortal.

9.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Give an account of St. Thomas Aquinas' theory of knowledge ?
- What is the importance of the sensations in St. Thomas Aquinas' theory of knowledge?

9.7 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge 1999.
- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.

9.8 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is not sufficient.

Q1 Why is it not possible to have genuine knowledge of the spiritual beings?

Q2 What is the role performed by the potential intellect?

Q3 Which knowledge has been called as ‘genuine knowledge’ according to St. Thomas Aquinas?

**‘COGITO ERGO SUM’
DESCARTES: DERIVATION OF THE JUDGEMENT**

STRUCTURE

- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Introduction
- 10.3 The beginning of Descartes’ philosophy
- 10.4 Descartes’ method
- 10.5 Derivation of the judgement ‘Cogito Ergo Sum’
- 10.6 To sum up
- 10.7 Glossary
- 10.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 10.9 Suggested Reading and References
- 10.10 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

10.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise the origin of the Modern Philosophy
- To explain the basic tenets of Rationalism
- To elaborate the main features of Descartes’ philosophy

10.2 INTRODUCTION

Western philosophy in the modern period began as a revolt against the religion-oriented thinking of the medieval times and had its origin in the intellectual tendencies. Thinkers developed a keen critical faculty, refusing to accept traditions and scriptures without critical examination. Reason and logic were accepted as the final criteria both in the field of science and of philosophy. *Free thinking was generally emphasized in the modern period.* Hence thinking turned from religious or supernatural subjects to others which were essentially natural. Natural causes were believed to be at the root of everything. Obviously, *the main point of departure from medieval thinking to modern philosophy is the growing faith in human reason.* The faith in human reason was also responsible for the uninterrupted progress in every field of life. Man did not like the unnecessary intervention of church in his relation with God.

So another result of modern approach was the individuation of thinkers. They tried to solve the problems implying their reason. The emphasis on reason and on the new method of discovery led the enquiry into the limits, nature and functions of knowledge. *This study of knowledge for ascertaining its nature and limits is called epistemology.* The epistemology is then the special contribution of the modern thinkers. There is hardly any modern thinker who does not discuss the theory of knowledge.

The rationalistic spirit which characterised Renaissance found its first philosophical expression in Rene Descartes (1596-1650). He is the father of the modern western philosophy and a rationalist philosopher. He held that ‘reason’ is the source of clear and distinct knowledge, and ‘sensitivity’ gives confused knowledge.

10.3 THE BEGINNING OF DESCARTES’ PHILOSOPHY

Descartes was the first philosopher who tried to bring objectivity in the philosophical conclusions. Like Bacon, he too stressed the practical aspects of knowledge and attached great importance to philosophy being

useful from the practical standpoint. With this object in view, he begins by doubting everything; even known and established truths and resolves to accept nothing except that which is absolutely certain. His aim is to construct, on an absolute basis, a philosophical system, free from the uncertainties of the old times as well as a true method of attaining the knowledge of all things of which his mind was capable. He says that if anything permanent and irrefutable is to be established, then it must not be accepted blindly. It has to be rejected first, and then an entirely new enquiry has to be conducted. Descartes, therefore, draws up a code of rules for himself. These rules are four in number, and are as follows:

- 1) To accept nothing for true, which is not clearly known to be such, that is, which is not presented to the mind so clearly and distinctly as to exclude all doubts.
- (2) To divide every problem under examination into as many parts as possible, and as might be required for its adequate solution.
- (3) To conduct one's thought in an orderly manner, so as to begin with objects, the simplest and easiest to understand and to ascend from them, step by step. To the knowledge of the more and more complex things, assigning in thought a certain order even to those things which, in their own nature, do not seem to stand in any relation to one another.
- (4) To make enumeration so complete and reviews so comprehensive as to be assured that nothing has been omitted. These four methodical rules are, Descartes thinks, sufficient for him, provided he observes them strictly. The first rule refers to Descartes dissatisfaction whereas the last three refer to analysis respectively.

10.4 DESCARTES' METHOD

The method Descartes adopts in his philosophical investigations is that which he borrows from mathematics. He mentions two steps in his method viz. Intuition and Deduction, which he thinks, are the only two ways

open to man for attaining truth. Like a geometrician (who starts with a small number of self-evident axioms and definitions and reaches wonderful results by means of deduction from them), Descartes begins first of all, by searching for some first and fundamental certainty, and then proposes to derive other certainties from it. *By intuition, therefore, he means the immediate self-evident certainty which forces itself upon us, 'the conception of an attentive mind so distinct and so clear that no doubt remains to it with regard to that which we comprehend'*. He says that most of our ideas are confused and obscure because we try to take too much at once. One who tries to attend too many things at a time ends up in confusion. Hence, the first thing required is to analyse out from habitual thinking those clear and distinct principles whose certainty cannot be doubted. This intuition again, is to be followed by deduction, which means the process by which, through a series of steps each intuitively certain, we can reach out conclusions carrying the same degree of certainty as each preceding intuition.

Thus we see that Descartes' method is the mathematical method which he considers the best among all. He liked the certainty and evidence of the mathematical demonstrations. Thus his philosophical method of deriving the judgement Cogito Ergo Sum is mathematical synthetic or deductive in character.

10.5 DERIVATION OF THE JUDGEMENT COGITO ERGO SUM

What Descartes wants, is to start with a fundamental certainty which will exclude all doubts and will be a foundation on which all other certainties could be established. He finds this certainty in that of self-consciousness i.e. in the certainty which our self-consciousness gives us of our own existence as thinking beings. He then shows that from this self-settled certainty of our existence, we can reason upwards to the certainty of an absolute and infinite being viz. God; and that from these two certainties of self and God together, we can reason downwards to that of the material world as a whole.

The preliminary condition of all genuine enquiry is, according to Descartes, *universal doubt*. *He, therefore, begins with doubting everything that seems to be uncertain even in the least degree*. Thus, he says that all the prejudices and opinions which have been handed down to us from our parents and teachers since our childhood should be doubted; for experience has proved many of them to be false. The senses also deceive us; so we cannot rely on them. Again, it may be that the so called realities which we perceive every moment may be of our dream states. There is no criterion also to distinguish our dream states from the sensations of our waking moments. Moreover, we don't have any guarantee that we are not always dreaming. This can also be true of the world which we always visualize, must be an imaginary world. We may, therefore, think that the heavens, the air, the earth, colours, figures, sounds, even our own bodies and actions, and all other external objects, are nothing but illusion and ill-fancies imposed on us by the evil spirits. Even mathematics, inspite of the apparent certainty of its axioms and demonstrations, may be doubted; for controversy and error are also found in it. Lastly, God who is all-powerful may have so created us that we are always deceived even in those things which, we think, we know best.

This is the universal doubt or the methodic doubt as the philosophers call it. *The universal doubt refers to the principle that we must doubt everything before starting the inquiry. Real knowledge only follows as its consequence. Doubt, for Descartes, is a means to find out certain and primary truths. His doubt starts against the certainty of the truths already established. It is a starting point of Descartes' philosophy and not its conclusion.*

Having thus doubted everything, Descartes then tries to see if there is anything that cannot be doubted at all; and as a result of this inquiry, he comes to the conclusion, that there is only one thing which cannot be questioned viz., the very fact of doubting itself. He therefore says; *I can doubt everything except that I doubt. Hence I doubt this is absolutely certain.*

Now, to doubt is to think. Hence it is certain that I think therefore I exist. Doubting means thinking which necessarily involves a thinker, the one implies the other. Since thinking is a fact given in inner consciousness; so the thinker, the self, which thinks must also be there. Hence follows his famous statement Cogito Ergo Sum -I think therefore I exist.

Descartes says that even supposing that I am being deceived by a powerful being, there can still be no doubt that I exist. For the powerful being could not succeed in deceiving me unless I existed. Everything may be a mistake but thinking is not a mistake. The whole content of consciousness is destroyed, yet consciousness itself, the doubting activity, the being of the doubter, is indestructible. Hence *Cogito Ergo Sum is the first most certain proposition which stands undubitable.*

Thus Descartes begins from doubt because he wanted to arrive at philosophical truths, which are undoubted. Therefore he begins by doubting everything. In doubting alone, he finds that the doubter exists. The activity of doubting itself proves the existence of a doubter.

Hence, Descartes' doubt is a methodical doubt through which he could establish Cogito Ergo Sum, on which all his enquiry could rely. This one point is the starting point of Descartes' philosophical enquiry.

10.6 TO SUM UP

The proposition of Descartes Cogito Ergo Sum is the only first and most fundamental certainty with which to start. It is the basis of all other enquiries. It becomes the criterion of certainties, the universal rule, according to which all other propositions are to be tested. 'I think therefore I exist' is the certainty which is indubitable because Descartes reached to establish this as a fundamental certainty in a very methodical way with the help of doubt.

10.7 GLOSSARY

- **Epistemology:** the branch of philosophy which studies the source, validity and limits of knowledge; it inquires into perception, meaning and truth.

- **Rationalism:** it is the view which says that knowledge is derived from reason.

10.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What are the distinctive features of modern western philosophy ?
- Which rules have been chalked out by Descartes for reaching a genuine conclusion ?
- Who is called the father of modern western philosophy and why?
- How does intuition and deduction help in the search for truth ?
- What is the meaning of 'Cogito Ergo Sum'?

10.9 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Descartes, Vol. I and II. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Russell, Bertrand. A History of Western Philosophy. London : USA Paperback, 1964
- Thilly, Frank. A History of Western Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 1997.

10.10 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate 'sheet if the space is not sufficient.

Q1 What is the outstanding characteristic of modern western philosophy?

Q2 How can you prove that you have conducted a genuine enquiry ?

Q3 Why is it necessary according to Descartes, to begin with the simpler truths and reach to the complex ones?

Q4 Why did Descartes choose the mathematical method for undergoing his enquiry?

Q5 How did Descartes derive the judgement 'Cogito Ergo Sum'?

Q6 How can you say that Descartes' doubt is a methodical doubt?

DESCARTES: THEORY OF INNATE IDEAS

STRUCTURE

- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Introduction
- 11.3 Theory of Innate Ideas
- 11.4 To sum up
- 11.5 Glossary
- 11.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 11.7 Suggested Reading and References
- 11.8 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

11.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise the rationalistic approach in the theory of knowledge
- To differentiate between adventitious ideas, factitious ideas and innate ideas
- To reproduce Descartes' theory of Innate Ideas.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

In the history of modern western philosophy, there arose an epistemological dispute. The dispute arose under the changed historical

conditions of the 17th and 18th centuries, which is often called the *Age of Reason*. The changed conditions had developed as a result of the collapse of the medieval way of life and the medieval way of thinking.

The corpus of the dispute was ‘methods of knowledge’. There was a hot controversy regarding the method of obtaining knowledge between the *Continental rationalists* of the 17th century such as Rene Descartes (1596-1650), Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646-1716); and the British empiricists of the late 17th and 18th centuries such as John Locke (1632-1704), George Berkeley (1685-1753) and David Hume (1711-1776). The dispute on knowledge was the question: What method should be followed to obtain knowledge? The rationalists argued that the correct method was to start from the mind, while the empiricists held that the best method was to start from experience. The controversy between the rationalists and the empiricists was long-drawn-out and bewildering until Immanuel Kant formulated his ‘critical theory of knowledge’ known as ‘*Apriorism*’.

Rationalism holds that the intellect contains important truths prior to sensory experience. Rene Descartes, the rationalist, believes in the *theory of innate ideas*, according to which these truths are “innate” to the mind - that is, they are part of the original dispositions of the intellect. This doctrine is called *rationalism*. Another doctrine, known as *empiricism*, rejects Descartes’ doctrine of innate ideas. John Locke, the empiricist, believes in the theory of, *nihil in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu*; that is, there is nothing in the intellect that was not first in the senses. He argues that the mind of the infant is a *tabula rasa*, that is, a blank slate, and is informed subsequently by sense experience. Experience imprints the mind with the ideas that are necessary for thinking. Nothing is thus innate to the mind. But, contrary to John Locke, Descartes believes that the mind possesses innate ideas that were not placed there by sensory experience. He also denies that experience can deliver any true knowledge.

11.3 THEORY OF INNATE IDEAS

Descartes, the father of modern western philosophy, regards rational thinking and judging as the source and extent of knowledge. He holds that genuine knowledge is acquired by reason. *Knowledge is gained by the clear vision of the intellect or reason alone.* He contends that the information which we receive from sense-perception, or build upon the data of senses, is not the object of knowledge, because it is not necessary and universal. *Knowledge gained from sense-perception is contingent i.e.* it happens to be true on a particular occasion or on a number of occasions, but it could turn out to be false in certain instances. Descartes thus rejects all knowledge derived from sense-experience. According to him, genuine knowledge cannot come from sense-perception. It must have its foundation in intellect or reason. Reason is thus the only source of valid knowledge.

Descartes starts with the certainty of the *self* which is known intuitively. According to him if everything is suspended, what remains is that I am doubting. Doubting means that I am thinking. Thus, I think, therefore I am. When analyzing my mind, I find that it is filled with clear, self-evident ideas, which are innate. Descartes regards these ideas as *ideae innatae* i.e. inborn ideas. They are, thus, in the mind prior to and independent of sense experience.

Descartes holds the presence of innate ideas in the mind along with the ideas whose source was adventitious and factitious. He thus divided ideas into three kinds:

- (i) Adventitious ideas,
- (ii) Factitious ideas, and
- (iii) Innate ideas.

- *Adventitious:* ideas come, or seem to come through the senses. They are not clear and distinct.
- *Factitious:* ideas are made up by the mind from the elements of the ideas of other things. They are also not clear and distinct.

- *Innate ideas* : originate from within the mind. They are implanted in the mind by God. Indeed, Descartes holds the belief that God at the time of birth imprints certain innate ideas on the mind. The ideas of, for example, causality, infinity, eternity, perfect Being of God and the like are innate ideas. According to him, these innate ideas are implanted in us by God. And it is because of innate ideas we can know certain propositions to be true *for certain*.

However, *Descartes deduces the existence of God from the innate idea of God*. According to him, the idea of God is the idea of an infinite Being. It cannot be produced by myself, because I am a finite being. It cannot be produced by any finite thing in the world, or by the addition of all finite things, because the sum of finite things is finite. The finite things cannot produce the idea of an infinite Being. The cause must contain at least as much reality as is contained in the effect. So God or the infinite Being is the cause of the innate idea of God. Therefore, God exists. He is perfect and truthful.

Furthermore, we have a conviction that external things exist; so, Descartes holds, they must exist. *Descartes deduces the existence of the external world from the veracity of God*. If it were non-existent, God would be deceitful. In this way, the self exists, God exists, and the world exists. Descartes thus deduces the existence of God and the world from the innate ideas in the self, which are distinct, clear and self-evident. He also maintains that the development of true knowledge consists in the deduction of other truths from these self-evident innate ideas, as propositions are deduced from axioms and definitions in geometry. He believes that it is by virtue of innate ideas in us that we are able to *reason* and, in particular, to do philosophy, to know God, to know universal truths.

