

Holy Trinity University
Faculty of Fundamental Theology
Department of Theological Philosophy
Introduction to Theological Philosophy
Teaching Material

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Dear learners, it is important to note first that giving a clear-cut definition of philosophy is difficult. It may be easy to define other disciplines, such as, chemistry, physics, geography, etc in terms of a subject matter, for they have their own specific subject matters to primarily deal with. However, it is difficult to do the same with philosophy, because philosophy has no a specific subject matter to primarily deal with. Philosophy deals primarily with issues. What contents philosophy has are not the specific subject matters, but issues, which are universal in nature. However, this should not lead us into thinking that philosophy is incomprehensible. It is only to say that whenever you want to understand philosophy, it is better to read different thoughts of philosophers, consciously see its salient features by yourself, participate in it, and do it.

Philosophy is not as elusive as it is often thought to be. Nor is it remote from our various problems. It is unanimously agreed that the best way to learn and understand philosophy is to *philosophize*; i.e., to be confronted with philosophical questions, to use philosophical language, to become acquainted with differing philosophical positions and maneuvers, to read the philosophers themselves, and to grapple with the issues for oneself. Socrates once stated that ***“Wonder is the feeling of a philosopher, and philosophy begins in wonder”***. It is true that most of us may not have a clear knowledge about the history, nature, language, and issues of philosophy. But, we all think and reflect in our own way about issues that matter to us most. We all have touched and moved by the feelings of wonder from which all philosophy derives. Thus, we all participate, more or less, in philosophical issues, even though thinking alone cannot make us philosophers.

If, however, you still want to find its clear-cut definition, it is better to refer to the etymology of the word itself, instead of trying to associate it with a certain specific subject matter. Etymologically, the word “*philosophy*” comes from two Greek words: “*philo*” and “*sophia*”, which mean “*love*” and “*wisdom*”, respectively. Thus, the literal definition of philosophy is ***“love of wisdom”***. The ancient Greek thinker Pythagoras was the first to use the word “*philosopher*” to call a person who clearly shows a marked curiosity in the things he experiences. Anyone who raises questions, such as Does God exist? What is reality? What is the ultimate source of Being?

What is knowledge? What does it mean to know? How do we come to know? What is value? and the like, is really showing a curiosity that can be described as a vital concern for becoming wise about the phenomena of the world and the human experiences. Therefore, seeking wisdom is among the various essences of philosophy that it has got from its etymological definition. Nevertheless, this is not sufficient by itself to understand philosophy, for not all wisdoms are philosophy.

Activity # 2: - Dear learners, what do you think is the wisdom that philosophers seek?

The wisdom that philosophers seek is not the wisdom of the expertise or technical skills of professionals. Someone may be encyclopedic, and thus seemingly intelligent, but he may actually be foolish when it comes to understanding the meaning and significance of what he knows. According to Socrates, wisdom consists of a critical habit and eternal vigilance about all things and a reverence for truth, whatever its form, and wherever its place. Based on the Socratic understanding of wisdom, philosophy, as a pursuit of wisdom, is, thus, the development of critical habits, the continuous search for truth, and the questioning of the apparent.

Activity # 3: - Dear learners, what do you think it means to question the apparent?
Does it mean to deny the fact or the practical reality?

To interrogate the obvious means to deal creatively with the phenomenal world, to go beyond the common understanding, and to speculate about things that other people accept with no doubt. But, questioning/criticism is not the final end of philosophy, though raising the right question is often taken not only as the beginning and direction of philosophy but also as its essence. Raising the right question is an art that includes the ability to foresee what is not readily obvious and to imagine different possibilities and alternatives of approaching the apparent. When we ultimately wonder about the existing world, and thus raise different questions about its order, each question moves us from the phenomenal facts to a profound speculation. The philosophical enterprise, as Vincent Barry stated, is ***“an active imaginative process of formulating proper questions and resolving them by rigorous, persistent analysis”***.

Therefore, philosophy is a rational and critical enterprise that tries to formulate and answer fundamental questions through an intensive application of reason- an application that draws on analysis, comparison, and evaluation. It involves reason, rational criticism, examination, and analysis. Accordingly, we can say that Philosophy has a ***constructive side***, for it attempts to formulate rationally defensible answers to certain fundamental questions concerning the nature of reality, the nature of value, and the nature of knowledge and truth. At the same time, its ***critical side*** is manifested when it deals with giving a rational critic, analysis, clarification, and evaluation of answers given to basic metaphysical, epistemological, and axiological questions.

The other thing, which is worthy of noting, is that ***philosophy is an activity***. It is not something that can be easily mastered or learned in schools. A philosopher is a great philosopher, not because he mastered philosophy, but because he did it. It is not his theory, but his extraordinary ability to critically think, to conceptualize, to analyze, to compare, to evaluate, and to understand- i.e., to *philosophize*- that makes him so. Of course, the product of philosophizing is philosophy as a product. However, what makes someone a great philosopher is not the produced philosophy, but his/her outstanding ability to philosophize.

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION, AND SCIENCE

If this is what philosophy is, then how does it stand in relation to those two other great enterprises, religion and science?

As if we did not already have enough problems, “religion” is a slippery word indeed, as is evident from looking in any dictionary. But two things are clear. First, religion has to do with many of the same things philosophy has to do with: ultimate reality, the meaning of life, good and evil, immortality, human nature, and so on. In fact, religion usually involves beliefs about such things and beliefs that are worked out and adhered to in a fairly systematic and fixed manner, though perhaps not in as critical a manner as in philosophy. Second, in addition to this intellectual aspect of religion is a more important one, one that concerns not so much the thinking as the willing side of our being. What is really distinctive about religion is the commitment it involves.

It may be helpful to note that this latter aspect of religion is true to the very origin of the word: “Religion” comes from the Latin ‘religio’, which means “to bind one thing to another.” The religious individual is someone who is personally bound to something. This something is usually understood to be God, and the worship of God and active participation in rituals, ceremonies, and proclamation are further evidence for the existential rather than intellectual character of religion. We might ask, however, whether the object of such commitment must be God. Perhaps the object of such commitment need only be something ultimate—as the German-American theologian Paul Tillich said, one’s “ultimate concern.” Could this something as easily be a political cause? the pursuit of pleasure? the acquisition of wealth? But then again, Tillich reminds us that some things may be perceived as being ultimate that really are not. Is it possible to be bound “religiously” to something that is not ultimate, to have an idolatrous faith, to be worshipping an idol instead of a real thing? Be that as it may, religion would appear to have mainly to do not so much with our intellects as with our decision, action, worship, and love—not so much with what we think as with what we do.

Science brings us back to the study of something. In fact, our word “science” comes from the Latin *scientia*, which means simply “knowledge.” It was in this sense of the word that it was held (and still is by some) that “theology is the queen of the sciences and philosophy is her hand-maid.” For most people the word has lost this original meaning and is now used sometimes to refer to the social sciences (such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, etc.) but more often to the natural sciences (such as physics, biology, chemistry, astronomy, etc.). Almost always the words “science” and “scientist” are associated with such things as test tubes, dissections, microscopes, telescopes, periodic charts, nuclear fission chambers, and laboratories occupied by people wearing white jackets.

Taken in this usual sense, science is easily related to philosophy. Like philosophy science is the pursuit of knowledge: It is an intellectual activity and it studies something. Unlike philosophy, however, its focus is much more restricted. Specifically, it narrows its focus to the study of the natural world alone, whereas our experience of nature may be but one aspect of the total reality that interests philosophers. Likewise, the scientific method is more restricted than the philosopher’s method may be. Inasmuch as scientists are interested in the world of nature, they naturally employ primarily the tools of observation and experimentation: the test tubes, dissections, microscopes, and telescopes mentioned above.

2.2. Basic Features of Philosophy

Dear learners, the general features of philosophy can be summarized as follows:

Philosophy is a set of views or beliefs about life and the universe, which are often held uncritically.

We refer to this meaning as the informal sense of philosophy or “having” a philosophy. Usually when a person says “my philosophy is,” he or she is referring to an informal personal attitude to whatever topic is being discussed.

- 1) *Philosophy is a process of reflecting on and criticizing our most deeply held conceptions and beliefs.*

This is the formal sense of “doing” philosophy. These two senses of philosophy-”having” and “doing”- cannot be treated entirely independent of each other, if we did not *have* a philosophy in the formal, personal sense, then we could not *do* a philosophy in the critical, reflective sense. However, having a philosophy is not sufficient for doing philosophy. A genuine philosophical attitude is searching and critical; it is open-minded and tolerant- willing to look at all sides of an issue without prejudice. To philosophize is not merely to read and know philosophy; there are skills of argumentation to be mastered, techniques of analysis to be employed, and a body of material to be appropriated such that we become able to think philosophically.

To philosophize also means to generalize. Philosophers are reflective and critical. They take a second look at the material presented by common sense. They attempt to think through a variety of life's problems and to face all the facts involved impartially. The accumulation of knowledge does not by itself lead to understanding, because it does not necessarily teach the mind to make a *critical evaluation* of facts that entail consistent and coherent judgment. Critical evaluations often differ. Philosophers, theologians, scientists, and others disagree, first because they view things from different points of view and with different assumptions. Their personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, and training may vary widely. This is especially true of people living at different times and in different places. A second reason philosophers disagree is that they live in a changing universe. People change, society changes, and nature changes. Some people are responsive and sensitive to change; others cling to tradition and the status quo, to systems that were formulated some time ago and that were declared to be authoritative and final. A third reason philosophers disagree is that they deal with an area of human experience in which the evidence is not complete. Different people may interpret the evidence we do have in various ways. Despite these disagreements, however, philosophers continue to probe, examine, and evaluate the material with the hope of presenting consistent principles by which we can live.

2) *Philosophy is a rational attempt to look at the world as a whole.*

Philosophy seeks to combine the conclusions of the various sciences and human experience into some kind of consistent worldview. Philosophers wish to see life, not with the specialized slant of the scientist or the businessperson or the artist, but with the overall view of someone cognizant of life as a totality. Although there are difficulties and dangers in setting forth any worldview, there also are dangers in confining attention to fragments of human experience. Philosophy's task is to give a view of the whole, a life and a worldview, and to integrate the knowledge of the sciences with that of other disciplines to achieve a consistent whole. Philosophy, according to this view, attempts to bring the results of human inquiry- religious, historical, and scientific into some meaningful interpretation that provides knowledge and insight for our lives.

3) *Philosophy is the logical analysis of language and the clarification of the meaning of words and concepts.*

Certainly, this is one function of philosophy. In fact, nearly all philosophers have used methods of analysis and have sought to clarify the meaning of terms and the use of language. Some philosophers see this as the main task of philosophy, and a few claim this is the only legitimate function of philosophy. Such persons consider philosophy a specialized field serving the sciences and aiding in the clarification of language rather than a broad field reflecting on all of life's experiences. This outlook has gained considerable support during the twentieth century. It would limit what we call *knowledge* to statements about *observable facts* and their interrelations i.e., to the business of the various sciences. Not all linguistic analysts, however, define *knowledge* so narrowly. Although they do reject and try to "clean up" many non-scientific assertions, many of them think that we can have knowledge of ethical principles and the like, although this

knowledge is also experientially derived. Those who take the narrower view neglect, when they do not deny, all generalized worldviews and life views, as well as traditional moral philosophy and theology. From this narrower point of view, the aim of philosophy is to expose confusion and nonsense and to clarify the meaning and use of terms in science and everyday affairs.

4) Philosophy is a group of perennial problems that interest people and for which philosophers always have sought answers.

Philosophy presses its inquiry into the deepest problems of human existence. Some of the philosophical questions raised in the past have been answered in a manner satisfactory to the majority of philosophers. Many questions, however, have been answered only tentatively, and many problems remain unsolved. What are philosophical questions? The question “Did Ram make a false statement on his income tax return?” is merely a question of fact. However, the questions “What is truth?” and “What is the distinction between right and wrong?” have philosophical importance. Sometimes we think seriously about fundamental life issues: What is life and why am I here? Why is there anything at all? What is the place of life in this great universe? Is the universe friendly or unfriendly? Do things operate by chance or through sheer mechanism, or is there some plan, purpose, or intelligence at the heart of things? Is my life controlled by outside forces, or do I have a determining or even a partial degree of control? Why do people struggle and strive for their rights, for justice, for better things in the future? What do concepts like “right” and “justice” mean, and what are the marks of a good society? Often men and women have been asked to sacrifice their lives, if need be, for certain values and ideals. What are the genuine values of life and how can it be attained? Is there really a fundamental distinction between right and wrong, or is it just a matter of one’s own opinions? What is beauty? Should religion count in a person’s life? Is it intellectually valid to believe in God? Is there a possibility of a “life after death?” Is there any way we can get an answer to these and many related questions? Where does knowledge come from, and can we have any assurances that anything is true?

The above questions are all philosophical. The attempt to seek answers or solutions to them has given rise to theories and systems of thought, such as idealism, realism, pragmatism, analytic philosophy, existentialism, phenomenology, and process philosophy. Philosophy also means the various theories or systems of thought developed by the great philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Royce, James, Dewey, Whitehead, and others. Without these people and their thoughts, philosophy would not have the rich content it has today. Even though we may be unconscious of the fact, we are constantly influenced by ideas that have come down to us in the traditions of society.

1.3. Core Fields of Philosophy

Metaphysics and Epistemology

Dear learners, we have said earlier that philosophy is a rational and critical enterprise that tries to formulate and answer fundamental questions through an intensive application of reason- an application that draws on analysis, comparison, and evaluation. It deals with the most basic issues faced by human beings. The content of philosophy is better seen as asking the right questions rather than providing the correct answers. It even can be said that philosophy is the *study of questions*. Van Cleve Morris has noted that the crux of the matter is asking the “*right*” questions. By “*right*” he meant questions that are meaningful and relevant- the kind of questions people really want answered and that will make a difference in how they live and work. Philosophy has different primary and secondary branches. This course deals only with the primary ones, namely Metaphysics, Epistemology, Axiology, and Logic. Metaphysics is the most important fields of philosophy that deal with the studies of ultimate reality and human knowledge, respectively.

In this lesson, we will discuss the first two major fields, Metaphysics and Epistemology, and we will deal with the remaining two fields, Axiology and Logic, in the next lesson.

3.1 Metaphysics

Activity # 1: - *Dear learners, what do you think is metaphysics? List any question that you might think is a metaphysical question. Show your question to student(s) beside you, and discuss about your questions together.*

Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that studies the ultimate nature of reality or existence. It deal with issues of reality, God, freedom, soul/immortality, the mind-body problem, form and substance relationship, cause and effect relationship, and other related issues. Metaphysicians seek an irreducible foundation of reality or ‘first principles’ from which absolute knowledge or truth can be induced and deduced. The term *metaphysics* is derived from the Greek words “*meta*” means (“beyond”, “upon” or “after”) and *physika*, means (“physics”). Literally, it refers ‘those things after the physics.’ Aristotle’s writings on ‘first philosophy’ came after his treatise on physics, therefore, Aristotle’s editor, Andronicus of Rhodes, named them metaphysics.

Here are some of the questions that Metaphysics primarily deals with:

- ❖ *What is reality?*
- ❖ *What is the ultimately real?*
- ❖ *What is the nature of the ultimate reality?*
- ❖ *Is it one thing or is it many different things?*
- ❖ *Can reality be grasped by the senses, or it is transcendent?*

- ❖ *What makes reality different from a mere appearance?*
- ❖ *What is mind, and what is its relation to the body?*
- ❖ *Is there a cause and effect relationship between reality and appearance?*
- ❖ *Does God exist, and if so, can we prove it?*
- ❖ *Are human actions free, or predetermined by a supernatural force?*
- ❖ *What is human being? A thinking mind? A perishable body? Or a combination of both?*
- ❖ *What is time?*
- ❖ *What is the meaning of life?*

At first, questions like, ‘What is real?’ seem too simple to bother asking. But consider George Knight’s example about the existence of a floor and one will see that the question has far reaching implications: What is exactly the nature of the floor upon which you stand? It may seem to have a rather straightforward existence. It is obviously flat, solid, and smooth; it has a particular color; it is composed of an identifiable material, such as wood or concrete; and it supports your weight. Suppose, however, that a physicist enters the room and questioned about the reality of the floor. She will reply that the floor is made of molecules; that molecules consist of atoms, electrons, protons, and neutrons; and these, finally, of electric energy alone. A third position is offered by a passing chemist. To him the floor is a hotbed of hydrocarbons associated in a particular way and subject to certain kinds of environmental influences, such as heat, cold, wetness, dryness, and oxidation.

It is evident that the question of reality is not as simplistic as it appears. If the reality of a common floor is confusing, what about the larger problems that presents themselves as humankind searches for the ultimate reality of the universe?

Metaphysical questions are the most basic to ask because they provide the foundation upon which all subsequent inquiry is based. Metaphysical questions may be divided into four subsets or aspects.

- i) ***Cosmological Aspect:*** Cosmology consists in the study of theories about the origin, nature, and development of the universe as an orderly system. Questions such as these populate the realm of cosmology: “How did the universe originate and develop? Did it come about by accident or design? Does its existence have any purpose?”
- ii) ***Theological Aspect:*** Theology is that part of religious theory that deals with conceptions of and about God. “Is there a God? If so, is there one or more than one? What are the attributes of God? If God is both all good and all powerful, why does evil exist? If God exists, what is His relationship to human beings and the ‘real’ world of everyday life?”
- iii) ***Anthropological Aspect:*** Anthropology deals with the study of human beings and asks questions like the following: What is the relation between mind and body? Is mind more fundamental than body, with body depending on mind, or vice versa? What is humanity’s moral status? Are people born good, evil, or morally neutral? To what extent are

individuals free? Do they have free will, or are their thoughts and actions determined by their environment, inheritance, or a divine being? Does each person have a soul? If so, what is it? People have obviously adopted different positions on these questions, and those positions influence their political, social, religious, and educational ideals and practices.

- iv) *Ontological Aspect:*** Ontology is the study of the nature of existence, or what it means for anything to exist. Several questions are central to ontology: “Is basic reality found in matter or physical energy (the world we can sense), or is it found in spirit or spiritual energy? Is it composed of one element (e.g., matter or spirit), or two (e.g., matter and spirit), or many?” “Is reality orderly and lawful in itself, or is it merely orderable by the human mind? Is it fixed and stable, or is change its central feature? Is this reality friendly, unfriendly, or neutral toward humanity?”

3.2 Epistemology

Activity # 2: - Dear learners, what do you think is epistemology? List any question that you might think is an epistemological question. Show your question to student(s) beside you, and discuss about your questions together.

Epistemology is the other field of philosophy that studies about the nature, scope, meaning, and possibility of knowledge. It deals with issues of knowledge, opinion, truth, falsity, reason, experience, and faith. Epistemology is also referred to as “theory of knowledge”.

Etymologically, the word epistemology has been derived from the Greek words *episteme*, meaning “knowledge, understanding”, and *logos*, meaning “study of”. In other words, we can say that Epistemology is the study of the nature, source, and validity of knowledge. It seeks to answer of the basic questions as “What is true?” and “How do we know?” Thus, epistemology covers two areas: the *content* of thought and *thought* itself. The study of epistemology deals with issues related to the dependability of knowledge and the validity of the sources through which we gain information.

The following are among the questions/issues with which Epistemology deals:

- ❖ *What is knowledge?*
- ❖ *What does it mean to know?*
- ❖ *What is the source of knowledge? Experience? Reason? Or both?*
- ❖ *How can we be sure that what we perceive through our senses is correct?*
- ❖ *What makes knowledge different from belief or opinion?*
- ❖ *What is truth, and how can we know a statement is true?*
- ❖ *Can reason really help us to know phenomenal things without being informed by sense experiences?*
- ❖ *Can our sense experience really help us to know things beyond our perception without the assistance of our reasoning ability?*
- ❖ *What is the relationship and difference between faith and reason?*

Epistemology seeks answers to a number of fundamental issues. One is whether reality can even be known. *Skepticism* in its narrow sense is the position claiming that people cannot acquire reliable knowledge and that any search for truth is in vain. That thought was well expressed by Gorgias, the Greek Sophist who asserted that nothing exists, and that if it did, we could not know it. A full-blown skepticism would make intelligent action impossible. A term closely related to skepticism is *agnosticism*. Agnosticism is a profession of ignorance in reference to the existence or nonexistence of God.

Most people claim that reality can be known. However, once they have taken that position, they must decide through what sources reality may be known, and must have some concept of how to judge the validity of their knowledge. A second issue foundational to epistemology is whether all truth is relative, or whether some truths are absolute. Is all truth subject to change? Is it possible that what is true today may be false tomorrow? If the answer is “Yes” to the previous questions, such truths are relative. If, however, there is Absolute Truth, such Truth is eternally and universally true irrespective of time or place. Closely related to the issue of the relativity and absoluteness of truth are the questions of whether knowledge is subjective or objective, and whether there is truth that is independent of human experience.