Descartes argues that the principle of rational argument, and the ideas like those of God, thought and extension which we perceive clearly and distinctly and which provide the rational foundations of our knowledge, are innate. He maintains that there are certain fundamental principles of reality,

which are innate and recognized as true by reason. All other truths about God, self and the world are deduced from them. According to him, all principles of science and knowledge are founded on clear and distinct ideas, or incorrigible truths, which are innate in the mind and which may be captured by the method of reason. *Descartes, thus, holds that there are ideas whose content can not be revealed by experience, but by reason alone.* We can generate from that content a system of truths whereby we know the universe as it really is, and not as it appears to our fallible organs of sensation. Indeed, the human mind has access to the truth through innate ideas only.

Descartes thus maintains that reasoning or thought is the basic factor in knowledge. He asserts that man has the power to know with certainty various truths about the universe which the senses alone cannot give us. Indeed, the mind has the ability to discover truth by itself. The mind has certain ready-made principles or innate ideas which make men capable of arriving at irrefutable knowledge independently of sense experience.

11.4 TO SUM UP

The above observations show that Descartes is a typical representative of rationalism. According to him, knowledge consists in rational insight. Knowledge is obtained through both the analytical and the deductive methods. After the rational structure of the universe has been established in terms of the analytical approach i.e. critical insight into nature and the human soul; the deductive method can be applied i.e. deriving and explaining the world from the innate ideas. In Descartes' rationalism, man relies upon his own reason. In a more general sense, Descartes' approach consists in the application of the mathematical method to the ideas of the human mind. Descartes' mathematical method consists in intuition and deduction. The fundamental principles are given by intuition. The remote conclusions are deduced from them. By intuition, Descartes means the conception which an attentive mind gives us so readily and distinctly that we are wholly freed from doubt about that which we understand. It is thus *immediate apprehension* of a self-evident truth by reason. An analysis of the human

mind shows that the ideas of God (truth), Being (reality), morality (goodness), the world (space, time, matter as mathematical categories) are intuitive and can be ordered according to their degree of clarity in such a way that, by the deductive method, the world's rational structure can be carved out.

11.5 GLOSSARY

- **Deduction:** orderly, logical reasoning from one or more statements (premises) which are assumed, to a conclusion which follows necessarily.
- **Intuition:** direct and immediate knowledge, such as the axioms of geometry.

11.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What is Descartes' doctrine of 'Innate Ideas'? Explain.
- Which are the three kinds of ideas mentioned by Descartes?

11.7 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Bennett, Jonathan. Learning from Six Philosophers, Vol. I, Oxford : Clarendon Press, 2001.
- Thilly, Frank (trans). History of Philosophy. Delhi: Surjeet Publication, 2005

11.8 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Q1 To what extent is Descartes a 'rationalist'?

Q2 Must intuition, reason and understanding all be involved in our explanation of human knowledge?

Q3 Descartes advocated a priori theory of knowledge. Discuss.

Q4 Is reason superior to sense experience?

DESCARTES: MIND-BODY DUALISM (DESCARTES' INTERACTIONISM)

STRUCTURE

- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Introduction
- 12.3 Mind-body Dualism
- 12.4 Criticism
- 12.5 To sum up
- 12.6 Glossary
- 12.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 12.8 Suggested Reading and References
- 12.9 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

12.1 OBJECTIVES

- To list the different theories of mind-body relationship.
- To reproduce Descartes' Mind-Body dualism.
- To evaluate Descartes' theory of 'Interactionism'.

12.2 INTRODUCTION

One of the most persistent Cartesian philosophical problems is the problem of 'mind-body' relation. Since the description of mental content is

quite different from the description of physical processes, the question arises, 'Is there any relation between mind and body, any correspondence between the mental processes and the physiological processes?' Or, there is no relation between mind and body; no correspondence between the two.

In order to response to the Cartesian formulation of the mind-body problem and its possible solutions, different philosophers have presented their views either regarding the same. Some hold that mind and body are two distinct and independent substances; some regard mind and body as two parallel attributes of the one and the same Substance (God); some others regard mind as an epiphenomenon of the brain substance.

The *first* view is known as *Interactionism* which regards body and mind as two independent substances interacting upon each other. Rene Descartes is exponent of Interactionism. The second view is known as *Occasionalism* propounded by Malebranche. According to him, mind and body are extremely opposed to each other and can not interact upon each other; but still there is a correspondence between the two; and this correspondence is brought about by God, who upon the occasion of certain change in the one, intervenes to bring about corresponding changes in the other. The *third* view regards the correspondence between mind and body as due to pre-established harmony between them. This is the theory of *Pre-established Harmony* advocated by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz.

The *fourth* view is *Psycho Physical Parallelism* or *Parallelistic Monism*, according to which mind and body, or thought and extension, are not two distinct and independent substances, but only two parallel attributes of the one and the same substance - God. It asserts that mental processes and physiological processes not interfere with each other, but run along in perfect correspondence with each other due to their consubstantiality or co-inherence in one and the same substance. Benedict Spinoza is the chief exponent of *Parallelistic Monism*. The *fifth* view is *Epiphenomenalism* which reduces mind or consciousness to an epiphenomenon of the brain, that mind

is simply brain. It holds that all states of consciousness in us are immediately caused by the molecular changes of the brain-substance.

Rene Descartes examines the relationship between mind and body in his work *Meditations*. He describes mind and body as completely opposite and separable. This separability of mind and body is known as *Cartesian dualism*.

12.3 MIND-BODY DUALISM

Descartes maintains that human beings are not automata. Rather they are the composite of thinking substance (mind) and extended substance (body). But mind and body (matter) are two heterogeneous substances. Mind is an immaterial or spiritual substance that thinks; matter (body) is a substance whose chief characteristic is extension. Mind is thus conscious while matter is unconscious. Matter (body) is extended while mind is unextended. Body is subject to mechanical laws, while mind is subject to purpose and teleology. It follows that mind and matter (body) are totally independent of each other. They have thus nothing in common. But still there is a correspondence between the two i.e. if there occurs a change in one, the similar change occurs in the other. That if there occurs a change in mind, the similar change occurs in the body and vice versa.

There is, thus, a causal relationship between mental and bodily processes. Our physical condition affects our mental disposition; bodily changes register themselves in the mental outlook. For diseases of the brain affect our mental life and thinking. A blow on the head or chloroform fumes may cause us to lose consciousness. The mental effects of drugs, alcohol, and coffee are almost universally recognized. If one's digestion or bodily secretions are disturbed, he may become depressed. We usually can not think clearly and concentrate unless our bodily processes are functioning rather smoothly. On the other hand, mental experiences also affect bodily processes. For example, worry may cause ill health. Fear leads to quickened heart action and other bodily reactions: anger may produce a rise in the blood pressure.

But how could all this happen? Since the two are not related to each other in any way, what is the mechanism which makes the exchange possible?

Descartes' answer is that mind and body interact. This view is known as Interactionism. According to it the mind and the body act upon each other. Descartes holds that in a living person the mind and the material body interact; the motion of the body being sometimes affected by the mind and the thoughts of the mind being influenced by physical sensations. In this way the body acts upon the mind in sensations, and that the mind acts upon the body in volitions. *Descartes maintains that the part of the body in which the soul (mind) exercises its functions immediately is not the heart, nor the whole of the brain, but merely the most inward of all its parts, a certain very small gland which is situated in the middle of its substance (deep between the two hemispheres of the brain).* This was a kind of bottle-neck through which the incoming sensory currents of “animal spirits” passed, and in which they were transformed into the outgoing impulses terminating in muscular movement. Here, then, was the natural spot for the mind to intervene and switch the trains of movement set up by sensory stimulation to the appropriate volitional and motor, or outgoing tracks.

The mind, Descartes holds, interacts with the body through “vital spirits” in the brain, that the slightest movements which take place in it may alter very greatly the course of these spirits; and reciprocally that the smallest changes which occur in the course of the spirits may do much to change the movements of this gland. *The gland Descartes is referring to is what is now called the Pineal Gland, a small endocrine gland at the base of the brain.* It had been discovered in Descartes' time, and its functions are still not adequately understood. It is recently hypothesized that it controls mating cycle in higher animals and possibly number of other activities. *Descartes thus holds that body and mind interact upon each other in the pineal gland of the brain, which is the seat of the mind.* He explains it saying that the body does not affect the mind. It is the pineal gland which is responsible for the mutual and inter-connected activity of mind and body.

The technical name given to this theory is *Causal Interactionism* which states that mind and body causally interact, that mental events e.g., an “act of will” can cause a bodily consequence e.g., raising one’s arm; and that a bodily change e.g. a puncture of the skin can cause a mental consequence e.g., a pain. Thus the mind causes bodily changes, and the bodily changes produce mental effects.

12.4 CRITICISM

In spite of Descartes’ best efforts to analyze how mental changes cause bodily changes and vice versa, the theory of *Interactionism* has been severely criticized. The critics have asked how the two substances or entities (body and mind), so different in nature could possibly interact: that how something immaterial could affect the movement of something material?

Another, objection is that - how can we consistently affirm that a non-spatial thinking thing (soul) is located at the pineal gland and exercises effective control over the mechanical system of the body? How can a non-spatial thing have spatial location? It is thus inconceivable that the two absolutely different and independent substances could interact. Descartes was vigorously attacked in this by most of his immediate followers, including Benedict Spinoza, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz and many of the empiricists.

12.5 TO SUM UP

To respond to Descartes’ mind body dualism, philosophers have struggled with a number of theories to explain how mind and body worked together to constitute a complete human being. The heterogeneity of mind and body made the connection between them extremely problematic. Therefore, some philosophers have suggested that mental events and bodily events are different aspects of some other event (Dual-aspect Theory), or that they occur in parallel, like the sound and visual tracks on a film (Parallelism or Pre-established Harmony), or that mental events and bodily events are in fact identical (Identity Theory). Some other philosophers and psychologists embraced behaviourism, arguing that “mental event” is in fact

only shorthand for a complex description of patterns of behaviour. Recently, many philosophers have come to reject the distinction between mind and body altogether, insisting on the primacy and indivisibility of the concept of a person. Other philosophers have come to embrace functionalism, which holds that the brain is in fact an extremely sophisticated computer, and the mind is causally but not logically dependent on the brain.

12.6 GLOSSARY

- **Dualism** : a view which holds that two equal but opposed ultimate, irreducible principles are required for the explanation of reality. Good and evil, mind and matter are dualism.

12.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Explain the different theories of the mind-body relationship.
- State Descartes' views on the relation between Mind and Body.

12.8 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Bennett, Jonathan. Learning From Six Philosophers, Vol. I, Oxford Clarendon Press, 2001
- Thilly, Frank (trans). History of Philosophy. Delhi: Surgeet Publication, 2005
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- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.

12.9 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

- Q1 Write a short note on metaphysical dualism of Descartess

Q2 Write a note on Interactionism.

Q3 Descartes is a dualist? Discuss.

**SPINOZA: BODY MIND RELATION PROBLEM
AND ITS SOLUTION PANTHEISM**

STRUCTURE

- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Introduction
- 13.3 Mind and body relationship
- 13.4 Criticism of Mind and body relationship
- 13.5 Pantheism
- 13.6 Criticism of Pantheism
- 13.7 To sum up
- 13.8 Glossary
- 13.9 Self-Assessment Questions
- 13.10 Suggested Reading and References
- 13.11 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

13.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise the development of rational thought
- To explain Spinoza's theory of Mind-Body problem
- To reproduce Spinoza's views on Pantheism

13.2 INTRODUCTION

Benedict Spinoza (1532-1677) was one of the most influential western thinkers. He was a rationalist and had complete faith in the power of reason. Spinoza based his philosophy on certain axiomatic principles and tried to arrive at the truth by the geometrical method.

Spinoza's thought exhibits a greater degree of mysticism and religiosity. He believes that all our objects of knowledge fall into, any of the three categories of substance, attributes and modes.

Substance according to Spinoza, is that from which all things follow necessarily. This one substance he calls God. The substance is infinite or unlimited. It can be compared to itself only. There is nothing like it with which it can be compared. It is self-caused, self-explanatory, all-inclusive, inter-related whole. It is only one because if there were more than one substance, then they would limit one another. As there is nothing over and above God, so all is God and everything follows from God. So God, according to Spinoza, instead of being transcendent is immanent in the world.

There can be no substance without attributes. Attributes may be either essential or accidental. The essential attributes define a substance i.e. without which the substance would cease to be a substance. The accidental characteristics are those which a substance can lose without ceasing to be what it is.

By attribute is meant that which intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance. Substance has infinite number of attributes. It does not mean that substance is bound by these infinite number of attributes because these are infinite and not finite. A substance can only be limited under these two conditions.

- (1) If an attribute excludes the possibility of other attributes i.e. one determination negates other determinations.
- (2) If an attribute by itself is finite. An attribute does not limit the substance; it manifests its nature infinitely and boundlessly.

Spinoza holds that out of an infinite number of attributes, the human intellect can perceive only two namely, extension and thought.

13.3 MIND AND BODY RELATIONSHIP

According to Spinoza, both the mental and physical realms, thought and extension, are the manifestations of one and the same universal reality. Both of them have equal rank and neither is the cause or the effect of one another. Both are the effects of the same cause according to him. In other words, the one indivisible nature or God, regarded from one angle, is a space occupying and moving thing while as looked at from another, is an ideal world. This is known as Psycho-physical parallelism. According to it, the order and connection in the realm of thought is the same as that in the realm of extension so that corresponding to every psychosis, there is a neurosis, or as Spinoza would say, to my notion of a circle there corresponds a real circle existing in nature. Hence extension and thought are the two parallel aspects of one and the same ultimate reality.

Descartes considered body and mind to be relative substances which were quite independent of each other but he considered them as interactive also. Spinoza rejected cartesian dualism and the substantiality of mind and body. He regarded mind and body, extension and thought as two of the many inseparable aspects of a single, all inclusive reality. They are co-existent but they do not interact. Mind is the form of cogitation while body is the form of extension. Both mind and body are related to one substance i.e. God. So they exist in close proximity to each other although in their functional forms, the two appear to be distinct. The body is continuously subject to external influences and it constantly shows new forms, about each one of which the mind is always aware. The mind can know the external elements only in the form in which they influence the body; it cannot know them in their true form.

This proves that mind does not influence the body, nor the body can influence the mind. They run parallel to each other. They are infinite but independent of one another, each capable of expressing God infinitely in its

own way. God is extended as well as thinking. These two are just the inseparable aspects of the same thing, like the convex and concave of the same lens. From one viewpoint, God appears as infinite extension; from another angle, He appears as infinite intellect. One aspect cannot exist without the other. To every mode of extension corresponds a mode of thought. For example, a circle and an idea of a circle are one and the same thing looked at from the angle of extension and thought respectively.

Such a view is neither materialism nor it is idealism. The former holds that mind or thought is the by-product of matter and its motion, while the latter holds that matter is the by-product of mind. But the parallelism of Spinoza wards off each of these one-sided theories by holding that matter and mind, extension and thought, exclude each other and neither can produce the other: and that despite independence, both belong to the same substance. This also does not attach any superiority to either of the two attributes, both having the same rank and order. In brief, Spinoza's theory differs from both materialism and idealism. This doctrine of parallelism also goes against the dualistic conception of God in relation to mind and matter and also against such conception of mind and matter themselves as given by Descartes.