A major aspect of epistemology relates to the sources of human knowledge. If one accepts the fact that there is truth and even Truth in the universe, how can human beings comprehend such truths? How do they become human knowledge? Central to most people’s answer to that question is ***empiricism*** (knowledge obtained through the senses). Empirical knowledge appears to be built into the very nature of human experience. Thus, when individuals walk out of doors on a spring day and see the beauty of the landscape, hear the song of a bird, feel the warm rays of the sun, and smell the fragrance of the blossoms, they “know” that it is spring. Sensory knowing for humans is immediate and universal, and in many ways forms the basis of much of human knowledge.

The existence of sensory data cannot be denied. Most people accept it uncritically as representing “reality.” The danger of naively embracing this approach is that data obtained from the human senses have been demonstrated to be both incomplete and undependable. (For example, most people have been confronted with the contradiction of seeing a stick that looks bent when partially submerged in water but appears to be straight when examined in the air.) Fatigue, frustration, and illness also distort and limit sensory perception. In addition, there are sound and light waves that are inaudible and invisible to unaided human perception.

Humans have invented scientific instruments to extend the range of their senses, but it is impossible to ascertain the exact dependability of these instruments since no one knows the total effect of the human mind in recording, interpreting, and distorting sensual perception. Confidence in these instruments is built upon speculative metaphysical theories whose validity has been reinforced by experimentation in which predictions have been verified through the use of a theoretical construct or hypothesis. In general, sensory knowledge is built upon assumptions

that must be accepted by faith in the dependability of human sensory mechanisms. The advantage of empirical knowledge is that many sensory experiences and experiments are open to both replication and public examination.

A second important source of human knowledge is reason. The view that reasoning, thought, or logic is the central factor in knowledge is known as **rationalism**. The rationalist, in emphasizing humanity's power of thought and the mind's contributions to knowledge, is likely to claim that the senses alone cannot provide universal, valid judgments that are consistent with one another. From this perspective, the sensations and experiences humans obtain through their senses are the raw material of knowledge. These sensations must be organized by the mind into a meaningful system before they become knowledge. Rationalism in a less extreme form claims that people have the power to know with certainty various truths about the universe that the senses alone cannot give. In its extreme form, rationalism claims that humans are capable of arriving at irrefutable knowledge independently of sensory experience. Formal logic is a tool used by rationalists. Systems of logic have the advantage of possessing internal consistency, but they risk being disconnected from the external world. Systems of thought based upon logic are only as valid as the premises upon which they are built.

A third source of human knowledge is **intuition**- the direct apprehension of knowledge that is not derived from conscious reasoning or immediate sense perception. In the literature dealing with intuition, one often finds such expressions as "immediate feeling of certainty." Intuition occurs beneath the threshold of consciousness and is often experienced as a sudden flash of insight. Intuition has been claimed under varying circumstances as a source of both religious and secular knowledge. Certainly many scientific breakthroughs have been initiated by intuitive hunches that were confirmed by experimentation. The weakness or danger of intuition is that it does not appear to be a safe method of obtaining knowledge when used alone. It goes astray very easily and may lead to absurd claims unless it is controlled by or checked against other methods of knowing. Intuitive knowledge, however, has the distinct advantage of being able to bypass the limitations of human experience.

A fourth influential source of knowledge throughout the span of human history has been **revelation**. Revealed knowledge has been of prime importance in the field of religion. It differs from all other sources of knowledge because it presupposes a transcendent supernatural reality that breaks into the natural order. Christians believe that such revelation is God's communication concerning the divine will. Believers in supernatural revelation hold that this form of knowledge has the distinct advantage of being an omniscient source of information that is not available through other epistemological methods. The truth revealed through this source is believed by Christians to be absolute and uncontaminated. On the other hand, it is generally realized that distortion of revealed truth can occur in the process of human interpretation. Some people assert that a major disadvantage of revealed knowledge is that it must be accepted by faith and cannot be proved or disproved empirically.

A fifth source of human knowledge, though not a philosophical position, is **authority**. Authoritative knowledge is accepted as true because it comes from experts or has been sanctified over time as tradition. In the classroom, the most common source of information is some authority, such as a textbook, teacher, or reference work. Accepting authority as a source of knowledge has its advantages as well as its dangers. Civilization would certainly stagnate if people refused to accept any statement unless they personally verified it through direct, firsthand experience. On the other hand, if authoritative knowledge is built upon a foundation of incorrect assumptions, then such knowledge will surely be distorted.

Dear learners, it is important to note that one source of information alone might not be capable of supplying people with all knowledge. It might be important to see the various sources as complementary rather than antagonistic. However, it is true that most people choose one source as being more basic than, or preferable to, the others, and then use it as a benchmark for testing other sources of knowledge. For example, in the contemporary world, knowledge obtained empirically is generally seen as the most basic and reliable type.

Axiology and Logic

Axiology

Activity # 1: - *Dear learners, what do you think is Axiology? List any question that you might think is an axiological question. Show your question to student(s) beside you, and discuss about your questions together.*

Axiology is the study or theory of value. The term Axiology stems from two Greek words- “Axios”, meaning “value, worth”, and “logos”, meaning “reason/ theory/ symbol / science/study of”. Hence, Axiology is the philosophical study of value, which originally meant the worth of something.

Axiology deals with the above and related issues of value in three areas, namely *Ethics, Aesthetics, and Social/Political Philosophy*.

I. Ethics

Activity # 2: - *Dear learners, how do you define ethics? What ethical rules, principles, and standards do you know and follow, and why? Discuss about it with the student(s) beside you.*

Ethics, which is also known as *Moral Philosophy*, is a science that deals with the philosophical study of moral principles, values, codes, and rules, which may be used as standards for determining what kind of human conduct/action is said to be good or bad, right or wrong. Ethics has three main branches: meta-ethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. Ethics raises various questions including:

- ❖ *What is good/bad?*
- ❖ *What is right/wrong?*
- ❖ *Is it the Right Principle or the Good End that makes human action/conduct moral?*
- ❖ *Is an action right because of its good end, or it is good because of its right principle?*
- ❖ *Are moral principles universal, objective, and unconditional, or relative, subjective and conditional?*
- ❖ *What is the ultimate foundation of moral principles? The supernatural God? Human reason? Mutual social contract? Social custom?*
- ❖ *Does God exist? If so, is He Benevolent and Omnipotent?*
- ❖ *If God is Benevolent, why He creates evil things? If God does not create evil things, then, there must be another creator who is responsible to creation of the evil things? But, if it is so, how can God be an Omnipotent creator?*
- ❖ *Why we honor and obey moral rules? For the sake of our own individual benefits?, or for the sake of others?, or just for the sake of fulfilling our infallible duty?*

Ethics, or ethical studies, can be grouped into three broad categories: *Normative ethics*, *Meta-ethics*, and *Applied Ethics*.

Normative Ethics refers to the ethical studies that attempt to study and determine precisely the moral rules, principles, standards and goals by which human beings might evaluate and judge the moral values of their conducts, actions and decisions. It is the reasoned search for principles of human conduct, including a critical study of the major theories about which things are good, which acts are right, and which acts are blameworthy. *Consequentialism or Teleological Ethics*, *Deontological Ethics*, and *Virtue Ethics* are the major examples of normative ethical studies.

Meta-ethics is the highly technical philosophical discipline that deals with investigation of the meaning of ethical terms, including a critical study of how ethical statements can be verified. It is more concerned with the meanings of such ethical terms as *good or bad and right or wrong* than with what we think is good or bad and right or wrong. *Moral Intuitionism*, *Moral Emotivism*, *Moral Prescriptivism*, *Moral Nihilism*, and *Ethical Relativism* are the main examples of meta-ethical studies.

Applied Ethics is a normative ethics that attempts to explain, justify, apply moral rules, principles, standards, and positions to specific moral problems, such as capital punishment, euthanasia, abortion, adultery, animal right, and so on. This area of normative ethics is termed applied because the ethicist applies or uses general ethical principles in an attempt to resolve specific moral problems.

II. Aesthetics

Activity # 3: - Dear learners, how do you define and understand aesthetics? What Discuss about it with the student(s) beside you.

Aesthetics is the theory of beauty. It studies about the particular value of our artistic and aesthetic experiences. It deals with beauty, art, enjoyment, sensory/emotional values, perception, and matters of taste and sentiment.

The following are typical Aesthetic questions:

- ❖ *What is art?*
- ❖ *What is beauty?*
- ❖ *What is the relation between art and beauty?*
- ❖ *What is the connection between art, beauty, and truth?*
- ❖ *Can there be any objective standard by which we may judge the beauty of artistic works, or beauty is subjective?*
- ❖ *What is artistic creativity and how does it differ from scientific creativity?*
- ❖ *Why works of art are valuable?*
- ❖ *Can artistic works communicate? If so, what do they communicate?*
- ❖ *Does art have any moral value, and obligations or constraints?*
- ❖ *Are there standards of quality in Art?*

III. Social/Political Philosophy

Activity # 4: - Dear learners, how do you define politics and society? What political and social rules, principles, and standards do you know and follow, and why? Discuss about it with the student(s) beside you.

Social/Political Philosophy studies about of the value judgments operating in a civil society, be it social or political.

The following questions are some of the major Social/Political Philosophy primarily deal with:

- ❖ *What form of government is best?*
- ❖ *What economic system is best?*
- ❖ *What is justice/injustice?*
- ❖ *What makes an action/judgment just/unjust?*
- ❖ *What is society?*
- ❖ *Does society exist? If it does, how does it come to existence?*
- ❖ *How are civil society and government come to exist?*
- ❖ *Are we obligated to obey all laws of the State?*
- ❖ *What is the purpose of government?*

4.1 Logic

Activity # 5: - Dear learners, how do you define and understand logic? Discuss about it with student(s) beside you.

Logic is the study or theory of principles of right reasoning. It deals with formulating the right principles of reasoning; and developing scientific methods of evaluating the validity and soundness of arguments. The following are among the various questions raised by Logic:

- ❖ What is an argument; What does it mean to argue?
- ❖ What makes an argument valid or invalid
- ❖ What is a sound argument?
- ❖ What relation do premise and conclusion have in argument?
- ❖ How can we formulate and evaluate an argument?
- ❖ What is a fallacy?; What makes an argument fallacious?

1.4: Importance of Learning Philosophy .

Activity # 1: - Dear learners, can you list, based on our previous lessons, the possible benefits of studying philosophy? Who do you think needs philosophy? Why? Discuss with the student(s) beside you.

Dear learners, if you ask any philosophy student ‘what is the necessity of studying philosophy’, he/she may give you the following famous philosophical statement: “**The unexamined life is not worth living**”. The ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates, once said that “*I tell you that to let no day pass without discussing goodness and all the other subjects about which you hear me talking and examining both myself and others is really the best thing that a man can do, and that life without this sort of examination is not worth living....*” Thus, among the various benefits of learning philosophy is that philosophy provides students with the tools they need to critically examine their own lives as well as the world in which they live. Let us clarify it more.

Some modern psychologists point out that human beings have both *maintenance* and *actualizing* needs. The former refer to the physical and psychological needs that we must satisfy in order to maintain ourselves as human beings: food, shelter, security, social interaction, and the like. The later appear to be associated with self-fulfillment, creativity, self-expression, realization of one’s potential, and being everything one can be. Although philosophy may not necessarily lead to this sort of self-actualization, it can assist us to actualize ourselves by promoting the ideal of self-actualization. There are many characteristics of self-actualization to whose achievement studying philosophy has a primordial contribution. Here below are some of them.

- 1) **Intellectual and Behavioral Independence:-** This is the ability to develop one’s own opinion and beliefs. Among the primary goals of philosophy, one is the integration of experiences into a unified, coherent, and systematic world views. Studying philosophy helps us not only to know the alternative world views but also to know how philosophers have ordered the universe for themselves. As a result, we can learn how to develop and integrate our experiences, thoughts, feelings, and actions for ourselves, and thus how to be intellectually and behaviorally independent.

- 2) *Reflective Self-Awareness*:- self-actualization cannot be realized without a clear knowledge of oneself and the world in which one lives. Philosophy helps us to intensify our self-awareness by inviting us to critically examine the essential intellectual grounds of our lives.
- 3) *Flexibility, Tolerance, and Open-Mindedness*:- by studying different philosophical perspectives we can understand the evolutionary nature of intellectual achievement and the ongoing development of human thought. As we confront with the thoughts of various philosophers we can easily realize that no viewpoint is necessarily true or false- that the value of any attitude is contextual. Finally, we become more tolerant, open-minded, more receptive, and more sympathetic to views that contend or clash with ours.
- 4) *Creative and Critical Thinking*: - this is the ability to develop original philosophical perspective on issues, problems, and events; and to engage them on a deeper level. From the study of philosophy, we can learn how to refine our powers of analysis, our abilities to think critically, to reason, to evaluate, to theorize, and to justify.
- 5) *Conceptualized and well-thought-out value systems in morality, art, politics, and the like*: - since philosophy directly deals with morality, art, politics, and other related value theories, studying philosophy provides us with an opportunity to formulate feasible evaluations of value; and thereby to find meaning in our lives.

The other benefit of studying philosophy that should not be missed is that it helps us to deal with ***the uncertainty of living***. Philosophy helps us to realize the absence of an absolutely ascertained knowledge. But, what is the advantage of uncertainty? What Bertrand Russell stated in his book, *The Problem of Philosophy*, can be a sufficient answer for this question.

The value of philosophy is, in part, to be sought largely in its very uncertainty. The man who has no tincture of philosophy goes through life imprisoned in the prejudices derived from common sense, from the habitual benefits of his age or his nation, and from convictions which have grown up in his mind without the cooperation or consent of his deliberate reason. To such a man the world tends to become definite, finite, obvious; common objects rouse no questions, and unfamiliar possibilities are contemptuously rejected. As soon as we begin to philosophize, on the contrary, we find... that even the most everyday things lead to problems to which only very incomplete answers can be given. Philosophy, though unable to tell us with certainty what is the true answer to the doubts which it raises, is able to suggest many possibilities which enlarge our thoughts and free them from the tyranny of custom. Thus, while diminishing our feeling of certainty as to what things are, it greatly increases our knowledge as to what they may be; it removes the somewhat arrogant dogmatism of those who have never traveled into the region of liberating doubt, and it keeps alive our sense of wonder by showing familiar things in an unfamiliar aspect (Bertrand, 1912, P; 158).

CHAPTER TWO: METAPHYSICS:- REALITY AND BEING

2.1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO METAPHYSICS

2.1.1. Materialism and Idealism

Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that studies about the nature of ultimate reality. Ontology and Cosmology are subfields of metaphysics that deal with being and an entire universe, respectively.

Among the several major schools of thought in the history of philosophy, *materialism* and *idealism* have been the two great camps or divisions. What would account for their division or what is the cause for their difference? The point is that it is the question of reality. The question as to what the ultimate source of reality would be. According to Friedrich Engels, it is the answers, which the philosophers gave to this question that split or divided them into two great camps, namely materialism and idealism.

Materialism is the view or position that the ultimate constituent of reality is matter or reality is ultimately matter. To the question of reality, materialism answers that 1) the world is constituted of matter in motion, and there are no spiritual components to it. 2) Materialism, in its more technical and metaphysical sense, states that matter is the ultimate reality of all things. More generally, everything in the universe from subatomic particles to extended substances such as tables, chairs, dogs, cats, and so on as well as to thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and ideals is reducible to matter, to physical states, to a position in space and time, to what can be quantified. 3) It is the doctrine that all facts of the universe may be understood as matter and the building blocks of nature are composed of sheer matter.

In connection to this, the pre-Socratic philosophers such as Democritus and Leucippus taught that all things including the soul are made of indivisible particles or atoms. The early Greek philosopher Epicurus adopted this idea of Democritus and Leucippus, and concluded from the materialistic nature of the soul that upon death, its parts disperse, and therefore there can be no life after death. To recapitulate, the materialist thus concludes that adequate explanation of our universe must proceed materialistically and not spiritually at any level.

On the other hand, *Idealism* is derived from the word ‘idea’, which literally means to see and to know. If we look around, we can see a hard and fast material world out there. We can only look through the eyes of our mind. Anything we know about the material or physical world out there or independent of us, we know by having an idea of it. Thus, we can say that all we really know is our ideas.

Idealism is the metaphysical theory, which states that mind is primary or ultimate and that all things are thus reducible to mind and ideas. This means that all things are constituted by mind and its ideas. It is the belief that reality is essentially idea, thought, or mind rather than matter. Idealists invariably emphasize the mental or spiritual, not the material, presenting it as the creative force or active agent behind all things.

To the question what is reality, idealism answers that because reality can be thought, it must in some sense be of a mental nature. i.e., reality itself must be some sort of idea. There are two types of Idealism; Objective Idealism and Subjective Idealism.

Objective idealism: the ideas of things exist apart from our perception of them. What we know must be capable of being grasped or perceived by our ideas. It must be of a nonphysical or nonmaterial nature or of a mental or spiritual nature.

The central argument of an objective idealist is that all things are made out of mind and ideas, but that things exist objectively (.i.e., out there) or independently of our perception or knowledge of them. According to objective idealist, the core of reality must be understood as *spiritual*, but there is also a *physical* dimension to it- as defended by Plato.

Plato was an objective idealist. He believes that reality is intelligible. i.e., of the nature of Ideas, and only apprehensible by the mind), but also that it exists outside our minds. He believes that he discovers a more universal, objective, perfect, eternal, permanent, transcendent, archetypal or model, etc reality which lies behind or goes beyond the limited, subjective, imperfect, changeable, temporary, variegated(or diversified) things of this world. Plato's universal, objective, and so on world is called "the world of Being." This world is populated or constituted by realities called the Ideas or Forms. The limited, subjective, and so on world is called the world of Becoming/Appearance. This world consists of particular physical things. The Ideas/Forms are the ultimate causes of the particular things. They give us the essential pattern or the very essence of what actually is/ exists.

For Plato, Ideas are more real than particular concrete empirical things. Reality is Eidos, which means Idea/Form. By Idea Plato does not mean subjective mental images (or something that is on any particular person's mind, but rather he means the essence of a thing. For example, there is the Form or the Idea of Triangle, of Beauty, Table, Tree, Gold, Woman, Girl, etc. There are also particular physical things (or objects) and persons such as triangles, trees, tables, gold, women, men, girls, and so on in this world, and they are mere copies of their respective Forms.

Subjective Idealism: Things or ideas depend on perception for their existence. A subjective idealist believes that all things are made out of mind and ideas, but that these things have no existence apart from perception of them. This means that they would not continue to exist if all perceivers did stop to exist. We can recall that as to an objective idealist, things would continue to exist even if we (the perceivers) did not exist because though, according to objective idealist, things are essentially ideas and can thus be grasped or perceived by our mind, they exist nonetheless objectively(or they exist independent of our perceiving or knowing them).

The English philosopher Bishop George Berkeley is generally recognized as a subjective idealist. He was very much well-known for his famous philosophical doctrine of "*to be is to be perceived.*" Berkeley chiefly emphasizes two main points: 1st) he is talking only about sensible or physical objects and 2nd) Existence is either to perceive or to be perceived. For him, the

existence of sensible ‘unthinking’ things consists in being perceived. This means that they cannot exist without or independent of a mind perceiving

For Berkeley sensible things are collections or combinations of ‘sensations’ (or ideas), and they cannot exist independent of a mind perceiving them. One might ask that Does not this table or chair have its own natural, real, absolute, and independent existence apart from its being perceived by any perceiving minds/percipient subjects/conscious spirits/? The point is that according to Berkeley what is said of the absolute or independent existence of unthinking or unperceiving things without any relation to their being perceived seems perfectly unintelligible/nonsense/meaningless/. For example, Berkeley asks what any other meaning the proposition, ‘the table exists,’ does have than the table is perceived or perceivable. In this sense, Berkeley says: “*The table I write on, I say exists .i.e., I see and feel it; and if I were out of my study I should say it existed, meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it, or some other spirit (God) actually does perceive it. God, who is a universal and constant observer, does actually perceive it.*”

2.1.2. Pre-Socratic Philosophers

Human beings have lived on this planet for hundreds of thousands of years. We, of course, cannot know all the experiences and thoughts of the earliest people. Still, it is reasonable to suppose that people then, as now, were driven by a desire to explain the world. Perhaps our earliest ancestors thought about how the world was formed, whether they were unique among the animals, and whether there was a world beyond the earthly one surrounding them. They may have also wondered whether there was a uniform standard of moral behavior or social order that applied to the various tribes they encountered. Whatever they may have thought about these subjects, their opinions are now irretrievably lost to time. It is only through the introduction of writing—a comparatively recent invention—that we know the precise speculations of any of our ancestors. When we look at the earliest writings from around the globe, we find that various regions had their own speculative traditions—such as those of East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, and Africa. This book is an account of one such tradition, namely, that which developed within Europe and was later exported to the Americas and elsewhere around the world. This tradition is often called “Western,” designating its origin within the western part of the Eurasian landmass.