Spinoza explains the agreement between the movements of the body and those of the soul both in man and in animals and thereby removes the difficulties involved in the cartesian interaction theory. He says that one and the same being manifests itself in the physical order and in the intellectual order. This being or the substance manifests itself in both the spheres according to the same laws, and the two realms are parallel. Hence he rejected cartesianism and occasionalism also which was propounded by the later cartesians.

Some critics say that Spinoza's God does not have intelligence or will, then how can He be assigned thought?

Spinoza's reply to this is that his God is not the author of nature but nature itself. He explains it with the example that the spider weaves its web without the slightest notion of geometry; the animal organism develops

without having the faintest conception of physiology and anatomy. Nature thinks without thinking that it thinks; its thought is unconscious. Hence Spinoza attributes to God thought or intellect, not in the sense in which it is attributed to finite beings. But he assigns it in a higher sense. Spinoza, in fact, does not deny intellect to God but he denies the human intellect to God which is limited. So thought is an attribute of God. In God there is not only the thought of His own essence but also the thought of all the things that necessarily follow from Him.

Human mind, according to Spinoza, is only a form of God's infinite wisdom and mind; so when we say that our mind comprehends a particular idea, we say nothing more or less than that the particular idea is implicit in God. In this manner, God is the universal substance. Neither the mind nor the body can influence each other as they are the two different aspects of the same reality Spinoza believes that mind cannot persuade the body to act nor can body persuade the mind to think. It is not possible for the mind to control the body in any of its states like awake, asleep, at rest or in motion. Man cannot indulge in any activity through the guidance of his mind. Whatever activity the mind takes up is predetermined by some cause. Every human action is predetermined according to Spinoza.

Hence mind and matter or thought and extension have been considered as two independent realities by Spinoza. They run parallel to each other but do not interact.

13.4 CRITICISM OF SPINOZA'S MIND-BODY RELATIONSHIP

Spinoza's mind-body relationship has been criticized on the following grounds:

- (1) It is observed that nothing can happen in the body unless there is a corresponding mental state. In this sense the mind must perceive everything that happens in the human body.
- (2) The mind knows the existence and nature of other bodies because its body is affected by them.

- (3) It sometimes happens that when we are engaged in some particular mental work, we are disturbed by a sudden and unanticipated noise with the result that our concentration breaks. This is an example of physiological intention in mental activity.
- (4) The theory of parallelism holds that mental development should leave no influence upon physical behaviour although in the theory of evolution, there is clear indication of the increasing significance and importance of the mind. The parallelism theory does not give more importance to mind.
- (5) The theory of parallelism states that every physical activity should be accompanied by a parallel mental activity. If we say so, then we are forced to accept that behind every physical activity, there must be a parallel mental activity whether the physical activity belongs to human organism or not. This would mean that there is mind in everything, everywhere or in other words, the notion of panpsychism. And this is not the fact.
- (6) Spinoza's parallelism also contradicts the clear testimony of consciousness. Just as the body acts upon mind, so the mind also acts on the body. The mind feels pain when body gets injured and when some bad news affects the mind, the body also starts feeling weak.

In spite of the various objections against Spinoza's mind-body problems, its significance cannot be undermined.

13.5 PANTHEISM

Pantheism is the doctrine according to which the things or modes have no existence of their own. They are mere illusions drawn by imagination. Pantheism lays down that God alone is real and all other finite things are suppressed in the existence of God. God is the true principle of things. God is nature and nature is God. God is not, as Descartes held, apart from the world as an external transcendent cause acting on it from without; but in the world, the immanent principle of the universe. God is in the world

and the world in Him; He is the source of everything, that is, God and the world are one. Cause and effect are not distinct here. *God does not create in the sense of producing something separate from, and external to Himself.* He is the permanent essence of all things and the source of all reality.

The relationship of the substance with the things or modes is of the same nature as of the plane to its various figures inscribed in it. In order to simplify the illustration, let us liken the substance to the infinitely extended plane and the modes may be like-wise compared to the many squares on it as in a graph paper. Now the position, extent and area of each square is determined by surrounding squares. They also, in turn, are determined by other surrounding squares and there seems no limit to this chain. Hence anyone square is determined, by other squares and not by the infinite plane itself. In the same way each mode is in other things and through which it is conceived and determined. Interpreted in this way the mode is unreal and does not follow from the substance.

However, there is another sense in which a mode is in God. The eternal nature of the mode follows from the following view:

- (a) Each finite thing as in the graph, each square, results from the infinite totality. However, this totality or *natura naturata* as infinite mode is directly caused by God. Therefore each mode follows from God.
- (b) Again the modes cannot be conceived to be existent without the substance.
- (c) Lastly, the substance is the pure being. Now even the finite mode must have some being. For example, as the square in the plane has some extension at least.

Thus each mode is real when it participates in the nature of God and unreal though actual, when it is seen to be determined by the infinite multiplicity of all other finite things. Thus Spinoza is really pantheistic for he negates the actuality of things. But many a times Spinoza calls nature as God and God as nature i.e. *Natura naturata* and *natura naturans*.

Spinoza conceives God under the attribute of extension as the ground of all modes of matter. He considers God as the immanent cause of everything. He is not outside as the theologians believe; rather He manifests himself through the reality. Therefore Spinoza's God is Nature, the ultimate essence of them, the *Natura naturans* manifesting itself through the *Natura Naturata*.

13.6 CRITICISM OF PANTHEISM

- (1) A lot of variety is seen in the world. But pantheism wants us not to see the existing variety but consider everything as identical to God.
- (2) There is much difference in God and the world. At one place, God is infinite where as world is composed of finite objects; then how can everything be God and God everything.
- (3) If we believe that God is all and all is God, then we shall also have to believe that God has all the ills and defects of the world.
- (4) Pantheism gives a blow to morality because no moral life is possible if one rejects the idea of free will in man. This theory says that everything is God. Then how can anyone be held responsible for any of his misdeeds.
- (5) If we accept the pantheistic theory, then we should also believe that everything in this world is done by God; so we don't have to make any effort.
- (6) The pantheistic God does not possess any personality; so fails to satisfy the aspirations of a religious man.

13.7 To SUM UP

Spinoza identifies God with nature. Nature is not a power that is different from God; it is a power that is one and the same with divine power. Spinoza wrote *Deus Sive Natura* (God or Nature) which means God was *Natura Naturans* not *Natura Naturata*, that is, “ a dynamic nature in action, growing and changing, not a passive or static thing.”

13.8 GLOSSARY

- **Materialism:** any monistic metaphysical theory which holds that ultimate reality is matter and that all seemingly nonmaterial things such as minds and thoughts are reducible to the motions of particles of matter.
- **Idealism:** any metaphysical theory which holds that reality is mental, spiritual, or has the nature of mind, thought, or consciousness.
- **Panpsychism :** it is the view that consciousness, mind or soul is a universal and primordial feature of all things.

13.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- How does Spinoza attempt to overcome Descartes' dualism?
- Explain mind and body relation as given by Spinoza.
- What is pantheism? Is it a satisfactory theory?

13.10 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. USA : Paperback, 1964.
- Thilly, Frank. A History of Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 1997.
- Bennett, Jonathan. A Study of Spinoza's Ethics. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1984.

13.11 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answer. Use separate sheet if the space is not sufficient.

- Q1 How are extension and thought related to God or the substance ?
-

Q2 How did Spinoza solve the mind body problem?

Q3 Critically examine pantheism of Spinoza.

Q4 How does Spinoza's parallelism leads to panpsychism?

Q5 What are the main features of pantheism ?

LEIBNITZ: THEORY OF MONADS

STRUCTURE

- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Introduction
- 14.3 Theory of monads
 - (a) Doctrine of monads
 - (b) Characteristics of monads
 - (c) Kinds of monads.
- 14.4 Principle of continuity
- 14.5 To sum up
- 14.6 Glossary
- 14.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 14.8 Suggested Reading and References
- 14.9 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

14.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain the climax of rationalism
- To elaborate spiritual atomism
- To summarise Leibnitz's contribution
- To explain the pluralistic approach of Leibnitz

14.2 INTRODUCTION

Leibnitz (1646-1716) was a great scientist and mathematician and was greatly impressed by the unity which Spinoza had emphasized in his philosophy. But unfortunately Leibnitz did not believe in the principle of unity : rather he based his philosophy on the opposite of unity i.e. Plurality.

Leibnitz believed in the principle of plurality. He said that reality cannot be one but many and is eternal and real. The real whole can be explained in terms of the parts. Leibnitz appreciated the importance of the self as accepted by Descartes but did not like his dualistic tendency. As Descartes has accepted extension as the second reality, Leibnitz criticized it in the following manner: it is always divisible; so it cannot take to something which is indivisible. Moreover extension is passive and the world is dynamic. No principle can explain inertia or rest in things. Law of continuity also demands that there should be no abrupt change from motion to rest.

Hence Leibnitz concludes that extension cannot be real. Extension presupposes force which seems to be more ultimate. The force remains even when the motion ceases. The force is a tendency of the body to move or to continue its motion. It is constant in quantity. There is no substance that does not act and is not the expression of force. Consequently force, and not extension is the essential attribute of body.

Leibnitz further believes that instead of one single substance, which is the only active power or force, there are as many powers or forces as there are things in the world. The real point is that where there is action there is active force. Now there is action in all things, each constituting a separate centre or activity; hence there are as many simple indivisible and original forces as there are things. These forces cannot be infinite in nature i.e. they are all limited or finite, because a plurality of infinities is inconceivable, *Thus, we see that for the one infinite and unique substance of Spinoza, Leibnitz constitutes a plurality of independent individual forces which he calls 'monads'.*

The geometric conception of nature is replaced in the philosophy of Leibnitz by the extension; but extension exists by virtue of bodies or forces. Extension, Leibnitz says, presupposes the existence of force in the body through which it spreads itself out and continues itself. Space, therefore, is conceived by Leibnitz as the result of the harmonious co- existence of forces. Forces do not depend on space but space depends on the forces. Hence there can be no empty space between things and beyond them; when forces cease to act, the world comes to an end.

These forces or monads differ from the physical points or atoms of Democritus on the one hand and the mathematical points on the other. The physical atoms of Democritus are extended and therefore divisible, while the monads of Leibnitz are inextended; therefore indivisible. The former are material whereas the latter are immaterial or spiritual in character. Again the mathematical points, though true points and indivisible in nature, are not real, but merely points of view while the monads of Leibnitz are real and can be called as metaphysical points. These metaphysical points are exact like mathematical points and real like physical points or atoms , but still they are different from both of them.

14.3 LEIBNITZ'S MONADOLGY

(a) *The doctrine of monads* : According to Leibnitz, the world of bodies is composed of an infinite number of dynamic units or immaterial, unextended simple units of force or monads. Leibnitz says that these monads can be well conceived of after an analogy to our own selves. We discover such a simple, unextended and immaterial force unit as the monad in our own inner life. The soul is such a substance. Similarly all the monads of all stages whether lower or higher, are the souls. The same principle that expresses itself in the mind of man is also active in body, plants and animals. There is force everywhere. Every particle of matter is like a cluster of plants, all matter is animate alive, even to the minutest part.

So, according to Leibnitz there is not one or two but infinite number of monads and each one is as real as the single substance of Spinoza. The

monads are eternal and can be destroyed only by miracle on the part of God. Each monad is a real unit: thus contains the whole infinity of existence. It is the whole universe potentially. *Each monad is a world in miniature, a microcosm in macrocosm.* It contains within itself the possibility of everything which happens to it. As an all-inclusive whole it mirrors the world. Every activity is reflected either in vague or clear form according to the nature of the monad. Each monad is complete in itself and is a self-contained unit.

The infinite number of monads are qualitatively unlike, so that no two monads are alike. They are found in a hierarchical order of existence. Each monad imperceptibly leads to others. There is no abrupt change anywhere: monads are found in a continuous scale without showing any gap. With the help of law of continuous series, we can bridge the gulf between mind and matter, men and animals and unconscious matter.

Leibnitz interprets the monads as spiritual forces. There is in them something analogous both to our sensations and to our conations or tendencies to actions: they have perception and appetite. No monad is an exception.

Thus Leibnitz maintains that perception is universal in the sense that all monads of all classes are endowed with the power. But here a question arises that how can there be mind in the stone, and even in the plant which really seem to have no power of perception at all. To this, Leibnitz replies that there are infinite degrees of perception. *He says that mind is not same in the stone, plant, animal and man. Leibnitz says that these perceptions differ in clarity and distinctness in different monads.* In fact, the human mind also reveals perceptions of different degrees of clarity. Leibnitz calls the perception of lower degree of clarity as obscure or confused perceptions and those of higher degree of clarity as clear or distinct perceptions.

The perception of human being is more clear and is accompanied by the consciousness of their selves; so it is known as *appreception*. The lowest

monads perceive but their perception is so confused that they appear in the state of coma. Such a dormant life we find in plants. In animals there is perception with memory or consciousness.

(b) *Characteristics of monads* : Having thus proved that everything is a system of monads, let us now see their characteristics:

- (i) *Indivisibility*: Indivisibility is an essential attribute of substance and because monads are the simplest form of substance, they are indivisible. They have no form and no extension; so they occupy no space.
- (ii) *Eternity*: Monads are also eternal. Having been present ever since the beginning of creation, they will continue to exist as long as the creation will last.
- (iii) *Windowlessness* : Monads are windowless. No two monads can interact or can cause change in to each other. Every motion of the monads is self-caused.
- (iv) *Mobility* : Monads are naturally mobile. They reflect the universe because they have perception and appetite. Due to the motion each monad has a tendency towards evolution.
- (v) *Uniqueness* : Each monad is unique, unparalleled and independent.
- (c) *Kinds of monads* : Leibnitz distinguishes three principle grades of monads corresponding to three principle grades of perception as:
 - (i) *Sleeping or naked monads*: This category includes those monads which are called material monads. These never rise above obscure and unconscious perception and so to speak, pass their lives in sleeping state.
 - (ii) *Dreaming monads or mind*: Such monads have consciousness and memory. By virtue of the quality of memory, such monads

establish an associative relation between the different perception of the past and the present.

- (iii) *Waking monads or selves:* At highest degree stands those monads which are called spirits and in them perception rises into self-consciousness and reason by virtue of which they acquire the knowledge of universal truths. By the increase in the degree of consciousness, the higher includes the lower in itself.

In addition to this conception of the universe being composed solely of monads, Leibnitz further believes that God too, is monad or '*a monas monadum*' the monad of monads.

14.4 PRINCIPLE OF CONTINUITY

According to Leibnitz there are no leaps in nature, no breaks in the line from the lowest to the highest. In the hierarchy thus formed, the most perfect monads rule and the less perfect ones obey. Man exhibits the qualities of living as well as non-living things. *According to Leibnitz, principle of continuity holds that the possibilities of future are inherent in the present.*

Both an organic and inorganic body are composed of monads or centre of force, but an organic body contains a central monad, a 'queen monad', a soul, which represents or has before it, a picture of the entire body and which is the guiding principle of the monads surrounding it. But the inorganic body is without a ruling monad. So inorganic bodies seem to be inanimate because their constitutive monads do not obey a governing monad but they just hold them in equilibrium.

14.5 TO SUM UP

The monads of Leibnitz are the original and independent forces; they are simple, indivisible, immaterial and indestructible in character. No two monads are same. Hence it follows that no two things are alike in the world.