The story of Western philosophy begins in a series of Greek islands and colonies during the sixth century B.C. Some original thinkers were driven by very specific puzzles, most notably, “What are things really like?” and “How can we explain the process of change in things?” The solutions they gave to these puzzles were shortly thereafter dubbed “philosophy”—the love of wisdom. What underlies these speculations was the gradual recognition that things are not exactly what they seem to be. Appearance often differs from reality. There are brute facts of birth, death, growth, and decay—coming into being and passing away. These facts raised sweeping questions of how things and people come into existence, can differ at different times, and pass out of existence only to be followed by other things and persons. Many of the answers given to these

questions by the earliest philosophers are not as important as the fact that they focused upon these specific questions. They approached these problems with a fresh point of view that was in stark contrast to the more mythical approach taken by the great poets of the time. The birthplace of Greek philosophy was the seaport of Miletus, located across the Aegean Sea from Athens, on the western shores of Ionia in Asia Minor. Because of their location, the first Greek philosophers are called either Milesians or Ionians. By the time the Milesian philosophers began their systematic work, in roughly 585 B.C., Miletus had been a crossroads for both seaborne commerce and cosmopolitan ideas. The wealth of the city allowed for leisure time, without which the life of art and philosophy could not develop. Further, the broadmindedness and inquisitiveness of its people created a congenial atmosphere for philosophical intellectual activity. Earlier, Ionia had produced Homer (700 B.C.), author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. In these timeless classics of epic poetry, Homer describes the scene of Mount Olympus, where the gods pursued lives very similar to those of their human counterparts on earth. This poetic view of the world also depicted ways in which the gods intruded into people's affairs. In particular, the Homeric gods would punish people for their lack of moderation and especially for their pride or insubordination, which the Greeks called *hubris*. It is not that Homer's gods were exceptionally moral beings. Instead, they were merely stronger than humans, and demanded obedience.

Although Homer depicts the gods with largely human features, he occasionally hints at a rigorous order in nature. Specifically, he suggests that there is a power called "fate," to which even the gods are subject and to which everyone and everything must be subordinate. Nevertheless, Homer's poetic imagination is dominated so thoroughly by human terms that his world is peopled everywhere with human types. Also, his conception of nature is that of impulsive and unpredictable wills at work instead of the reign of physical natural laws. It was Hesiod (700 B.C), writing around the same time as Homer, who altered this concept of the gods and fate. He thus removed from the gods all arbitrariness and instead ascribed to them a moral consistency. Although Hesiod retains the notion that the gods control nature, he balances this personal element in the nature of things with an emphasis on the impersonal operation of the moral law of the universe. The moral order, in Hesiod's view, is still the product of Zeus's commands. However, contrary to Homer, these commands are neither arbitrary nor calculated to gratify the gods, but instead are fashioned for the good of people. For Hesiod the universe is a moral order, and from this idea it is a short step to say, without any reference to the gods, that there is an impersonal force controlling the structure of the universe and regulating its process of changes.

This was the short step taken by three great Milesian philosophers, namely, Thales (585 B.C), Anaximander (610–546 B.C), and Anaximenes (585–528 B.C). Whereas Hesiod still thought in terms of traditional mythology with humanlike gods, philosophy among the Milesians began as an act of independent thought. To ask, as they did, "What are things really like?" and "How can we explain the process of change in things?" substantially departs from the poetry of Homer and Hesiod and moves toward a more scientific way of thinking. In point of fact, at this stage of history, science and philosophy were the same thing, and only later did various specific

disciplines separate themselves from the field of philosophy. Medicine was the first to do so. Thus, we can rightly call the Milesians primitive scientists, as well as the first Greek philosophers. The important thing to keep in mind, though, is that Greek philosophy from the start was an intellectual activity. It was not a matter only of seeing or believing, but of thinking, and philosophy meant thinking about basic questions with an attitude of genuine and free inquiry.

WHAT IS PERMANENT IN EXISTENCE?

Thales

We do not know as much as we would like about Thales of Miletus, and what we do know is rather anecdotal in nature. He left no writings, and all that is available are fragmentary references to him by later writers who recorded memorable incidents in his career. He was a contemporary of Greek king Croesus and statesman Solon, and the years of his life are set between 624 and 546 B.C. During a military campaign against Persia, he apparently solved the difficult logistical problem of enabling the Lydian king's army to cross the wide Halys River. His solution was to dig a channel that diverted part of the flow, thereby making two narrower rivers over which bridges could be built. While traveling in Egypt, Thales worked out a way of measuring the height of the pyramids. His solution was to use the simple procedure of measuring a pyramid's shadow at that time of day when his own shadow was equal in length to his own height. It may have been during these Egyptian travels, too, that he became acquainted with the kinds of knowledge that enabled him to predict the eclipse of the sun on May 28, 585 B.C. In a practical vein, while in Miletus, he constructed an instrument for measuring the distance of ships sighted at sea. And, as an aid to navigation, he urged sailors to use the constellation Little Bear as the surest guide for determining the direction of the north.

It was probably inevitable that tradition would attach questionable tales to such an extraordinary person as Thales. For example, Plato (427–347 B.C) writes about “the joke which the clever witty Thracian handmaid is said to have made about Thales, when he fell into a well as he was looking up at the stars. She said that he was so eager to know what was going on in heaven that he could not see what was before his feet.” Plato adds that “this is a jest which⁶ Part 1 Ancient Greek Philosophy is equally applicable to all philosophers.” Aristotle (384–322 B.C) describes another episode:

There is . . . the story which is told of Thales of Miletus. It is a story about a scheme for making money, which is fathered on Thales owing to his reputation for wisdom. . . . He was criticized for his poverty, which was supposed to show the uselessness of philosophy. But observing from his knowledge of meteorology (as the story goes) that there was likely to be a heavy crop of olives [during the next summer], and having a small sum at his command, he paid down earnest-money, early in the year, for the hire of all the olive-presses in Miletus and Chios. And he managed, in the absence of any higher offer, to secure them at a low rate. When the season came, and there was a sudden and simultaneous demand for a number of presses, he let out the stock he had collected at any rate he chose to fix; and making a considerable fortune, he succeeded in proving

that it is easy for philosophers to become rich if they so desire, though it is not the business which they are really about.

However, Thales is famous, not for his general wisdom or his practical shrewdness, but because he opened up a new area of thought for which he has rightly earned the title of “First Philosopher” of Western civilization.

Thales’s novel inquiry concerns the nature of things. What is everything made of, or what kind of “stuff” goes into the composition of things? With these questions Thales was trying to account for the fact that there are many different kinds of things, such as earth, clouds, and oceans. From time to time some of these things change into something else, and yet they still resemble each other in certain ways. Thales’s unique contribution to thought was his notion that, in spite of the differences between various things, there is nevertheless a basic similarity between them all. The many are related to each other by the One. He assumed that some single element, some “stuff,” a stuff that contained its own principle of action or change, lay at the foundation of all physical reality. For Thales this One, or this stuff, is water.

Although there is no record of how Thales came to the conclusion that water is the cause of all things, Aristotle writes that he might have derived it from observation of simple events, “perhaps from seeing that the nutriment of all things is moist, and that heat is generated from the moist and kept alive by it.” Thales, Aristotle continues, “got his notion from this fact and from the fact that the seeds of all things have a moist nature, and water is the origin of the nature of moist things.” Other phenomena such as evaporation and freezing also suggest that water takes on different forms. But the accuracy of Thales’s analysis of the composition of things is far less important than the fact that he raised the question concerning the nature of the world. His question set the stage for a new kind of inquiry, one that could be debated on its merits and could be either confirmed or refuted by further analysis.

Admittedly, Thales also said that “all things are full of gods.” But this notion apparently had no theological significance for him. Thus, when he tried to explain the power in things, such as magnetic powers in stones, he shifted the discussion from a mythological base to a scientific one. From his starting point others were to follow with alternative solutions, but always with his problem before them.

ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN CHANGE

Heraclitus

Earlier philosophers attempted to describe the ultimate constituents of the world around us. Heraclitus (ca. 540–480 B.C.)- an aristocrat from Ephesus, shifted attention to a new problem, namely, the problem of change. His chief idea was that “all things are in flux,” and he expressed this concept of constant change by saying that “you cannot step twice into the same river.” The river changes because “fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you.” This concept of flux, Heraclitus thought, must apply not only to rivers but to all things, including the human soul. Rivers and people exhibit the fascinating fact of becoming different and yet remaining the same. We return to the “same” river although fresh waters have flowed into it, and the adult is still the same person as the child. Things change and thereby take on many different forms; nevertheless,

they contain something that continues to be the same throughout all the flux of change. There must be, Heraclitus argued, some basic unity between these many forms and the single continuing element, between the many and the one. He made his case with such imaginative skill that much of what he had to say found an important place in the later philosophies of Plato and the Stoics; in more recent centuries he was deeply admired by Hegel and Nietzsche.

Flux and Fire :- To describe change as unity in diversity, Heraclitus assumed that there must be something that changes, and he argued that this something is fire. But he did not simply substitute the element of fire for Thales's water or Anaximenes' air. What led Heraclitus to fasten upon fire as the basic element in things was that fire behaves in such a way as to suggest how the process of change operates. Fire is simultaneously a deficiency and a surplus; it must constantly be fed, and it constantly gives off something either in the form of heat, smoke, or ashes. Fire is a process of transformation, then, whereby what is fed into it is transformed into something else. For Heraclitus it was not enough simply to point to some basic element, such as water, as the underlying nature of reality; this would not answer the question of how this basic stuff could change into different forms. When, therefore, Heraclitus fastened upon fire as the basic reality, he not only identified the something that changes but thought he had discovered the principle of change itself. To say that everything is in flux meant for Heraclitus that the world is an "everliving Fire" whose constant movement is assured by "measures of it kindling and measures going out." These "measures" meant for Heraclitus a kind of balance between what kindles and what goes out of the fire. He describes this balance in terms of financial exchange, saying that "all things are an exchange for Fire, and Fire for all things, similar to merchandise for gold and gold for merchandise." With this explanation of exchange, Heraclitus maintained that nothing is really ever lost in the nature of things. If gold is exchanged for merchandise, both the gold and the merchandise continue to exist, although they are now in different hands. Similarly, all things continue to exist, although they exchange their form from time to time.

There is a stability in the universe because of the orderly and balanced process of change or flux. The same "measure" comes out as goes in, just as if reality were a huge fire that inhaled and exhaled equal amounts, thereby preserving an even inventory in the world. This inventory represents the widest array of things, and all of them are simply different forms of fire. Flux and change consist of the movements of fire, movements that Heraclitus called the "upward and downward paths." The downward path of fire explains the coming into being of the things that we experience. So, when fire is condensed it becomes moist, and this moisture under conditions of increased pressure becomes water; water, in turn, when congealed becomes earth. On the upward path this process is reversed, and the earth is transformed into liquid; from this water come the various forms of life. Nothing is ever lost in this process of transformation because, as Heraclitus says, "fire lives the death of earth, and air the death of fire; water lives the death of air, earth that of water." With this description of the constant transformation of things in fire, Heraclitus thought he had explained the rudiments of the unity between the one basic stuff and the many diverse things in the world. But there was another significant idea that Heraclitus added to his concept of Fire, namely, the idea of reason as the universal law.

Reason as the Universal Law The process of change is not a haphazard movement but the product of God's universal Reason (logos). This idea of Reason came from Heraclitus's religious conviction that the most real thing of all is the soul, and the soul's most distinctive and important attribute is wisdom or thought. But when he speaks about God and the soul, he does not have in mind separate personal entities. For him there is only one basic reality, namely, Fire, and it is this material substance, Fire, that Heraclitus calls the One, or God. Inevitably, Heraclitus was a pantheist—a term meaning that God is identical with the totality of things in the universe. For Heraclitus all things are Fire/God. Since Fire/God is in everything, even the human soul is a part of Fire/God. As wisdom is Fire/God's most important attribute, wisdom or thought is human beings' chief activity. But inanimate things also contain the principle of reason, since they are also permeated with the fiery element. Because Fire/God is Reason and because Fire/God is the One, permeating all things, Heraclitus believed that Fire/God is the universal Reason. And, as such, Fire/God unifies all things and commands them to move and change in accordance with thought and rational principles. These rational principles constitute the essence of law—the universal law immanent in all things. All people share this universal law to the degree that they possess Fire/God in their own natures and thereby possess the capacity for thought.

Logically, this account of our rational nature would mean that all of our thoughts are God's thoughts, since there is a unity between the One and the many, between God and human beings. We all must share in a common stock of knowledge since we all have a similar relation to God. Even stones partake in that part of God's Reason, which makes them all equally behave according to the "law" of gravity. But people notoriously disagree and behave quite inconsistently. Recognizing this fact about human disagreement, Heraclitus says that "those awake have one ordered universe in common, but in sleep everyone turns away to one of his own." "Sleep," for Heraclitus, must mean to be thoughtless or even ignorant. Unfortunately, he does not explain how it is possible for people to be thoughtless if their souls and minds are part of God. In spite of its limitations, Heraclitus's theory had a profound impact on succeeding thinkers. This is particularly so concerning his conviction that there is a common universe available to all thoughtful people and that all people participate in God's universal Reason or universal law. In later centuries it was this concept that provided the basis for the Stoics' idea of cosmopolitanism—the idea that all people are equally citizens of the world precisely because they all share in the One, in God's Reason. According to the Stoics, we all contain in ourselves some portion of the Fire, that is, sparks of the divine. It was this concept, too, that formed the foundation for the classic theory of natural law. With some variations the natural law passed from Heraclitus, to the Stoics, to medieval theologians, and eventually became a dynamic force in the American Revolution. Even today natural law is a vital component of legal theory.

The Conflict of Opposites:- Although human beings can know the eternal wisdom that directs all things, we do not pay attention to this wisdom. We therefore "prove to be uncomprehending" of the reasons for the way things happen to us. We are distressed by meaningless disorders in the

world and overwhelmed by the presence of good and evil, and we long for the peace that means the end of strife. Heraclitus offers us little comfort here, since, for him, strife is the very essence of change itself. The conflict of opposites that we see in the world is not a calamity but simply the permanent condition of all things. According to Heraclitus, if we could visualize the whole process of change, we would see that “war is common and justice is strife and that all things happen by strife and necessity.” From this perspective, he says, “what is in opposition is in concert, and from what differs comes the most beautiful harmony.” Even death is no longer a calamity, for “after death things await people which they do not expect or imagine.” Throughout his treatment of the problem of strife and disorder, Heraclitus emphasizes again and again that the many find their unity in the One. Thus, what appear to be disjointed events and contradictory forces are in reality intimately harmonized. For this reason, he says, people “do not know how what is at variance agrees with itself. It is an attunement of opposite tensions, like that of the bow and the lyre.” Fire itself exhibits this tension of opposites and indeed depends on it. Fire is its many tensions of opposites. In the One the many find their unity. Thus, in the One “the way up and the way down is the same,” “good and ill are one,” and “it is the same thing in us that is quick and dead, awake and asleep, young and old.” This solution of the conflict of opposites rests upon Heraclitus’s major assumption that nothing is ever lost, but merely changes its form. Following the direction of Reason, the eternal Fire moves with a measured pace, and all change requires opposite and diverse things. Still, “to God all things are fair and good and right, but people hold some things wrong and some right.” Heraclitus did not come to this conclusion because he believed that there was a personal God who judged that all things are good. Instead, he thought that “it is wise to agree that all things are one,” that the One takes shape and appears in many forms.

Parmenides

A younger contemporary of Heraclitus, Parmenides was born about 510 B.C and lived most of his life in Elea, a colony founded by Greek refugees in the southwest of Italy. He flourished there in more than one capacity, giving the people of Elea laws and establishing a new school of philosophy whose followers became known as Eleatics. Dissatisfied with the philosophical views of his predecessors, Parmenides offered the quite startling theory that the entire universe consists of one thing, which never changes, has no parts, and can never be destroyed. He calls this single thing the One. Granted, it may appear as though things change in the world, such as when a large oak tree grows from a tiny acorn. It may also appear as though there are many different things in the world, such as rocks, trees, houses, and people. However, according to Parmenides, all such change and diversity is an illusion. In spite of appearances, there is only one single, unchanging, and eternal thing that exists. Why would Parmenides offer a theory that is so contrary to appearances? The answer is that he was more persuaded by logical reasoning than by what he saw with his own eyes.

The logic of Parmenides's theory begins with the simple statement that something is, or something is not. For example, cows exist, but unicorns do not exist. On further consideration, though, Parmenides realizes that we can assert only the first part of the above statement, that something is. The reason is that we can only conceptualize and speak about things that exist; we are unable to do this with things that do not exist. Can any of us form a mental picture of the nonexistent? Thus, according to Parmenides, we must reject any contention that implies that something is not. Parmenides then unpacks several implications from this observation. First, he argues that nothing ever changes. Heraclitus, we have seen, held that everything is in constant change; Parmenides holds the exact opposite view. We typically observe that things change by coming into existence and then going out of existence. A large oak tree, for example, comes into existence when it emerges from a tiny acorn; the tree then goes out of existence when it dies and decomposes. Although this is how things appear to our eyes, Parmenides argues that this alleged process of change is logically flawed. We first say that the tree is not, then it is, then once again it is not. Here we begin and end with the impossible contention that something is not. Logically, then, we are forced to reject this alleged process of change, chalking it up to one big illusion. Thus, nothing ever changes.

Parmenides argues similarly that the world consists of one indivisible thing. Again, we typically observe that the world contains many different things. Suppose, for example, that I see a cat sitting on a carpet. My common perception of this is that the cat and the carpet are different things, and not simply one undifferentiated mass of stuff. But this common view of physical differentiation is logically flawed. I am, in essence, saying that beneath the cat's feet the cat is not, but from its feet through its head the cat is, and above the cat's head the cat is not. Thus, when I demarcate the physical borders of the cat, I begin and end with the impossible contention that something is not. I must then reject the alleged fact of physical differentiation and once again chalk it up to one big illusion. In short, only one indivisible thing exists.

Using similar logic, Parmenides argues that the One must be motionless: If it moved, then it would not exist where it was before, which involves illogically asserting that something is not. Also, Parmenides argues that the One must be a perfect sphere. If it were irregular in any way—such as a bowling ball with three holes drilled in it—this would involve a region within the ball where nothing existed. This too would wrongly assert that something is not.

Even if we grant the logical force of Parmenides's arguments, it is not easy for us to cast off our commonsense view that the world exhibits change and multiplicity. Everywhere we see things in flux, and to us this represents genuine change. But Parmenides rejected these commonsense notions and insisted on a distinction between appearance and reality. Change and multiplicity, he says, involve a confusion between appearance and reality. What lies behind this distinction between appearance and reality is Parmenides's equally important distinction between opinion and truth. Appearance cannot produce more than opinion, whereas reality is the basis of truth.

Common sense tells us that things appear to be in flux and, therefore, in a continuous process of change. However, Parmenides says that this opinion based on sensation must yield to the activity of reason. Reason, in turn, is able to discern the truth about things, and reason tells us that if there is a single substance of which everything consists, then there can be no movement or change. To some extent Thales made a similar point when he said that everything derives from water. Thales thus implies that the appearance of things does not give us the true constitution or stuff of reality.

But Parmenides explicitly emphasized these distinctions, which became crucial to Plato's philosophy. Plato took Parmenides's basic idea of the unchangeability of being and developed from this his distinction between the intelligible world of truth and the visible world of opinion.

2.2. PLATO (THE THEORY OF FORMS):

2.2.1 – INTRODUCTION:

Plato was born in 427 BC. He studied music, poetry, painting and philosophy. He became a pupil of Socrates in 407 B.C and remained with him till his death. Socrates became for him the pattern and exemplar of the true philosopher. Plato was the first person in the history of the world to produce a great all-embracing system of philosophy, which has its ramification in all departments of thought and reality. The problem of the meaning of human life, human knowledge, human conduct and human institutions depended for their complete answer on the solution of the problem of the meaning of reality. It was Plato, the greatest pupil of Socrates, who set himself to this task. He developed not only a theory of knowledge, a theory of conduct and a theory of the state, but crowned his work with a theory of the universe.