14.6 GLOSSARY

- **Macrocosm:** the whole of a complex structure, especially the world or the universe, contrasted with a small or representative part of it.

14.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- How many realities have been accepted by Leibnitz and why ?
- What is the difference between the mathematical points and the metaphysical points?
- What do you understand by perception and appetite in monads?
- What does Leibnitz understand by monad? Give its characteristics.
- Is there any gap in the creation or is it continuous?

14.8 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- Scruton, Roger. A Short History of Modern Philosophy. From Descartes to Wittgenstein. 2nd Etc. New York : Routledge, 1995.
- Bertrand Russell. A History of Western Philosophy. USA: Paperback, 1964

14.9 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

- Q1 Why did Leibnitz call forces as the metaphysical points or the spiritual atoms ?

- Q2 What arguments have been forwarded by Leibnitz in order to prove that there are infinite number of forces ?

Q3 What is appreception? How is it different from appetite and perception ?

Q4 How can you say that a stone or a plant is also a monad ?

Q5 Monads are windowless. How can you show this ?

Q6 What are the different kinds of monads ?

Q7 What is the role of the queen monad ?

LEIBNITZ: THEORY OF EVIL AND THEORY OF PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY

STRUCTURE

- 15.1 Objectives
- 15.2 Introduction
- 15.3 Theory of Pre-Established Harmony
- 15.4 Criticism of Pre-Established Harmony
- 15.5 Theory of evil
 - (a) Nature of evil
 - (b) Kinds of evil
- 15.6 To sum up
- 15.7 Glossary
- 15.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 15.9 Suggested Reading and References
- 15.10 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

15.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain the existing harmony in the world
- To justify the problem of evil in the universe
- To establish that Leibnitz has successfully solved the problem of evil

15.2 INTRODUCTION

In his theory of monadology, Leibnitz believes in the existence of an infinite number of substances and thus establishes pluralism. These monads are indivisible, eternal and unique. They don't communicate with each other and are naturally mobile. They are the simple forces which differ according to the clarity in their perception and appetition. The lower monads have confused perception whereas the clarity in perception increases with the higher status of the monads.

According to Leibnitz one can observe a continuity in creation, starting with the sleeping or naked monads to the 'God' who is monad of monads. In this continuity consciousness increases with every stage in the chain of monads. The higher monads invariably include all the qualities of the lower monads. All objects in the world are linked to one another, according to the principle of continuity. Leibnitz saw continuity everywhere in action and inaction, good and bad, clarity and confusion, plants and animals, animals and human-beings. Leibnitz manages to bridge the gaps between the monads, and without it his pluralistic theory is incomplete because it is this principle that establishes some order between an individual existent.

Since all monads are different and no two monads are identical, so no monads are related to each other. Then the obvious question which arises is that, "how do these monads indulge in communication? The answer *to* this question has been given by Leibnitz through his theory of pre-established harmony.

15.3 THEORY OF PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY

Inspite of the monads being independent, working according to their inner urge, the world is a harmony and runs in a smooth manner. The monads are not separate stories and events beginning at odd intervals. But we have to explain this harmony between self-contained and exclusive monads.

Leibnitz considered this harmony as pre-established by God. He has so engaged the monads in hierarchical order that the change in one is preceded and followed in other monads harmoniously. To the beholder it looks as if the change in A has caused the change in B, but really the monads being windowless cannot inter-act with one another. What appears to us as interaction is really concomitant relationship. For example we press the button and the fan moves. According to Leibnitz a change in the button monad takes place as a result of its own preceding movement but a corresponding and correlative change takes place in the fan-monad. We wrongly interpret the independent but concomitant change between the fan and the button due to interaction.

God has arranged the order and the working of all the monads in such a way that a grand plan in His mind may be fulfilled. The monads, no doubt, work independently of all other monads, according to their own inner urge, but this inner plan coincides with the realisation of the one master plan in the mind of the creator. Because each monad tries to realise the same final end in the mind of the creator, therefore, a harmony is reached in their working. This combination of independence and harmony may be compared to different chairs of musicians playing their parts separately, and so situated that they do not see or even hear one another. Nevertheless they keep perfectly together by each following their own notes in such a way that one who hears them all finds in them a harmony that is wonderful and much more perfect than if there had been any connection between them.

This doctrine of the pre-established harmony is nothing but the extension of the parallelism of Spinoza. Parallelism was confined to two realities only but Leibnitz's theory refers to the question of relation between two or more realities.

The relation between the things or monads, according to Leibnitz, is to be conceived in terms of concomitant relation between them with reference to the pre-established harmony.

Again we mark beauty and order in the universe. The different monads, though separate and isolated from one another still combine in such a way as to give rise to this harmonious universe. All this, according to Leibnitz, occurs due to harmony established by God. All these facts refer to a harmoniser and that is God.

Leibnitz has given the theory of pre-established harmony to emphasize that there is a perfect harmony among the monads by virtue of which each represents all other monads. This harmony runs through the whole universe. It was established at the very creation of the world of monads by God.

15.4 CRITICISM OF PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY

However Leibnitz's theory of pre-established harmony was criticized on the following grounds :

- (1) The doctrine of pre-established harmony is only an assumption to explain order in the world. This assumption is unverified and unverifiable also. No monad can go beyond itself and cannot perceive the mutual relation of other monads. So no harmony can be perceived by a monad.
- (2) Besides, the harmony does not follow from the nature of the monads themselves. Seeing the necessity of a common plan, Leibnitz invented the divine plan. The plan though internal to each monad is a plan introduced in them externally by mind or God. Hence the harmony of the monads is external to their real nature.
- (3) Leibnitz comes in conflict with the desire to establish the supremacy of God and regards Him as the creator of the monads. If God is the creator of the monads, then monads become finite and created and cease to be self-contained units. If the monads are allowed to be eternal, independent and self-contained units, then God as a creator becomes unnecessary.
- (4) Leibnitz says that each monad is a series of reflection, but he has not explained reflections of what? Leibnitz would say that the

ultimate reality reflected in each monad is the clear and distinct thought in the mind of God. God then becomes the only reality and all other monads become an imperfect appearance or a modification of God.

In nutshell Leibnitz has given the theory of pre established harmony to emphasize that there is a perfect harmony among the monads by virtue of which each represents all other monads. This harmony runs through the whole universe. It was established at the very creation of the world of monads by God.

15.5 THEORY OF EVIL

According to Leibnitz, the actually existing world is the best of all possible worlds that existed in the mind of God, and as such, it must be free from all imperfections or limitations. But we find that the opposite is the case with this world, for often the best people suffer the most and the innocent are not frequently admired but are punished and tortured. In short, imperfections and evil prevail in the world; and consequently the statement that God has chosen the best possible world seems to be groundless. But Leibnitz still says and tries to prove that this world is the best possible world inspite of its imperfections.

Leibnitz's theodicy discusses the problem of evil and justifies God in view of the evils in the world. According to Leibnitz, the world, as the work of God must be the best of all possible worlds. No better world is possible than the one which actually exists. This must have been created through God's wisdom and will. He must have created it with his omnipotence. But Leibnitz says that though the world is the best of all possible worlds, it is not perfect: and has, therefore, its defects, for God could not express His infinite nature without limitations or imperfections. If there was to be a world, it was necessary that it should consist of finite beings; and this is how finiteness or limitation and liability to suffering can be justified in the world. Falkenberg justifies the limitations of the world. He says 'No world whatever can exist which is entirely free from evil,

entirely without limitation, and he who forbids God to create imperfect and finite beings forbids Him to create a world at all. For created beings must be essentially limited, otherwise they would not be created, but would be, identical With God'. In the Theodicy, Leibnitz uses this as a hypothesis by which he tries to remove this responsibility of the existence of evil in the world from God. The origin of evil, in his opinion, lies in the essential imperfection of created substances and God is the cause, not of these evils, but of the imperfections or the positive reality of created beings. Thus evil in the world results from the very existence and nature of the world itself.

(a) Nature of evil:

Leibnitz accepts that there is evil in the world. He tries to justify the evil also as the other side of the coin. Just as the dark background of a painting adds materially to its aesthetic value instead of reducing it; in the same way the presence of evil enhances the beauty of goodness in every field. We become more conscious of goodness. Without evil being there, good is not possible. Hence, God has purposely created evil.

(b) Kinds of evil:

Leibnitz distinguishes three kinds of evil viz :

(i) Metaphysical evil

(ii) Physical evil

(iii) Moral evil

(i) *Metaphysical evil* : Metaphysical evil is absolutely unavoidable for existence of a created world is inconceivable without imperfection, finitude or limitation.

(ii) *Physical evil* : This kind of evil includes pain and punishment with all the physical suffering, to which living beings are prone. The pains and sufferings, he believes, are there in the world to make the way for good. He believes that the amount of suffering is never so great as it appears to be; rather it is less as compared to goodness.

(iii) *Moral evil* : God wanted a world to be lived by free men and the award of freedom of will was absolutely necessary. But with the granting of the will to choose freely, God had to allow the possibility of wrong choice also. Thus God has not willed moral evil but has just allowed it in order to create free human-beings. No doubt God could have created men who would always do rightly but then they would have been machines. Hence the road to perfection is through sin and suffering.

15.6 TO SUM UP

To conclude, we can say that evil exists in the universe in order to enhance the beauty of goodness. Moreover, many a times, evil is not there but it looks like evil as when we look at only one incident in the world apart from its connection with the system as a whole: but when we study it from the standpoint of the whole by marking its real relation to all other movements of the world, we are convinced that everything which was at first evil owing to our narrow vision is right in its place and is the inevitable outcome of the nature of the world. Similarly just as sweet things become tasteless if we eat nothing else, but when salty, bitter, sour things are combined with them, they stimulate our taste; so also the evil and imperfections when combined with perfection or what is good, enhances its beauty and excellence.

15.7 GLOSSARY

- **Moral:** concerned with the principles of right and wrong behavior.

15.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What role does the doctrine of pre-established harmony play in Leibnitz's system?
- Examine Leibnitz's account of the doctrine of pre-established harmony.
- How does Leibnitz justify evil ?
- What are the different kinds of evil as accepted by Leibnitz ?

15.9 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- Thilly, Frank. A History of Western Philosophy Allahabad: Central Publishing House, 1997.

15.10 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is not sufficient.

- Q1 How would Leibnitz account for evil in the world and how far is it acceptable to you ?

- Q2 Evil enhances the beauty of goodness. Explain in the light of Leibnitz's Theodicy.

- Q3 Give a critical exposition of Leibnitz's doctrine of pre-established harmony.

- Q4 What is the place of pre-established harmony theory in Leibnitz's philosophy ?

Q5 How does the principle of pre-established harmony work in the world according to Leibnitz ?

JOHN LOCKE: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY QUALITIES

STRUCTURE

- 16.1 Objectives
- 16.2 Introduction
- 16.3 Scientific Realism
- 16.4 Difference between Scientific Realism and Naive Realism
- 16.5 Characteristics of Representationism
- 16.6 Criticism of Representationism
- 16.7 Primary and Secondary qualities
- 16.8 To sum up
- 16.9 Glossary
- 16.10 Self-Assessment Questions
- 16.11 Suggested Reading and References
- 16.12 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

16.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise the basis of empirical thought
- To explain the meaning of Empiricism
- To elaborate the meaning of Scientific Realism

- To list the differences between Scientific Realism and Naive Realism
- To differentiate between Primary and Secondary qualities

16.2 INTRODUCTION

The position in philosophical thought which John Locke (1632-1704) represents is called Empiricism. That is why he is called as the father of modern empirical philosophy. For rationalists, the faculty of reason was the ultimate source of all truths and certainty. The highest principles of knowledge were called as the innate ideas given by reason. The rationalists followed them without considering critically whether this faculty had the power actually to yield such high truths. This critical attitude towards knowledge was adopted by Locke, and the problems that arise with him thus relate to the origin, the validity, and the limits of knowledge. These have to be settled first, before any system of thought could be created. A sound metaphysics must be based upon a true theory of knowledge - was the note that characterised Locke's thought.

So Locke in conducting his epistemological enquiry, propounded a theory of knowledge known as the *a-posteriori* or empirical theory, in opposition to the *a-priori* theory of the rationalists and held that all knowledge is derived from experience. *Locke maintained that mind is at first a tabula rasa -a blank tablet, like a blank sheet of paper without any writing on it. It is experience which writes, and this writing by experience is all the mind can know. Mind has no innate ideas. It receives ideas from experience. Experience is twofold; sensation and reflection.* Sensation is external perception. Reflection is internal perception. Sensation is the source of our knowledge of external objects. Reflection is the source of our knowledge of the internal states of mind. The child gets his first ideas from sensation; then at an advanced age he reflects upon them. In other words, mind is at first perfectly empty, and whatever knowledge it acquires is due to the action of external things, which stamp impressions upon it in the form of sensations. Thus Locke aims at deriving all knowledge from

experience. His often quoted statement, ‘there is nothing in the intellect which was not previously in the sensations’, also endorses his ideology.

16.3 SCIENTIFIC REALISM

John Locke has examined the origin, limit, nature and source of knowledge in his famous treatise *Essays Concerning Human Understanding*. He criticized the naive approach to knowledge and instead approached the subject from a more scientific standpoint so that his theory came to be called as ‘Scientific Realism’.

The scientific realists believe that the experience of object is translated to the mind in the form of ideas and notions. The idea has two distinct meanings.

- (1) *It may refer to individual consciousness and thus be subjective.*
- (2) *It may mean a representation of something other than itself.*

Due to second interpretation, Lockes’ theory is also known as representationism. According to him, an idea means, ‘Whatsoever the mind perceives in itself or is the immediate object of perception, thought or understanding’. He uses the term to include sensations and feelings in addition to what is now called ‘idea’ and, therefore, understands it in a wider sense. The reason for this wide use of the term is that he takes for granted from the beginning a certain theory of perception, namely, the representationist theory. *According to this theory, what we are directly conscious of in perception is not the extramental object but only a mental representation of it, made up of the sensations.* Hence, in this sense, even the percepts are called ideas. Sensation and reflection are the two sources of knowledge. The ideas we first receive through these sources are simple ideas, but later they become combined together in various ways so as to constitute complex ideas. But all our ideas are derived from these sources and we don’t have anything like the innate ideas in our mind. These ideas cannot be called object itself but its

representation. It is for this reason that Locke's theory of scientific realism is also known as representationism.

16.4 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC REALISM AND NAIVE REALISM

Both Naive Realism and Representationism differ from each other due to the difference in their basic approaches. Representationism admits that the object is independent but holds that the metaphysical speculation depends on the mind. According to the Naive Realist, the qualities of the object are inherent in it. But the scientific realist holds that only the primary qualities are inherent in the object and not the secondary qualities of the object.

Naive Realism denies that knowledge influences the object but Representationism admits such a possibility. The Representationists do not agree with the Naive Realists that the object is what it appears to be. According to the former, there is a difference between the actual object and its idea which is only an image of the real object. They also disagree with the latter that the knowledge of the object is direct. They argue that knowledge of objects is in the form of complex ideas through the medium of simple ideas.

Another important difference is that while Naive Realists hold that the objects are common for all, Representationism opposes this view and maintains that primary ideas may be common but the secondary ideas cannot be common as they differ from individual to individual. The following are the main differences between the two approaches:

Naive Realism

- (i) Objects exist independently of their knowledge.
- (ii) The qualities exist in the object
- (iii) Knowledge does not influence the object
- (iv) The object is what it appears to be.
- (v) Objects are known directly.
- (vi) Objects are commonly known.

Scientific Realism

- (i) Objects are independent of their knowledge, but metaphysical speculation depends upon the mind.
- (ii) All the qualities do not exist in the object. Secondary qualities are imposed by the mind on the object.
- (iii) Ideas have their influence on the object.
- (iv) There is a difference between the actual object and its idea. Because idea is only an image of the object.
- (v) Knowledge of object is in the form of complex ideas through the medium of simple ideas.
- (vi) Only primary ideas are common but in case of secondary ideas, objects are not common. They vary from individual to individual.

16.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF REPRESENTATIONISM

The chief feature in the theory of Representationism is ideas; simple and complex. So characteristics of Representationism are as:

- (i) *Objects exist independently of knowledge:* The scientific realists, like all other realists, believe that the objects have their own existence. They are not mind dependent. The only respect in which they differ is that ideas are aroused by objects but they depend upon the mind.
- (ii) *The primary qualities do not depend upon the knower:* Locke distinguished between primary and secondary qualities. He says that the primary qualities are primary because they belong to the object itself. Examples of primary qualities are size, shape, length, solidity, number etc. The secondary qualities are secondary because they do not depend upon the object. They are colour, sound, taste, smell etc. Hence, Locke maintains that primary ideas and primary qualities are objective while secondary qualities are subjective.

- (iii) *Object and its primary qualities are not affected by knowledge but ideas of them are:* Knowledge can in no way affect the object so far its primary qualities are concerned. But the secondary qualities and ideas are picked up by the sense-organs. Mind uses its own creative energy to convert simple ideas into complex ones with the result that secondary qualities are influenced by knowledge.
- (iv) *Objects are what they appear to be in primary ideas and not what they appear to be in secondary:* Locke contends that only primary ideas are symbols of the object and not secondary ideas, as the formation of secondary ideas depend upon the knowledge gained through sense-organs.
- (v) *Knowledge of real object is indirect:* According to Locke, we can never know the real nature of an object because our knowledge of it is indirect. We know the object through simple ideas which are representation of it.
- (vi) ***Primary ideas originating in object are public:*** Primary ideas are the images of the primary qualities of the object. They are available to every individual without any distortion. So they are public. On the other hand secondary ideas are not public as they depend upon man. They are private.

16.6 CRITICISM OF REPRESENTATIONISM

The following objections have been raised against Locke's theory of Representationism:

- (i) *Locke divides the world into two parts:* Locke divides the world into the subjective world of ideas and the objective world of objects. But he fails to bridge the gap between the two. He says that ideas are the representation of objects but it is not possible to test their truths for we never know objects: all that we ever know are ideas. Through ideas only we know the object. But Locke says that sometimes our

ideas are accurate representations of objects and sometimes they are not. So the authenticity of the ideas is a tough work to prove.

- (ii) *Locke's theory of truth does not satisfy:* He accepts the correspondence theory of truth, according to which the criterion of accuracy of a truth is the extent to which it accurately represents the object. But the comparison between the objects and the ideas is not possible and it is beyond our knowledge.
- (iii) *All qualities and the objects itself are unreal:* If we believe and prove that our knowing of the object is indirect and there is no way of knowledge to what degree ideas accurately represent the object, then how can we conclude that the object is real ? Locke has provided no satisfactory answer to this query.
- (iv) *Mind-body dualism:* In distinguishing between the object and its idea, Locke tried his best to solve the problem of mind and body but he did not succeed.
- (v) *Locke many a times appears to be turning towards idealism:* In his theory, Locke appears to be turning towards idealism. According to some critics, the only reason why Locke treats secondary qualities as subjective is that he finds the primary qualities more rational when compared with secondary qualities.

However, the above criticism of Locke's scientific realism does not make the theory worthless. Locke's effort is valuable and his contribution cannot be undermined.

16.7 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY QUALITIES

Material objects are found to possess two types of qualities; the primary and the secondary. Primary qualities are those which are utterly inseparable from the body in whatever state it may be. These qualities are essential to the very conception and existence of material things as such and make material things to be material things and distinguish them from non-material things. *There are six such original or primary qualities namely*

solidity, extension, figure, motion, rest and number. They are constantly found in bodies.

The secondary qualities, infact, are nothing but powers to produce sensation in us. They include colour, taste, smell etc. In so far as primary qualities are concerned, our ideas are exact copies of things which exist objectively whether any mind perceives them or not. The patterns exist in the bodies themselves, whereas the secondary qualities are only states of our consciousness which cannot have any resemblance of their kind to anything outside of it. In other words, primary qualities are objective as they exist in the object and secondary qualities are subjective in the sense that they exist only in the consciousness. Hence secondary qualities are totally dependent on human subjects and their various sense-organs. Without eyes, there are no colours and without ears, there are no sounds. Secondary qualities are relative also according to the arrangement of things. But primary qualities do not depend upon the mind of the knower; they have objective reality.

The substratum of primary qualities is matter. In the words of Locke, the existence of matter can be deduced from the fact that we receive sensations from outside.

Criticism of Locke's concept of qualities:

Locke's concept of qualities has been criticized as follows:

- (i) Berkeley has criticized Locke's concept of qualities. He said that not only the secondary but the primary qualities also are mind dependent. For example, the quality of extension and of solidity is conveyed to the mind by the sense of touch.
- (ii) Primary qualities and secondary qualities are intimately related to each other. Ideas of form, solidity, motion and the absence of motion cannot be formed in the mind in the absence of mental images of colour, touch, smell etc. For example, one never sees an extended object without any colour.

- (iii) Locke's acceptance of the existence of matter is another abstraction. Even if it is accepted that such a thing exists as matter, still we cannot believe it because we don't have any means to prove its existence.
- (iv) Even the so called primary qualities do not depend upon the object but on the person perceiving it. For example, a round object appears elliptical when perceived from distance; a plane seen flying at a great distance appears flying slower than another which is flying nearer and so on. Hence, Berkeley says that just as the secondary qualities are not definite; similarly the primary qualities are also not definite. Both depend upon the knower. Hence the distinction between them depends upon the viewer.

16.8 TO SUM UP

In spite of the criticism levelled against Locke's qualities, his contribution in the field cannot be undermined. The distinction between primary and secondary qualities is a conceptual distinction in epistemology and metaphysics, concerning the nature of reality. It is explicitly articulated by Locke in his *Essay concerning Human Understanding*.

16.9 GLOSSARY

- **Metaphysics** : the philosophical enquiry into the nature of ultimate reality
- **A posteriori** : not existing in the mind prior to or independent of experience

16.10 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Write a short note on Representationism.
- Compare and contrast Naive Realism with Scientific Realism.
- Distinguish between Primary and Secondary qualities.
- On what ground Locke was criticised by Berkeley regarding Primary and Secondary qualities ?

16.11 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge Classics, 2010.

16.12 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space give below each question for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is not sufficient.

Q1 Critically examine Locke's scientific realism.

Q2 What are the chief characteristics of scientific realism ?

Q3 How are the qualities related to the substance ?

Q4 How does Locke prove that only the primary qualities are real ?

JOHN LOCKE: REFUTATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF INNATE IDEAS

STRUCTURE

- 17.1. Objectives
- 17.2. Introduction
- 17.3. Refutation of Innate Ideas
- 17.4. Conclusion
- 17.5. Glossary
- 17.6. Self-Assessment Questions
- 17.7. Suggested Reading and References
- 17.8. Exercise (Answer the Questions)

17.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise the meaning of Innate Ideas
- To reproduce John Locke's refutation of the Cartesian doctrine of Innate Ideas

17.2 INTRODUCTION

Innate ideas are ideas in the mind prior to and independent of sense experience. They are the ideas that human beings are born with. Rationalists like Rene Descartes, Benedict Spinoza and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz think that there are certain self-evident innate ideas in the mind prior to and

independent of sense experience. They argue that no doubt the ideas of blue, dog and large, for example, can be explained as the result of certain sense impressions; but other ideas, for example, ideas of number, axioms in mathematics, logic etc. are outside the realm of sensation. But the empiricists especially John Locke, rejects this concept. According to him, there are no innate ideas or principles. In making this claim, Locke is explicitly going against Descartes. *Locke holds that all ideas come to us from experience.* He believes in the theory of, *nihil in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu*; that is, there is nothing in the intellect that was not first in the senses. Locke argues that the mind of the infant is a *tabula rasa*, that is, a blank slate, and is informed subsequently by sense experience. Experience imprints the mind with the ideas that are necessary for thinking. Nothing is thus innate to the mind. The controversy between the rationalists who are the defenders of innate ideas and the empiricists who refute the innate ideas was long-drawn-out until Immanuel Kant formulated his theory of synthetic *a priori* truth.

17.3 REFUTATION OF INNATE IDEAS

John Locke refutes Cartesian doctrine of innate ideas. According to him the doctrine of innate ideas advocated by Rene Descartes is not tenable. In his work *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), Locke severely criticizes Descartes' theory of innate ideas and expounds the doctrine of empiricism. He puts forth the following arguments to refute the theory of innate ideas:

1. *Ideas do not exist in the minds universally:*

If there are innate ideas, they must be equally present in all the minds. But Locke contends that there are no such ideas, which are universally presents in the minds. Children, savages, idiots and illiterate persons are quite unconscious of the so-called innate ideas. They are not conscious of the ideas of God, eternity, infinity, causality and the like. If these ideas are innate in their minds, they must be conscious of them. But they are not conscious of them. So the idea of innate ideas is merely a metaphor.

2. *People do not possess similar notions:*

If there are innate ideas in the mind, they must be the same in all minds. *But, according to John Locke, the so-called innate ideas of God, morality, sin and the like differ in different societies and in different cultures.* They differ in different persons even at the same time in the same society. Take an example regarding the idea of God. Some believe in anthropomorphism, and conceive of God as endowed with human qualities, emotions and passions. Others believe in deism, and conceive of God as external to the world and the finite spirits: others believe in pantheism, and conceive of God as wholly immanent in the world and the finite selves. And the atheists have no idea of God at all. Thus the idea of God differs with different persons. So it cannot be an innate idea. Similarly, the idea of morality widely differs in different cultures and customs. So it cannot be innate.

3. *Universality of ideas does not affirm innateness:*

Locke holds that even if there were the same ideas in all minds, it would not prove their innateness. All persons, for example, have the same idea of fire. But it is not an innate idea; it is derived by all from experience. Hence, universality of an idea does not prove its innateness.

4. *No innate fundamental principles:*

John Locke contends that there are no fundamental principles of reality, which are innate and recognized as true by reason or intuition. Since there are no innate ideas, there can be no innate principles or propositions which are conjunction of ideas. If ideas are not innate, principles cannot be innate. There are only certain principles of general truth which are inductions from particular facts of experience. They are not the primary facts of knowledge, but generalizations from particular facts, which are acquired from perception.

John Locke further maintains that philosophical knowledge is not like mathematical knowledge. Mathematical knowledge is abstract. It deals

with abstractions and deductions from them. Points, lines and the like are not realities, but mere conceptual constructions or abstract ideas. The knowledge that is deduced from them is not concrete. But philosophy does not deal with abstractions or imaginary entities. It deals with real entities. It seeks to give a rational concept of the reality as a whole by rational reflection on the facts of experience.

5. *Mind receives ideas from experience:*

Locke maintains that the mind is a tabula rasa in the beginning. It is like a clean slate. It has no innate ideas. It receives ideas from experience. Experience is two-fold i. e. sensation and reflection. Sensation is external perception; reflection is internal perception. Sensation is the source of our knowledge of external objects. Reflection is the source of our knowledge of the internal states of mind. *According to Locke, there is not a single idea in the mind, which is not derived from sensation or reflection.* The child gets his first ideas from sensation; then at an advance stage he reflects upon them. Locke believes that the child can not think before his mind is stocked with sensations.

6. *All knowledge is derived from experience:*

Rene Descartes, the rationalist, maintains that the mind always thinks even before it is furnished with sensations. John Locke denies that mind thinks independently of sensations. He maintains that the mind cannot think before it has sensations. *'There is nothing in the intellect which was not previously in the sense'.* *Sensations are the material on which the mind thinks. John Locke, thus, maintains that all knowledge is derived from experience. Knowledge is posterior to or after experience. It is inductive in procedure and not deductive as Descartes and Spinoza think.* Knowledge, Locke holds, starts with particular facts of experience, and makes generalizations from them. It does not start with some self-evident innate ideas or principles, and deduce other truths from them. The child knows

that sweet is sweet and sweet is not bitter. These are particular facts of his experience. The so-called innate principles are derived from experience. They are empirical truths, and not innate or intuitive. They are not *a priori* or *prior* to experience.

17.4 CONCLUSION

Thus in his work *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke argues that there are no innate ideas stored in the mind at the time of birth. Man's mind at the time of birth is a blank slate, a *tabula rasa*, on which experience writes. Locke describes man's initial condition as a dark closet, requiring to be furnished from without.

Locke traces the origin of all ideas to experience. Experience, he believes, is made up of sensation and reflection. Out of these two sources, comes all the complexity of mental life.

Further, Locke maintains that all ideas, as they come into the mind, are simple ideas. Man has a power to discern and distinguish them. He combines simple ideas to make complex ideas. He discovers relation among ideas by holding them together in the mind, makes abstraction, drawing what is common from a set of ideas and in this way producing abstract or general ideas, i.e. universals.

17.5 GLOSSARY

- **Intuition:** direct and immediate knowledge, as in case of our comprehension of self-evident truths, such as the axioms of geometry.
- **Empiricism:** the view that all human knowledge is derived from the sense.
- **Abstract:** abstract is the product of the mind alone. In abstraction, things, events and phenomena are conceived separately, independently and mutually isolated.

17.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Prior to experience, is the mind a 'tabula rasa', without any ideas?

- Are there any inborn or innate ideas? What are Locke's arguments for this?

17.7 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge Classics, 2010.
- Scruton, Roger. A Short History of Modern Philosophy. London : Routledge, 1995.
- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- Thilly, Frank (trans). History of Western Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 1997.

17.8 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Q1 To what extent is John Locke an 'empiricist'?

Q2 How is knowledge related to sense experience?

Q3 How is Locke's attack on 'Innate Ideas' related to his arguments for empiricism?

Q4 Should experience be regarded as the valid source of knowledge?