The central and governing principles of his philosophy are the theory of Ideas. All else hinges on this, and is dominated by this. In a sense his whole philosophy is nothing but a theory of Idea and what depends upon it. Dialectic or logic or the theory of Ideas is Plato's doctrine of the nature of the absolute reality. The theory of idea is itself based upon the theory of knowledge. According to Plato, knowledge is neither perception nor opinion. What is it? Plato adopts, without alteration, the Socratic doctrine that knowledge is knowledge through concepts. A concept is the same thing as definition. A definition is formed in the same way as a concept namely, by including the qualities in which all the members of the class agree and excluding the qualities in which the members of the class differs. e.g.; we cannot define man as a white-skinned animal because all men are not white- skinned. But we can define man as a rational animal because all men are rational. Plato's theory of Idea is the theory of the objectivity of concepts. That the concept is not really an idea in the mind, but something which has a reality of its own, outside and independent of the mind— this is the essence of the philosophy of Plato.

2.2.2. THE TWO WORLDS: APPEARANCE AND REALITY

Many philosophers have found it necessary to conceive of reality in two spheres or levels: what appears to be real, and what is real. Already in the beginning stages of the history of philosophy

Plato introduced this two-layer view of reality. For Plato, too, it is the difference between Appearance and Reality, though he expressed it also by means of the terms Becoming and Being. With such talk Plato affirms his conviction that in addition to the ever-changing world around us (Becoming), there is another world, an eternal and unchanging reality (Being). Why would one believe in an additional world such as this?

Plato had many reasons for believing in a transcendent world—that is, a reality lying beyond space and time. We will limit ourselves to two of these reasons, but perhaps the two most important.

First, Plato's view of reality is a reaction to that of his predecessor, Protagoras. Protagoras, a Sophist who was active in about 425 B.C., was responsible for one of the most famous lines ever uttered: "Man is the measure of all things." His meaning is clear from a more accurate and complete quotation: *A man is the measure of all things; of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not.*

This means that the individual—each and every person—is the criterion unto himself or herself as to what exists and what doesn't. The thought was expanded, of course, to include truth and morality. Whatever you perceive as true or false is true or false, and whatever you think is good or bad is good or bad. This is known as relativism or subjectivism because it makes the most important things relative to and dependent upon the individual (or community, society, etc.), or because it asserts that the subject (an individual, community, society, etc.) is the source and standard of being, truth, and goodness.

For Plato (and for most philosophers since) it was absurd to say that being, truth, and morality are "up for grabs" and can be or mean whatever an individual wishes! This would mean the immediate collapse of not only all serious talk about what's real and unreal, and what's true and false, but also all talk about moral responsibility, praise, blame, punishment, and so on. No, says Plato. Our understanding of being, truth, and goodness must— if it is to be really meaningful— be anchored in some objective (that is, it exists outside of our own minds), independent (it is not dependent on anything else for its existence), and absolute (it does not come or go or otherwise change) Reality. There must then exist above our minds and beyond this world another world, a world of Reality (Being).

Second, Plato's view of reality is a reaction to still another of his predecessors, the Pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus. Heraclitus went about saying things like, "The sun is new every day" and "We are and we are not." These are ways in which Heraclitus expressed his view—a very famous view—that everything is constantly changing, nothing stands still for a moment, the world and everything in it are in a ceaseless movement, activity, coming and going, ebbing and flowing. In fact, "All things flow" caught on as a Heraclitean slogan, and Heraclitus himself appears to have likened the fluctuating universe to a river: "You can't step twice into the same

river.” The idea is that by the time you have put a foot into the water, different water is flowing there.

What did this colorful and dynamic view of the world have to do with the development of Plato’s conception of reality? Just as Protagoras’ relativism, says Plato, leads to impossible conclusions, so does Heraclitus’ doctrine of flux: If all reality is constantly changing, then all discourse is impossible, and the same is true for knowledge itself. Why is this? For the answer, read on. Plato inherited from still another Pre-Socratic philosopher, Parmenides, the idea that genuine knowledge and discourse must be about what is, not what is not—after all, you can’t think about, talk about, or have any knowledge of what isn’t, can you? (The word “nothing” does not denote something, but rather the negation or absence of something.) Furthermore, what is (Being) must be one and unchanging. Do you see why Being must be one and unchanging? Do not multiplicity and change involve difference, absence, relativity, and degrees? And do not these in turn involve various sorts of nonbeing? Now since a thing cannot both be and not be (the Law of Non-Contradiction), it is logically impossible that what is could also be what is not. How then could that which is involve multiplicity and change? True Being is therefore one and unchanging. And only this can be an object of knowledge and discourse.

Now consider again Heraclitus’ world of flux. What is it that you refer to when you comment on that table over there in the corner? “Why,” you say, “just that table over there in the corner.” But in the Heraclitean view there is no table over there in the corner: By the time you say “that table” it is no longer that table but has already become a different table. Likewise for everything in the Heraclitean world of flux. If then, says Plato, knowledge and talk about tables, chairs, dogs, cats, justice, and anything else are about anything real, it must be because there is more to reality than the sensible world of multiplicity and change. There must be a world of Being in addition to the world of Becoming.

2.2.3. THE THEORY OF THE FORMS

Grasping the distinction between the two worlds is the first step toward an understanding of Plato’s theory of reality. The next step is to grasp that for Plato the transcendent world, the world of Being, is populated by realities called Forms, which are the causes of the particular things that exist beneath them, like tables, chairs, dogs, cats, circles, human beings, instances of beauty, examples of justice, and so on for every different kind of thing there is.

We are ready, then, to consider Plato’s theory of the Forms—at least that is what it is usually called. It is also sometimes called the theory of Ideas. But here we must be on guard not to confuse these Ideas (capital I) with the ideas (lowercase i) that exist merely in our minds. We will see that while our ideas have no existence apart from our minds, the Platonic Ideas exist objectively and absolutely: They would exist even if everything else were to disappear. In any case, it is useful to employ capital F and I to remind us of the unique status of the Platonic Forms and Ideas.

Why the word “Form”? It translates the Greek word *eidos*, which does, in fact, mean “form” in the ordinary, usual sense: shape, structure, appearance. As will shortly be seen, Plato certainly does not mean something visible. Still, it is easy to see why Plato took over this word for his own purpose. After all, a Platonic Form does have everything to do with what a thing is, and thus even with its physical structure, shape, or appearance. But if it helps, there are many expressions one could substitute for the word “Form”: essence, nature, essential structure, object of a definition, and so on. Again, they all designate what a thing is, its “whatness.”

It may be helpful, further, to outline the main features of Forms. They may be characterized as

- **Objective.** They exist “out there” as objects, independently of our minds or wills.
- **Transcendent.** Though they exist “out there,” they do not exist in space and time; they lie, as it were, above or beyond space and time.
- **Eternal.** As transcendent realities they are not subject to time and therefore not subject to motion or change.
- **Intelligible.** As transcendent realities they cannot be grasped by the senses but only by the intellect.
- **Archetypal.** They are the models for every kind of thing that does or could exist.
- **Perfect.** They include absolutely and perfectly all the features of the things of which they are the models.

Perhaps now we are ready for a more explicit statement of the theory of the Forms: It is the belief in a transcendent world of eternal and absolute beings, corresponding to every kind of thing that there is, and causing in particular things their essential nature.

More generally, for every particular and imperfect thing in the world of Becoming (a table, a chair, an instance of justice, an example of beauty, a circle) there is a corresponding reality that is its absolute and perfect essence or Form in the world of Being (Table, Chair, Justice, Beauty, Circle). The particular and imperfect thing, though imperfect, is what it is by virtue of its corresponding Form, which imparts to it, or causes in it, its essence or general nature. Because something has an essence or general nature it is an imperfect something. On the other hand, it is an imperfect something because, while it reflects being from above, it is invaded and contaminated by nonbeing from below: The changeless is set in motion, the one is multiplied into many, the absolute is relativized, the universal is particularized.

In view of all of this, the following passage from Plato’s *Euthyphro* should make a lot of sense. Here Socrates has asked Euthyphro about the meaning of holiness. Euthyphro responded with examples of holiness.

SOCRATES: . . . try to tell me more clearly what I asked you a little while ago, for, my friend, you were not explicit enough before when I put the question. What is holiness? You merely said

that what you are now doing is a holy deed—namely, prosecuting your father on a charge of murder.

EUTHYPHRO: And, Socrates, I told the truth.

SOCRATES: Possibly. But, Euthyphro, there are many other things that you will say are holy.

EUTHYPHRO: Because they are.

SOCRATES: Well, bear in mind that what I asked of you was not to tell me one or two out of all the numerous actions that are holy; I wanted you to tell me what is the essential form of holiness which makes all holy actions holy. I believe you held that there is one ideal form by which unholy things are all unholy, and by which all holy things are holy. Do you remember that?

EUTHYPHRO: I do.

SOCRATES: Well then, show me what, precisely, this ideal is, so that, with my eye on it, and using it as a standard, I can say that any action done by you or anybody else is holy if it resembles this idea, or, if it does not, can deny that it is holy.

This brief passage expresses or embodies many of the things we have just explained. Notice for example, (1) Plato's use of words or phrases like "essential form" and "ideal" for the essence in the world of Being; (2) the contrast between the one essence in the world of Being (in this case Holiness) and the many instances of it in the world of Becoming (numerous holy acts); (3) the way in which the Form is said to be the cause of its many sensible instances; (4) the Form referred to as a standard for judgment; and (5) the way in which the particular instance is said to resemble the model.

This last point leads us further. We have said above that particular things have a nature or essence because they stand in some sort of relation to their Forms. But what, exactly, is this relation? How does the Form impart essence to the particular thing? This is a troublesome question, and Plato seems to have been bothered by it, though he never resolved it. Until now, we have been representing the Form as the model, and the sensible instance of the Form as a copy or imitation of it. This is the most common way of representing Plato's theory at this point. But Plato actually resorts to two explanations (really, metaphors) of how the Form gives essence to particular things. Sometimes, as in the above passage in the Euthyphro, he talks as if sensible things are copies or imitations of the Forms, and at other times he talks of a participation of the sensible thing in its Form. Thus a table is a table because it imperfectly reflects or is an imperfect copy of its pattern or model, the Form Tableness, or it is a table because it participates in the Form Tableness. The following passage from the Phaedo is useful not only because it makes explicit (though ambiguous) reference to a Form's relation to its sensible instances—he speaks of the Form's "presence in it or association with it"—but also because it shows that Plato did not concern himself with a rigorous explanation of this point:

2.2.4. Criticism of Plato's Theory of Ideas

- (i) Plato's Ideas do not explain the existence of things. To explain why the world is here is after all the main problem of philosophy, and Plato's theory fails to do this.
- (ii) Plato has not explained the relation of Ideas to things. Things, we are told, are "copies" of Ideas, and "participate" in them. But how are we to understand this "participation"
- (iii) Even if the existence of things is explained by the Ideas, their motion is not. The Ideas themselves are immutable and motionless, so will be the same world which is their copy. Thus the universe would be absolutely static. The world, on the contrary, is a world of change, motion, life, becoming. Plato makes no attempt to explain the unceasing becoming of things.
- (iv) The world consists of a multitude of things, and it is the business of philosophy to explain why they exist. By way of explanation Plato merely assumes the existence of another multitude of things, the Ideas. But only effect of this is to double the number of things to be explained.
- (v) Ideas are supposed to be non-sensuous, but they are, in fact, sensuous. There is, in fact, no difference between the horse and the Idea of the horse, between the man and the Idea of the man, except useless and meaningless "in-itself" or "in-general" attached to each object of sense to make it appear something different.