**BERKELEY: ESSE-EST-PERCIPI,
SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM**

STRUCTURE

- 18.1 Objectives
- 18.2 Introduction
- 18.3 Subjective Idealism
- 18.4 Chief tenets of Subjective Idealism
- 18.5 Criticism of Subjective Idealism
- 18.6 Esse-Est-Percipi
- 18.7 Fundamentals of Esse-Est-Percipi
- 18.8 Criticism of Esse-Est-Percipi
- 18.9 To sum up
- 18.10 Glossary
- 18.11 Self-Assessment Questions
- 18.12 Suggested Reading and References
- 18.13 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

18.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise Berkeley's contribution
- To elaborate the meaning of Subjective Idealism

- To reproduce the basic tenets of Berkeley's philosophy of Subjective Idealism.
- To explain the meaning of the statement 'Esse-Est-Percipi'

18.2 INTRODUCTION

George Berkeley(1685-1753) was a staunch empiricist. He agreed with Locke that knowledge is possible only through sensation. But he also believed that the external object has no independent existence; it depends upon our mind for its existence. The entire world is an imaginary world. For example, whenever we talk about something, we talk about its qualities. So a thing is nothing more than a collection of sensations. There is no need to have any distinction between primary and secondary qualities. Both are subjective. So no object has any existence if it is not an experienced body: therefore, objects have no existence without a mind; their being consists in being perceived. It is a contradiction to say that matter exists unperceived by any mind.

Hence Berkeley's philosophy shows an idealistic trend. However the following are the main features of his philosophy.

- (a) *Berkeley believes in the empirical character of knowledge as Locke believed.*
- (b) *Berkeley refutes materialism and atheism and proves that matter does not exist as a substance.*
- (c) *His philosophy is of nominalistic character because it denies the possibility of forming general abstract ideas. He believes that the 'name' is the only common thing that belongs to a class.*

So, it is observed that Berkeley aims to remove all the drawbacks of Locke's system. He attacks the fundamental principles of the latter and thereby establishes new view of the world, according to which, only *ideas* and the *percipient minds* to which they belong are the only realities, and God, the supreme mind or spirit, is the ultimate reality.

Thus Berkeley tries to resolve the material world into ideas and came to be known as an idealist.

18.3 SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM

Idealism is the view which holds that the world of things exists as a content of consciousness. It reduce all things of the world to ideas. It emphasizes mind in some sense prior to the matter. *Idealists contend that mind is real and matter is in a sense by product of the mind.* They hold that universe can be known through the medium of reason only. In a narrow sense, idealism can be described as that philosophy which views the universe as dependent on the mind.

Berkeley is an advocate of subjective idealism. Subjective idealism denies the existence of the external objects and reduces them to the subjective ideas of the finite mind that perceives them. The so called external objects are the sensations produced in the minds by God.

Subjective idealism as ‘Kulpe’ observes, is that form of idealism which defines everything knowable, every object of experience, ‘a purely subjective process in the mind of an individual’. In other words, it is that form of idealism, according to which, nothing exists in the world except in the consciousness of finite minds. It is known as *solipcism* and is distinguished from the form known as *objective idealism*, which supposes the existence of things, not simply in the finite minds, but in a universal or Absolute mind. The Absolute mind evolves and sustains all things constituting the world, and of which the finite minds are but reproduction or reduplications.

Berkeley, therefore, seems to be a *subjective idealist* as he holds the view that the world has no independent existence except in the finite consciousness. He believes all objects of knowledge to be dependent upon mind. *The sole existents in this universe are either minds or ideas belonging to them. Only that thing exists, according to Berkeley, which is subject of some mind and whatever is not subject of any mind, does not exist.*

Solipsism:

Some philosophers call Berkeley's theory as solipsism but it is not so: because solipsism is a theory which believes in the exclusive existence of my own mind and myself. Since Berkeley believes in the existence of minds other than his own; so his theory cannot be regarded as solipsism. The acceptance of the existence of other minds forces him to accept many objects in the world which cannot be the subject of his mind or any other finite mind, but of the infinite mind or God's mind. Thus, Berkeley evades the charge of solipsism by accepting the multiplicity of minds other than his own.

18.4 CHIEF TENETS OF SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM

Following are the chief tenets of Subjective Idealism:

(i) *Esse-Est-Percepi:*

Berkeley says that the existence of things consists in their perception. He assumes the existence of a number of minds as well as the divine mind and believes that all existent things are subject to knowledge.

(ii) *Qualities also exist only when perceived:*

Berkeley admits no distinction between primary and secondary qualities and believes that the object is known through its qualities. But the qualities exist only when perceived.

(iii) *Images depend upon the individual:*

The ideas imprinted on the senses by God are commonly called 'real things', and those excited in the imagination being less vivid and regular, are more properly termed images of things. Berkeley believes that the images depend upon God or the infinite mind. The nature and existence of images depends upon the manner in which they are known by finite minds while the existence of real objects depends upon how they are known by the infinite mind.

(iv) *Objects conform to knowledge of them and knowledge conforms to objects:*

Berkeley agrees with the naive realists that the objects are independent of the knowledge of them but he does not interpret them in terms of having the material or physical existence. Rather he means that the objects, if they are not known by any finite mind, continue to exist in the infinite mind. Through this dictum only, Berkeley could prove that how an object not known now, can be known later on.

(v) *Knowledge of the object is direct:*

According to Berkeley, there is nothing in the universe besides mind and its idea. Hence, it follows that nothing intervenes between the object and its knowledge. All knowledge is direct.

(vi) *Objects are not public:*

It is within the capacity of God to create similar experience in different minds; otherwise the experience of each individual finite mind is private. By holding this view, Berkeley opposes the view of Naive realists, that objects are public and not private.

(vii) *Refutation of materialism:*

Subjective idealism believes in the existence of mind only with its concepts. It rejects the notion of any substance other than mind. It, therefore, refutes materialism. With his firm belief in the existence of God, Berkeley also refuted atheism.

(viii) *Establishing theism:*

Subjective idealism aims at the establishment of theism. According to Berkeley, God is the real cause of everything existent. God arranges the succession of events according to His own will and arranges them to occur according to the laws of nature.

18.5 CRITICISM OF SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM

Subjective idealism has also been criticized by several thinkers regarding its limitations on several grounds:

(i) *Moore's refutation of idealism:*

According to Moore, from the psychological point of view, knowledge and the subject of knowledge are different. But the idealists have forgotten it. For example, the difference between red and blue colours is not on account of the difference between the knowledge of them but because of the difference in the colours themselves. It follows from this that the object does not depend upon knowledge.

(ii) *Alexander's argument:*

Alexander has objected to the Berkeleyian thesis on the ground that since knowledge of the object depends upon the mind, it is not possible to identify the object with the knowledge of it.

But Berkeley's reply to this argument is that he believed only images to be dependent on the individual mind and objects to be dependent on the mind of God.

(iii) *Fallacy of initial predication:*

Perry has proved this fallacy in the philosophy of Berkeley. He says, if we perceive flower we should not conclude that the only quality of it being existent, is being perceived. The object can continue to exist even if it is not perceived.

Berkeley's defence to this is that an object will continue to exist as long as it remains an idea in God's mind. The only thing that depends upon the finite mind is image and not the *object*.

(iv) *How do different individuals experience the same thing:*

Berkeley stated that objects are ideas but not of the finite minds. They belong to the infinite mind. But it is seen that different finite beings have the same idea of one thing. Berkeley's reply to this is that every one experiences a thing in his own personal way and formulates his own concept. Regarding the general opinion, he says that it is possible as it is the idea in the infinite mind.

(v) *What is the role of intermediate cause ? :*

In this limited human universe man obstructs and creates many objects determined by mechanical laws and for these, it is necessary to have an intermediate human cause i.e. in order to conform to the laws of nature, an intermediate cause is necessary.

(vi) *Theism:*

Berkeley's theory is completely coloured by religious faith in which God is believed to be the final creator. But Hume could not digest this idea as he believes that it is difficult to believe the existence of God as it contradicts the very basis of the empirical philosophy. Berkeley has not succeeded in maintaining any real harmony between empiricism and theism.

(vii) *Fails to prove the existence of God:*

Berkeley could not forward any proof for the existence of God.

(viii) *God is sensation, mind is image:*

If we believe that God causes the sensation in us, then God Himself should be of the nature of sensation. In much the same manner, our mind which is responsible for images, should itself be an image. But Berkeley could not accept such a view of God and mind.

(ix) *Empiricism:*

While Berkeley maintains that he is an empiricist, he makes the mistake of inferring the existence of mind. Hume based his criticism of Berkeley on this point.

(x) *Objects appear to be immaterial:*

Berkeley agrees with the principle that objects are what they appear to be. But he refuses to grant them substance which is unfair.

(xi) *Solipsism:*

Some critics say that Berkeley's theory is solipsist, according to which myself and my mind only are the true entities. Although Berkeley tried to

prove the existence of other minds and the infinite mind, but he could not do so on the empirical grounds. Hence Berkeley cannot evade the charge of being a solipsist.

18.6 ESSE-EST-PERCIPI

Esse-Est-Percipi means *to be is to be perceived*. According to empirical thought, the subjects of human knowledge are known either through the sensations comprehended through the medium of the senses or the activities of the mind. So everyone has to believe that our subjective ideas, emotions, imaginations and images depend upon the perception. Berkeley demonstrates that the same is true of sensations also, for in their case too, existence depends upon being perceived. They exist when they are perceived. *Perception does not mean the perception by my mind only but the perception by any other mind or even the mind of God. It is impossible to accept that a thing which is not perceived by anyone exists.* Hence, existence implies being perceived. These perceptions exist in the mind: and hence the object cannot be said to exist outside the mind. Hence, whatever is asserted of physical objects is useless unless it is in the context of the perception of such objects.

Berkeley's theory that 'to be is to be perceived' is deduced from Locke's conception of the idea of a human body. Locke points out that there are some qualities in the object which are not affected by the perception. They are solidity, extension, figure, motion etc. They are primary qualities. Besides these, there are some qualities which are dependent on the mind. They are secondary qualities like colour, taste, smell etc. Locke considers primary qualities to be permanent whereas he considers secondary qualities to be mind dependent. But Berkeley considers both the types of qualities as mind dependent. He says that it is difficult to see primary qualities without the secondary qualities. For example, it is difficult to see extension without colour and so on.

18.7 FUNDAMENTALS OF BERKELEY'S ESSE EST PERCIPI:

The following points throw light on Berkeley's theory:

- (i) Our ideas, feelings and images have no existence apart from mind.
- (ii) Ideas depend upon the knower
- (iii) Existence implies perception
- (iv) Without perception, it is useless to talk about an object

Berkeley's use of the term ideas is not in ordinary connotation. Ideas imply our knowledge of any particular object. We cannot say what the object really is apart from our knowledge of it. Hence every object that is experienced by us is only an idea and it has no existence outside the mind.

Following are the main points of Berkeley's Esse-Est-Percipi:

- (i) *Percipi is not personal*: In saying that 'to be is to be perceived', Berkeley means that a thing which is not perceived cannot exist. By this he does not refer to the perception by me or my mind; rather he refers to the perception by any mind.
- (ii) *Perception is not limited to the present*: Berkeley's theory does not refer to the present, but to any point of time. If an object is not perceived by me at any moment of time, I cannot say that it does not exist for it may have existed in the past or may exist in the future.
- (iii) *Ultimate perception is in God*: It is possible that any finite mind may not see a thing but nothing can exist without being perceived by God.

18.8 CRITICISM OF ESSE-EST-PERCIPI

Esse-Est-Percipi has been criticized on the following grounds:

- (i) As far as the question of knowing self, principles of mathematics, natural laws and even God is concerned, Berkeley believes that they can be known by the mind and in this case, 'to be is to be perceived' should be expanded to include not merely sensuous knowledge but

also comprehension by the mind. But it is certain that by expanding the scope of perception, Berkeley moves away from his empiricist stand and tends towards rationalism.

- (ii) The term ‘perception’ includes two things namely ‘the act of perceiving and ‘the object perceived’. The perceiving act is mental, but the object perceived is non- mental. Berkeley could explain only the mental act and not the non-mental act.
- (iii) The word ‘perception’ in Berkeley’s philosophy stands in extreme particularity, which is fallacious. For example, Ram was husband of Sita, son of Dasratha and brother of Laxman: to see things in one context, is wrong

Hence Berkeley’s ‘Esse Est percipi’ was also criticised.

18.9 TO SUM UP

Berkeley held that existence consists of the state of actively perceiving or of passively being perceived. If some thing is not able to perceive or is not able to be perceived, then it does not exist. Berkeley contends that in order for anything to exist, it must be capable of being perceived.

18.10 GLOSSARY

- **Perception** : the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the sense
- **Solipsism**: it is the view that the self is all that can be known to exist.
- **Theism** : belief in the existence of a god or gods, specifically of a creator who intervenes in the universe.

18.11 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Examine the Subjective Idealism of Berkeley.
- What are the main tenets of Subjective Idealism?
- What is meant by ‘Esse Est Percipi’ according to Berkeley?
- Existence is perception. Explain the statement.

18.12 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge Classics, 2010.
- Scruton, Roger. A Short History of Modern Philosophy. London : Routledge, 1995.
- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- Thilly, Frank (trans). History of Western Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 1997.

18.13 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

Q1 Is Berkeley a subjective idealist? Discuss.

Q2 Critically examine subjective idealism of Berkeley.

Q3 Critically examine 'Esse Est Percipi'.

Q4 Write a note on 'To be is to be perceived'.

DAVID HUME: THEORY OF CAUSATION

STRUCTURE

- 19.1 Objectives
- 19.2 Introduction
- 19.3 Theory of Causation
- 19.4 Criticism
- 19.5 To sum up
- 19.6 Glossary
- 19.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 19.8 Suggested Reading and References
- 19.9 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

19.1 OBJECTIVES

- To appraise Hume's contribution
- To explain the climax of Empiricism
- To elaborate Hume's Theory of Causation

19.2 INTRODUCTION

David Hume (1711-1776) took the philosophy of Locke and Berkeley to climax. Clarifying Locke, he points out that there are two kinds of contents of mind, namely, impressions and their ideas. These are the only perceptions

which compose the human mind. *Impressions may be divided into sensation and reflection. Sensations seem to arise from unknown causes but the reflection arises from our ideas. Thus reflection is secondary and sensation is primary. Reflection though secondary is not the copy of the sensation but the original fact and reality.*

Simple impressions are the originals of which the simple ideas are the copies. Thus impressions are prior and the ideas are posterior. There can be no simple idea without their corresponding original impression. The simple ideas are the copies of the original impressions. So the true impressions are always simple but the ideas can be both simple and complex.

All impressions are distinct and separate with no logical connection between them. This is known as Humean atomism. But knowledge is a unified whole and a connected system. Hence Hume supplements his atomism with the principles of union and cohesion. He points out that there is a gentle force which attracts the separate impressions into union. This gentle force is nothing but the law of association working according to the principles of *resemblance and contiguity*. Because of these bonds, one idea naturally introduces another. Hence there is connection amongst the impressions which is not rational but is effected through custom and imagination.

19.3 THEORY OF CAUSATION

Causation is the most important category on which, Hume believes, depend our knowledge of the matters of fact. On its strength we pass from the immediate impressions to something not immediately presented in senses. *On the basis of the causal principle, we bind together the passing impressions into universal laws. On the validity of this principle, there is rational justification for the science to be imparting certain knowledge.*

In order to show that the idea of cause be true and real, it must be traced to some impressions. But the things named as causes are so many that there is no quality by virtue of which a thing may be called a cause. The idea of cause, therefore, must be derived from the relations among objects. First,

the objects regarded as cause and effect are always contiguous like fire and heat, food and nourishment etc. Again, there is the relation of priority i.e. the cause is always antecedent to the effect: thus *contiguity* and *succession* are the two relations from which the idea of causation might have been derived. But there is a third and the most important element in causation, called the element of *power or necessary connection*. It is said that a cause produces an effect, or the effect is necessarily connected with the cause, but the impression cannot yield the knowledge of causation.

Hume says that all this happens due to the conjunction between the two things. For example, we call flame the cause of heat as we recall their constant conjunction in the past and start calling flame as the cause and heat effect and infer the existence of one from the other. Thus, *besides contiguity and succession, it is the relation of constant conjunction which produces the mental habits of regarding things necessarily connected*. So, on the basis of past experience and on our remembrance of the constant conjunction, we make transition to necessary connection.

The belief in the causation seems to be based on imagination. Due to the constant conjunction of two things, we start thinking them to be connected. And when this happens regularly, we start thinking one to be the cause and the other as an effect.

Whenever we pass from the impression of one to the idea or belief of another, we are not determined by reason but by custom or principle of association. Thus, there is no necessity in objects but there is subjective necessity by virtue of which we read causality into objects.

Thus, according to Hume, the idea of causation has two elements. Firstly, there is the human nature in the form of imagination and its principle of association. Secondly, the past experience of constant conjunction. The latter determines a certain sequence of ideas. Sometime even one instance may associate one as the cause of the other. But this is due to the allied habit of reading causality into the objects.

This reduction of causality to connection even disturbs the very root of scientific knowledge. If there is no causality, then there is no real connection between things. So in a way, Hume's enquiry ends in the denial of knowledge by the denial of causation.

Now let us see that how we arrive at the knowledge of causality:

(i) *A priori reasoning:*

One method of arriving at the causal connection is by a priori reasoning. But this alternative is not sound as the relation of causality cannot be derived by deduction: it is only on the basis of past experience that we arrive at a causal relationship.

(ii) *Demonstration:*

The relation of causality cannot be demonstrated. No person can demonstrate that food invariably provides nutrition or that fire will invariably burn something. It is not possible to deduce the nature of the cause from the nature of the effect with as much facility as we draw some mathematical principle. In mathematics the problem is of the relations of ideas, while in science it is one of the matters of fact. There is no contradiction in saying that food may not give nutrition and fire may not burn, because this can happen depending upon the circumstances.

(iii) *Observation and experience:*

The notion of causality is, derived from experience and observation. As part of our experience, we note that certain things and incidents bear the relation of antecedent and consequent to each other. For example, fire provides heat. We observe that there is some relation between the two things that occur in conjunction with each other. From this we deduce that one is the cause of other. This is just a feeling of belief or faith of everyone's experience and nothing like causality.

Hence, Hume disapproves the philosophical conception of causality. He says that neither our sensory experience proves the invariability of causal relations nor do our internal experience proves this invariability. The basis of causality is habit and custom. Since the mind has the habit of expecting another incident when one has occurred, so we wait for the incident and call it the effect. *The relation of causality, therefore, is based on habit, belief and custom. It has no logical force behind it for no amount of reasoning can establish relation between two things. Basically laws of causation are the results of associative process. Contradictions to such laws can always be expected.*

19.4 CRITICISM

Hume's theory of causation has met with severe criticism by Kant:

- (1) Kant has postulated causation as a category of thought. He says that whatever is experienced, is first passed through the category of causality and only then perceived or assimilated by the mind.
- (2) Rejection of belief in causality refers to exposing the limitations of empiricism. Categories of thought are not the subjects of experience but the basis of experience. From this standpoint, the knowledge of them can be said to be a priori. So, the effort to provide empirical proof of the causal relation is useless.
- (3) Kant is an advocate of phenomenalism. In the world of phenomena, causal relation is an essential condition of knowledge because no experience can assume the form without passing through this category of thought.

19.5 TO SUM UP

Hume's pure empiricism results in scepticism in philosophy. The sceptic is a philosopher who believes in the impossibility of the knowledge which is beyond experience. So it is clear that this philosophy believes in

criticizing the knowledge to be probable. So far as Hume's validity of knowledge is concerned, he is termed sceptic by some and agnostic by some others. Agnosticism lies in between absolute affirmation and absolute negation. Hume says that we cannot say definitely about the existence of anything outside the limits of our immediate experience regarding it because we do not have any proof for our statement. Thus, in epistemology, Hume's approach is agnostic.

However, whether sceptic or agnostic, Hume's contribution cannot be undermined.

19.6 GLOSSARY

- **Agnosticism:** it is the view that the existence of god, of the divine or the supernatural is unknown or unknowable. English biologist Thomas Henry Huxley coined the word 'agnostic' in 1869.

19.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Examine Hume's theory of causation.
- What are the grounds on which Hume has refuted causation?

19.8 SUGGESTION READING AND REFERENCES

- Thilly, Frank (trans). History of Western Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 2010.
- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge Classics, 2010.

19.9 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Note: Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

- (1) Examine critically Hume's view of causation.

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- (2) The basis of causality is habit and custom. Justify in the light of Hume's views.
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DAVID HUME: KNOWLEDGE OF EXTERNAL WORLD

STRUCTURE

- 20.1 Objectives
- 20.2 Introduction
- 20.3 Knowledge of the External World
- 20.4 To sum up
- 20.5 Glossary
- 20.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 20.7 Suggested Reading and References
- 20.8 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

20.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain Hume's views regarding the world
- To elaborate the extent up to which the world can be known

20.2 INTRODUCTION

Ordinarily we believe that there is an independent and permanent world outside us which we can easily discover with our sense-organs. But Hume's enquiry into the reality has shown that not the external world but only the impressions are real.

Hume says that we have no idea of substance. According to him, we have no perfect idea of anything except perception. Substances are perceived through impressions. Only qualities and powers are so perceived. The unknown something which is supposed to have qualities or in which these qualities are supposed to inhere is an unnecessary fiction of imagination. *A thing is nothing more than a collection of qualities to which we give a special name, because those qualities are always found together.* The idea of substance like the idea of cause is founded in a subjective habit which we erroneously objectify. The impression from which it has arisen is our inner perception that our thought remains constant in the repeated experience of the same group of qualities. For example, When I see sugar, I do same thing i.e. I combine the qualities, white colour, sweet taste, hardness etc. with one another. In other words, I get the impression of uniform combination of ideas. The idea of substance becomes erroneous through the fact that we refer it, not to the inner activity of representation to which it rightly belongs; but to the external group of qualities and make it a real permanent substratum for the latter. Hence, we have no true idea of substance or things.

So, Hume holds that we have no idea of such a substratum of the different qualities of bodies; we have no idea of the substance of the external qualities like colour, taste etc. We cannot prove that perceptions are caused by external objects, entirely different from them, though resembling them if possible. Our experience is silent here, for all we have before the mind is perceptions. We observe a relation of cause and effect between two perceptions, but can never observe it between perceptions and objects. Hence, we cannot reach from perceptions to objects as their causes. *The objects of all our knowledge are ideas of our own impressions. We cannot prove that these are caused by external objects or by an unknown substance or by ourselves or by God. Sensations arise from unknown causes. All we can do is to limit ourselves to the world of experience to the impressions and ideas.*

20.3 KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

Hume begins his enquiry regarding the knowledge of the external world with the question ‘what is a material thing’ ?

A material thing is nothing but a cluster of sensations experienced successively and repeatedly at different orders - objectified or thought of as external by imagination. We have no idea of a thing existing apart from sensations. An idea of such a thing existing beyond our sensations is an illusion. Hume regards some sensations as fundamental and some others as occasional. For example, sensations like hardness, resistance, extension, forms etc. are permanently experienced, while sensations such as colour, smell, taste and temperature and the like are occasional and variable.

Now we specially distinguish the permanent and fundamental sensations such as extension, hardness, form and the like and ascribe to them a kind of independence and thereby substantiate and objectify them in our own imagination. We think them as existing externally and independently of ourselves, and thus build up in to what we take to be an idea of an external and extramental world. But really we have no such true idea of material substance. Hence the idea of material substance is nothing but a fiction of our own imagination.

How, then, can we know about the existence of a permanent and independent external world from the fleeting, perishing and interrupted perceptions?

We might have proved this with the help of causation but then this has been shown to be an affair of imagination. So belief in the external world is not an affair of reason but it entirely owes its being to imagination. We trust our senses and accept the external universe without reasoning. But the slightest philosophical reflection can destroy the opinion of all men regarding the existence of the external world, because it is not the object but the impression and idea which really exists. Moreover it is also not possible to know the origin of the impressions.

So, we see that the belief in the external world is not an affair of reason but is entirely owing to imagination. *'The belief in the external world is neither on account of the involuntariness of certain impressions, as is commonly supposed, nor of their superior force and violence, that we*

attribute to them a reality, and continued existence, which we refuse to others that these are voluntary and feeble. For it is evident that our pains and pleasures our passions and affections, which we never suppose to have any existence beyond our perception, operate with greater violence, and are equally involuntary, as the impression of figure and extension, colour and sound which we suppose to be permanent beings.'

The continued, distinct and independent existence of the external world is derived from the constancy and coherence of the impressions. He says, 'the mountains, the houses, the tables, the bed have always appeared to me in the same order; and when I lose sight of them by shutting my eyes or turning my head, I soon after find them returning upon me without the least alteration... (They) present themselves in the same uniform manner and change not on account of any interruption in my seeing or perceiving them.' And whenever these impressions change there is coherence and regular dependence on each other.

He further says 'When I return to my chamber after an hour's absence, I find not my fire in the same situation, in which I left it: But then I am accustomed in other instances to see a like alteration produced in a like time, whether I am present or absent near or remote.'

Just as the objective factors of contiguity and succession had to be coupled with the mental or subjective factor of custom to account for causality; in the like manner, the coherence and constancy have to be combined with mental propensity to account for the belief in the external world. The constancy and coherence engender in the mind the habit of finding uniformity as complete as *possible*. The mental habit of finding coherence and constancy is best fulfilled by the supposition of the continued *distinct* and independent world. This supposition, based on mental propensity, makes the closely resembling *impression* as identical.

Hume says, 'The thought glides along the succession with equal facility, as if it considered only one object; and therefore confounds the succession with the identity... I shut my eyes, and afterwards open them;

and find the new perceptions to resemble perfectly those, which formerly struck my senses.' At first the supposition of a distinct, independent and continued existence of the external world is purely hypothetical. But it gains in strength by its success in harmonising many contradictory impressions. The belief in the continuous existence of the external world is only an imaginary one. This belief ignores the gaps or interruptions and fuses the succession of similar impressions and gives the impression of continuous existence.

Reason easily shows that the belief in the continued existence is illusory, for our own reality is of the passing and interrupted impressions only. So the testimony of senses alone is not to be trusted implicitly, we must correct the evidence by reason. We trust our senses by a natural instinct and accept an external universe without reasoning about it. We assume it to exist even if every sensible creature were annihilated. The slightest philosophical reflection, however, suffices to destroy the instinctive opinion of all men. Nothing can be present to the mind but only an image or perception.

We cannot prove that perceptions are caused by external objects entirely different from them, though perhaps resembling them in some way. Experience is silent here, for we have before the mind only perceptions. We observe a relation of cause and effect between two perceptions, but we can never observe it between perceptions and objects; hence we cannot proceed from perceptions to objects. If we deprive matter of primary and secondary qualities, what remains is only a certain unknown, inexplicable something as the cause of our impression-an entity so devoid of meaning that no skeptic will think it worth his while to dispute its reality. *The object of all our knowledge are impressions and ideas derived from them. There is no evidence that these are caused by external objects, or an unknown substance, or by God. Impressions and sensations simply appear and reappear in our experience. All we can do, then, is to limit ourselves to the world of experience, to our impressions and ideas. We can compare our ideas, note their relations, and reason about the relations, thus attaining a kind of demonstrative*

knowledge. We can also observe the order of our sensations through habit or custom. We come to regard one object as connected with another by a relation which we call cause and effect.

So, the habit of finding an identity between the perception, produces the fiction of a continued existence. But this fiction and identity are false.

20.4 TO SUM UP

Thus Hume says that instead of discarding the fiction of the continued existence, human beings inconsistently form the hypothesis of double existence. The perceptions are supposed to be interrupted, and perishing at every stage. But the objects are uninterrupted and preserve a continued existence and identity. Thus both the contradictory verdicts of reason and imagination are inconsistently retained by us.

20.5 GLOSSARY

- **Skeptic** : A person who doubts the truth or value of an idea or belief
- **Annihilate** : To destroy something completely so that nothing is left

20.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Explain Hume's views regarding the external world ?
- Can the reality of the external world be proved, according to Hume ?

20.7 SUGGESTION READING AND REFERENCES

- Thilly, Frank (trans). History of Western Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 2010.
- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.

20.8 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

Q1 Was Hume a sceptic in proving the external world ?

Q2 Explain fully Hume's views on the external world.

Q3 Can the external world be proved by senses ?

Q4 Does one need the help of reason to prove the external world according to Hume? Comment.

Q5 The existence of the external world is based on imagination. Comment.

RATIONALISM AND EMPIRICISM - A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT

STRUCTURE

- 21.1 Objectives
- 21.2 Introduction
- 21.3 Rationalism
- 21.4 Empiricism
- 21.5 Comparison of Rationalism and Empiricism
- 21.6 Conclusion
- 21.7 Glossary
- 21.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 21.9 Suggested Reading and References
- 21.10 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

21.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain the meaning of rationalism
- To elaborate the meaning of empiricism
- To list the drawbacks of rationalism and empiricism
- To differentiate between these two philosophical views

21.2 INTRODUCTION

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge. It enquires into the origin, nature and sources of knowledge along with the conditions of its validity. The problem concerning the sources of knowledge is vital one.

There are mainly four theories regarding the sources of knowledge. Rationalism regards reason as the source of true knowledge. Empiricism regards experience as the genuine source of knowledge. Kant advocates apriorism and regards reason and experience both as the sources of knowledge; reason gives a priori form of knowledge and experience gives the matter of knowledge in the shape of discrete and disconnected sensations. Another theory regarding the source of knowledge is called intuitionism. Intuitionism regards intuition as the valid source of knowledge. It condemns reason or intellect.

Among these four views we are here concerned with only two of them.

21.3 RATIONALISM

Rationalism is the theory of knowledge according to which all knowledge is rational in nature. From the historical point of view, rationalism in the modern times began in the philosophy of Descartes, the father of modern western philosophy. *Descartes, for the first time, declared that in philosophical reflections, nothing should be admitted purely on the basis of faith.* He formulated the following four principles for philosophical reflections:

1. Never accept anything true about which you are doubtful.
2. Divide each difficulty under examination into as many parts as might be necessary for its adequate solution.
3. Always start with the simpler ones and then go to the complex ones, step by step.
4. Don't omit anything in order to reach to the general conclusions.

These rules throw light on Descartes' rational approach to the problems. According to him reason is the source of real knowledge. We distinguish

between the real and unreal through our reason. Reason alone is a power by which we can reach knowledge. And since everyone has reason in him, everybody can know the truth through his personal endeavour. Descartes began with a method of doubt but this doubt was merely a stepping stone to reach definite knowledge.

Spinoza gave a developed form to the rationalism. He said that we can know the truths through reason because basically reality is rational in nature. No state of man's existence is beyond the reach of reason. He laid so much importance on reason that he considered intellectual love of God to be the highest state of human being.

The climax of rationalism in modern western philosophy was seen in the philosophy of Leibnitz. Whereas Descartes considered only basic ideas to be innate, Leibnitz considered all ideas to be innate. Intellect alone is the source of genuine knowledge. The innate ideas gradually manifest in the mind through the activity of the intellect. In the beginning, they are vague but in the process they gradually become clear. In this process, the sensory perceptions provide occasions for knowledge but the intellect alone makes the ideas manifest. The knowledge consists of the ideas. This view takes rationalism to its climax.

The following are the general characteristics of rationalism:

- (1) Mind is active and not passive.
- (2) According to Descartes only root ideas are innate but according to Leibnitz all ideas are innate.
- (3) Sensory perceptions do not give knowledge but only occasion for it.
- (4) Through intellect alone, we can arrive at definite, true and universal knowledge.
- (5) Reason alone is the final testimony of knowledge.

Criticism of Rationalism:

- 1 According to rationalism there is a universal faculty of reason by

virtue of which each individual has certain innate ideas. Knowledge proper is exclusively constituted of such ideas. This theory explains the universality of ideas that all men have the same ideas. But this is not the case; there are individual variations. They are subjective states of mind.

- 2 The rationalists do not agree as to how many ideas are innate.
- 3 It is wrong to undermine the importance of sensory experience.
- 4 The rationalists fail to provide any contention for the acceptance of ideas to be innate.

21.4 EMPIRICISM

Empiricism is the philosophy which considers empirical experience to be the real source of knowledge. According to it, man attains knowledge through the sensations received by his sense organs. The empiricists are against the theory of innate ideas. *The British philosopher John Locke, the father of modern empiricism, considered the mind of child as a 'Tabula Rasa' i.e. blank sheet. It means that the mind is a blank sheet on which the sensations leave their impressions.* Thus the matter of knowledge comes from outside the mind. The empiricists do not admit the existence of anything which is not subject to sensual experience. Thus David Hume refuses that the ideas are objects of our knowledge. He says that we do not know any mind in which they live. Therefore, the concept of mind is baseless.

The following are the characteristics of empiricism:

- 1) Knowledge is sensory in nature and attained through the sense organs.
- 2) The basis of knowledge is sensory experience.
- 3) Truth is posteriori.
- 4) True ideas are acquired but mind is passive in receiving them.
- 5) Perception is the real testimony of knowledge and it is limited up to the limits of the sense-experience.

Criticism of empiricism:

- 1) According to empiricists, mind passively receives sensations but it has been proved that mind selects sensations.
- 2) According to the empiricists, mind makes ideas on the basis of sensations received by it. Then how can it remain passive? Does it not become active while doing so ?
- 3) John Locke and Hume tried to distinguish between knowledge and ideas but they did not succeed in doing so as both ideas and knowledge are two aspects of the same thing.
- 4) According to the empiricists, the sensations reach the mind one by one. But the psychologists prove that perception is not a putting together of different bits of sensations but it is a whole.
- 5) According to empiricists, our sense organs are the medium through which external objects reach the mind. But according to modern psychology, perception also depends on past experience, mental set up, attention and interest besides sensations.

21.5 COMPARISON OF RATIONALISM AND EMPIRICISM

Rationalism	Empiricism
1) Knowledge is intellectual.	1) Knowledge is sensory.
2) The basis of knowledge is intellect.	2) The basis of knowledge is sensory experience.
3) Truths are a priori.	3) Truths are posteriori.
4) True ideas are innate.	4) True ideas are acquired.
5) Mind is active.	5) Mind is passive.
6) Reason is the testimony of knowledge	6) Perception is the testimony of knowledge.
7) The limits of reason are the limits of knowledge.	7) The limits of sense-experience are the limits of knowledge.

Both rationalism and empiricism seem to be one sided theories. Kant attempted to reconcile them. Kant believed that though all knowledge begins with experience yet it does not spring from experience alone. While sense experience is a necessary condition of the acquisition of ideas - it is not a sufficient condition - it is the occasion for the display of certain a priori mental functions. Knowledge is a joint product of both a priori and posteriori factors, the former supplying the form and the latter giving the material or content of knowledge.

Kant did not reject empiricism and rationalism outright. He tried to retain all that appeared to be valuable in them. His statement was that both empiricism and rationalism are right in what they 'affirm', but wrong in what they 'deny'. Empiricism affirms that knowledge is constituted by experience and rationalism affirms that knowledge is constituted by innate or a priori ideas. Empiricism is right in as much as it points out that proposition of facts can be derived from experience. But rationalism is also right in as much as it points out that knowledge is constituted of a priori elements. Again empiricism is wrong in as much as it denies the presence of a priori elements involved in knowledge. In the same way rationalism wrongly denies the role of the sense-experience in attaining knowledge.

Kant's view is the synthesis of these two opposite views. He says that knowledge begins with experience, but does not necessarily originate from it. As soon as sense-experience registers its impressions on the mind, the mind at once is stirred into its own activity and contributes its own ordering activity into discrete impressions. The ordering activity is discharged by a priori elements. Knowledge proper is a joint venture of both sense and understanding.

Hence both rationalism and empiricism are one-sided theories. The points of difference between them can be stated in the following manner:

Rationalism

- 1) Rationalism states that mind is active and creative. As soon as we begin to reflect, we become conscious of certain innate ideas. Knowledge is constituted exclusively of innate ideas.
- 2) Real knowledge, according to, rationalism consists in clear and distinct ideas which are given by reason alone. Sense experience can neither constitute knowledge nor can it ever confirm or disconfirm propositions given by reason. Senses provide only with an occasion for thinking about innate ideas.
- 3) Rationalism too did not make any sharp distinction between sensing and thinking. But it was Leibnitz who regarded the distinction between sensation and thought as of degree only.
- 4) Rationalism starts with clear and distinct ideas and connects them with the help of logical rules. But innate ideas by themselves have no correspondence with facts. Therefore, knowledge according to rationalism becomes purely conceptual.
- 5) Rationalism is dogmatic also since it confines knowledge to innate ideas only, ignoring the claims of sense-experience. In the end it terminates in the inconsistent systems of Spinoza and Leibnitz.

Empiricism

- 1) Empiricism holds that the mind at birth is a clean state or a tabula rasa. All the characteristics of knowledge are inscribed on it by experience only. Thus knowledge begins 'with' and 'ends in' experience.
- 2) Empiricism over-estimates sense and under-estimates reason. The intellect, according to Locke, can function only after simple ideas have been supplied to it. Similarly, according to Hume, intellect cannot create one single simple idea of sense. The place of intellect is secondary.

- 3) Empiricism holds that sense and understanding differ in degree only. This is at least very clear in sensationalism according to which thinking is perceiving or imagining.
- 4) Empiricism holds that the data supplied by experience is discrete, distinct and unconnected. Any connection is introduced by the process of association and imagination. As these connecting processes are considered to be purely relative and subjective, so knowledge based on them is taken to be lacking in certainty.
- 5) Empiricism is dogmatic, for it uncritically assumes the constitutive role of experience, without reference to 'a priori' elements. In the end it sets no limit to ignorance which finally terminates in scepticism.

21.6 CONCLUSION

Rationalism and empiricism are the two different systems as they stress on two different sources of knowledge. Rationalism accepts reason and empiricism accepts experience as the valid source of knowledge. So we characterize philosophers as rationalists or empiricists according to the answers they give to the question of the origin of knowledge.

21.7 GLOSSARY

- **A – priori:** Relating to or denoting reasoning or knowledge which proceeds from theoretical deduction rather than from observation or experience.
- **Rationalism:** the view that appeals to reason, not the sense, as the source of knowledge. In its most extreme form, rationalism insists that all knowledge is derived from reason.
- **Empiricism:** the view that all human knowledge is derived from the sense.
- **Posteriori:** relating to or derived by reasoning from observed facts.
- **Tabula-Rasa:** a clean slate (the mind in its hypothetical primary blank or empty state before receiving outside impressions)

21.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What are the different sources of knowledge?
- What do you understand by rationalism?
- What do you understand by empiricism?
- What are the characteristics of empiricism?
- Explain the differences between rationalism and empiricism.

21.9 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Thilly, Frank (trans). History of Western Philosophy. Allahabad : Central Publishing House, 2010.
- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. London : Routledge Classics, 2010.

21.10 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

Q1 Give the characteristics of rationalism.

Q2 Critically examine rationalism as an epistemological theory.

Q3 Critically examine empiricism.

Q4 Compare and contrast rationalism and empiricism.

SYNTHESIS OF RATIONALISM AND EMPIRICISM (KANT)

STRUCTURE

- 22.1 Objectives
- 22.2 Introduction
- 22.3 Synthesis of Rationalism and Empiricism
- 22.4 Conclusion
- 22.5 Glossary
- 22.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 22.7 Suggested Reading and References
- 22.8 Exercise (Answer the Questions)

22.1 OBJECTIVES

- To summarise Kant's views as a positive thinker
- To explain the meaning of rationalism and empiricism
- To elaborate the drawbacks of rationalism
- To list the drawbacks of empiricism
- To establish the synthesis of rationalism and empiricism

22.2 INTRODUCTION

Kant is one of the most influential philosophers in the history of western philosophy. Like other modern thinkers Kant answered the question regarding the certainty of knowledge. Such knowledge, according to him, is found in physics and mathematics. So Kant did not believe in any kind of scepticism if rationalism and empiricism are interpreted in the right manner. He said that on the basis of experience, strict universality and necessity cannot be explained. So empiricism can never guarantee universal and necessary elements in empirical propositions. He believed that knowledge proper must have universal and necessary factors along with a firm basis on facts. Kant firmly says that empiricism cannot explain knowledge as is found in mathematics and physics. Kant also holds the same opinion regarding rationalism. The innate ideas found in men are subjective. Then the question arises regarding the truth of such ideas. Moreover reason unaided by experience cannot lay claim to actuality. Therefore Kant rejected rationalism on the ground that it dealt with airy structures without correspondence with facts. These shortcomings of rationalism and empiricism became the source of inspiration for the philosophy of Kant.

22.3 SYNTHESIS OF RATIONALISM AND EMPIRICISM

Kant did not reject empiricism and rationalism outright. He tried to retain all that appeared to be valuable in them. His statement was that both empiricism and rationalism are right in what they affirm but wrong in what they deny. Empiricism affirms that knowledge is constituted by experience and rationalism affirms that knowledge is constituted by innate or a priori ideas. Empiricism is right in as much as it points out that propositions of facts can be derived from experience. But rationalism is also right in as much as it points out that knowledge is constituted of a priori elements. Again, empiricism is wrong in as much as it denies the presence of a priori elements involved in knowledge. In the same way, rationalism wrongly denies that sense experience also constitutes knowledge. *The proper view, according to Kant, is: 'Knowledge begins with experience but does not necessarily*

originate from it'. As soon as sense experience registers its impressions on the mind, the mind at once is stirred into its own activity and contributes its own ordering activity into discrete impressions. *Therefore, knowledge proper is a joint venture of sense and understanding.* But we also find that mind does not remain satisfied with the knowledge of phenomena only. It wants to know the supra natural also. This is possible through the faculty of reason only. Hence, according to Kant, knowledge begins with sense, proceeds to understanding and ends in reason.

Hence, knowledge is a joint venture of reason and experience both. *Kant believed in the existence of a priori or universal elements which, according to him, are an important aspect of epistemology. Such a priori elements are independent of all kinds of experience. Kant believed that unless these a priori elements be operative, no experience of any kind would-arise at all. So Kant was interested in the enquiry of all kinds of a priori ways of knowing any object. This is the reason that Kant's enquiry is known as Transcendental.* Kant says 'I entitle transcendental all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible a priori'.

In Kant's philosophy, a- priori is the mark of necessity. Such necessity can never be explained in terms of experience. Thus Kant's method is called transcendental method. Kant also believes in a kind of synthesis which is affected a priori by the three ideas of reason namely the world, soul and God. These ideas, he considered as regulative and no knowledge is possible concerning them. This view of Kant is known as Agnosticism.

Kant's philosophy goes beyond all kinds of dogmatism. It is that transcendental in the sense as far as he discusses the a priori elements. His philosophy is a reconciliation of both rationalism and empiricism. The following are the main points of transcendentalism:

- 1) Knowledge begins with experience because experience stirs mind to become creative. The sense experience moulds and transforms the a priori elements which are contributed by the mind.

- 2) Knowledge proper is a joint venture of both sense and understanding. The material is supplied by the senses and synthesized into cognitive statements by the a - priori forms of the mind.
- 3) Kant makes a sharp distinction between sensing and thinking or understanding. Sensing is passive whereas understanding is active. Senses supply the matter and understanding connects the discrete data into judgements.
- 4) True data by themselves are discrete but the connection introduced into them by a priori forms is the same for all persons. Though the connection depends on the subjective constitution of the human mind, yet it is valid for all, as all human knowers have the same constitution. But knowledge is confined to phenomena only.
- 5) Transcendentalism points out the importance of a-priori elements in knowledge. However it points out that without sense material, they alone cannot constitute knowledge. It successfully reconciles the rival claims of empiricism and rationalism and maintains a golden mean between the scepticism and the claims of knowledge.

22.4 CONCLUSION

To conclude, Kant says that genuine knowledge is universal and necessary knowledge. He agrees with rationalists that there is such knowledge but only of the basic assumptions of the sciences of physics and mathematics. With the empiricists, he agrees that we can know only what we can experience. Sensations provide matter of our knowledge. Kant agrees with both the rationalists and empiricists. His view is that the senses furnish the material of our knowledge and the mind arranges them in ways made necessary by its own nature. The content of our knowledge is derived from experience but the mind thinks its experiences, conceives them according to a priori, that is, rational ways. Thus, according to Kant, knowledge is a joint venture of both reason and experience.

22.5 GLOSSARY

- **Transcendental** : It means something like going beyond ordinary level of experience. The term transcendental signifies the a priori condition of all possible knowledge.
- **Dogmatism** : The tendency to lay down principles as undeniably true, without consideration of evidence or the opinions of others.

22.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What are the drawbacks of rationalism and empiricism?
- How did Kant reconcile rationalism and empiricism?

22.7 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Masih, Y. A Critical History of Western Philosophy. New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- Sharma, Ram Nath. History of Greek Philosophy . Delhi : Kedar Nath Ram Nath, 1950.

22.8 EXERCISE (ANSWER THE QUESTIONS)

Use the space given below for your answers. Use separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

Q1. What are the characteristics of Transcendentalism?

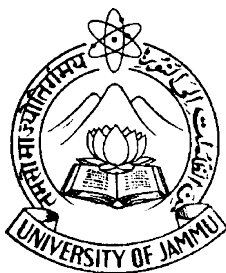
Q2. How does Transcendentalism differ from rationalism and empiricism?

Q3. Rationalism and empiricism are right in what they affirm; examine Kant's philosophy in the light of this statement.

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SELF LEARNING MATERIAL

B.A. SEMESTER - V

SUBJECT : PHILOSOPHY

UNIT : 1 TO V

COURSE NO. : PL-501

LESSON NO. : 1-22

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Course Co-ordinator

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Course Contributors :-

Prof. Kiran Bakshi

Dr. P.P Singh

***Content Editing &
Proof Reading:-***

Ms. Shalini Gupta

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