2.3. ARISTOTLE: SUBSTANCE, ACTUALITY AND POTENTIALITY

2.3.1. The Problem of Metaphysics Defined

The various sciences seek to find the first principles and causes of specific kinds of things, such as material bodies, the human body, the state, or a poem. Unlike these sciences, which ask, "What is such-and-such a thing like and why?" metaphysics asks a far more general question—a question that each science must ultimately take into account, namely, "What does it mean to be anything whatsoever?" What, in short, does it mean to be? It was precisely this question that concerned Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*, making metaphysics for him "the science of any existent, as existent." The problem of metaphysics as he saw it was therefore the study of Being and its "principles" and "causes."

Aristotle's metaphysics was to a considerable extent an outgrowth of his views on logic and his interest in biology. From the viewpoint of his logic, "to be" meant for him to be something that could be accurately defined and that could therefore become the subject of discourse. From the point of view of his interest in biology, he was inclined to think of "to be" as something implicated in a dynamic process. "To be," as Aristotle saw the matter, always meant to be something. Hence, all existence is individual and has a specific nature. All the categories (or predicates) that Aristotle dealt with in his logical works—categories such as quality, relation, posture, and place—presuppose some subject to which these predicates can apply. This subject to which all the categories apply Aristotle called substance (*ousia*). "To be," then, is to be a particular kind of substance. Also, "to be" means to be a substance as the product of a dynamic process. In this way metaphysics is concerned with Being (that is, existing substances) and its causes (that is, the processes by which substances come into being).

2.3.2 Substance as the Primary Essence of Things

Aristotle believed that the way we know a thing provides a major clue as to what we mean by “substance.” Having in mind again the categories or predicates, Aristotle says that we know a thing better when we know what it is than when we know its color, size, or posture. We separate a thing from all its qualities, and we focus upon what a thing really is, upon its essential nature. To this end Aristotle distinguishes between essential and accidental properties of things. For example, to say that a person has red hair is to describe something accidental, since to be a human it is not necessary or essential that one have red hair—or even any hair for that matter. But it is essential to my being human that I am mortal. We similarly recognize that all humans are human in spite of their different sizes, colors, or ages. Something about each concretely different person makes him or her a person in spite of the unique characteristics that make him or her this particular person. At this point Aristotle would readily agree that these special characteristics (categories, predicates) also exist and have some kind of being. But the being of these characteristics is not the central object of metaphysical inquiry.

The central concern of metaphysics is the study of substance, that is, the essential nature of a thing. On this view substance means “that which is not asserted of a subject but of which everything else is asserted.” Substance is what we know as basic about something, after which we can say other things about it. Whenever we define something, we get at its essence before we can say anything about it, as when we speak of a large table or a healthy person. Here we understand table and person in their “essence”—in what makes them a table or a person—before we understand them as large or healthy. It is true that we can know only specific and determinate things—actual individual tables or persons. At the same time, the essence, or substance, of a table or a person has its existence peculiarly separate from its categories or its qualities. This does not mean that a substance is ever in fact found existing separately from its qualities. Still, Aristotle believed that we can know the essence of a thing such as “tableness” as separated from its particular qualities of round, small, and brown. Thus, he says, there must be some universal essence that is found wherever we see a table. And this essence or substance must be independent of its particular qualities inasmuch as the essence is the same, even though in the case of each actual table the qualities are different. Aristotle’s point is that a thing is more than the sum of its particular qualities. There is something “beneath” (substance) all the qualities; thus, any specific thing is a combination of qualities, on the one hand, and a substratum to which the qualities apply, on the other. With these distinctions in mind, Aristotle was led, like Plato before him, to consider just how this essence, or “universal,” was related to the particular thing. What, in short, makes a substance a substance; is it matter as a substratum or is it form?

2.3. 3. Matter and Form

Although Aristotle distinguished between matter and form, he nevertheless said that, in nature, we never find matter without form or form without matter. Everything that exists is some concrete individual thing, and everything is a unity of matter and form. Substance, therefore, is always a composite of form and matter. Plato, you will recall, argued that Forms, such as Human or Table, have a separate existence. Particular things, such as the table in front of me, obtain their

nature by participating in the Forms, such as the Form Tableness. Aristotle rejected Plato's explanation of the universal Forms—specifically, the contention that the Forms existed separately from individual things. Of course, Aristotle did agree that there are universals and that universals such as Human and Table are more than merely subjective notions. Indeed, Aristotle recognized that without the theory of universals, there could be no scientific knowledge, for then there would be no way of saying something about all members of a particular class.

What makes science effective is that it identifies classes of objects (for example, a certain form of human disease), so that whenever an individual falls into this class, we can also assume that other facts are relevant. These classes, then, are not merely mental fictions but do in fact have objective reality. But, Aristotle said, we simply find their reality in the individual things themselves. What purpose, he asked, could be served by assuming that the universal Forms exist separately? If anything, this would complicate matters, since everything would have to be replicated in the world of Forms—not only individual things but also their relationships. Moreover, Aristotle was not convinced that Plato's theory of the Forms could help us know things any better; “they help in no wise toward the knowledge of other things.” Since presumably the Forms are motionless, Aristotle concluded that they could not help us understand things as we know them, as full of motion. Nor could they, being immaterial, explain objects of which we have sense impressions. Again, how could the immaterial Forms be related to any particular thing? It is not satisfactory to say, as Plato did, that things participate in the Forms: “to say that they are patterns and that other things share in them, is to use empty words and poetical metaphors.”

When we use the words matter and form to describe any specific thing, we seem to have in mind the distinction between what something is made of and what it is made into. This, again, inclines us to assume that matter—what things are made of—exists in some primary and unformed state until it is made into a thing. But, again, Aristotle argues that we shall not find anywhere such a thing as “primary matter,” that is, matter without form. Consider the sculptor who is about to make a statue of Venus out of marble. He or she will never find marble without some form. It will always be this marble or that, a square piece or an irregular one. But he or she will always work with a piece in which form and matter are already combined. That the sculptor will give it a different form is another question. The question here is, how does one thing become another thing? What, in short, is the nature of change?

2.3.4. The Process of Change: The Four Causes

In the world around us we see things constantly changing. Change is one of the basic facts of our experience. For Aristotle the word change meant many things, including motion, growth, decay, generation, and corruption. Some of these changes are natural, whereas others are the products of human art. Things are always taking on new form; new life is born and statues are made. Because change always involves taking on new form, we can ask several questions about the process of change. Of anything, Aristotle says, we can ask four questions, namely (1) What is it?

(2) What is it made of? (3) By what is it made? And (4) For what end is it made? The four responses to these questions represent Aristotle's four causes. Although the word cause refers in modern use primarily to an event prior to an effect, for Aristotle it meant an explanation. His four causes, therefore, represent a broad pattern or framework for the total explanation of anything or everything. Taking an object of art, for example, the four causes might be (1) a statue (2) of marble (3) by a sculptor (4) for decoration. Distinguished from objects produced by human art, there are also things that are caused by nature. Although nature does not, according to Aristotle, have "purposes" in the sense of "the reason for," it does always and everywhere have "ends" in the sense of having built-in ways of behaving. For this reason seeds sprout, and roots go down (not up!), and plants grow. In this process of change, plants move toward their "end," that is, their distinctive function or way of being. In nature change will involve these same four elements. Aristotle's four causes are therefore (1) the formal cause, which determines what a thing is, (2) the material cause, or that out of which it is made, (3) the efficient cause, by what a thing is made, and (4) the final cause, the "end" for which it is made.

Aristotle looked at life through the eyes of a biologist. For him nature was life. All things are in motion—in the process of becoming and dying away. The process of reproduction was for Aristotle a clear example of the power inherent in all living things to initiate change and to reproduce. Summarizing his causes, Aristotle said that "all things that come to be come to be by some agency and from something, and come to be something." From this biological viewpoint Aristotle elaborated the notion that form and matter never exist separately. In nature generation of new life involves first of all an individual who already possesses the specific form that the offspring will have (the male parent). After that there must be matter capable of being the vehicle for this form (this matter being contributed by the female parent). Finally, from this comes a new individual with the same specific form. In this example Aristotle shows that change does not involve bringing together formless matter with matterless form. On the contrary, change occurs always in and to something that is already a combination of form and matter and that is on its way to becoming something new or different.

2.3.5. Potentiality and Actuality

All things, said Aristotle, are involved in processes of change. Each thing possesses a power to become what its form has set as its end. There is in all things⁸⁴ Part 1 Ancient Greek Philosophy a dynamic power of striving toward their "end." Some of this striving is toward external objects, as when a person builds a house. But there is also the striving to achieve ends that pertain to a person's internal nature, as when we fulfill our nature as a human being by the act of thinking. This notion of a self-contained end led Aristotle to consider the distinction between potentiality and actuality. He used this distinction to explain the processes of change and development. If the end of an acorn is to be a tree, in some way the acorn is only potentially a tree but not actually so at this time. A fundamental type of change, then, is the change from potentiality to actuality. But the chief significance of this distinction is that Aristotle argues for the priority of actuality over potentiality. That is, although something actual emerges from the potential, there could be no

movement from potential to actual if there were not first of all something actual. A child is potentially an adult, but before there can be a child with that potentiality, there has to be an actual adult. As all things in nature are similar to the relation of a child to an adult, or an acorn to a tree, Aristotle was led to see in nature different levels of being. If everything were involved in change—in generation and corruption—everything would partake of potentiality. But, as we have seen, for there to be something potential, there must already be something actual. To explain the existence of the world of potential things, Aristotle thought it was necessary to assume the existence of some actuality at a level above potential or perishing things. This led to the notion of a Being that is pure actuality, without any potentiality, at the highest level of being. Since change is a kind of motion, Aristotle saw the visible world as one composed of things in motion. But motion, a type of change, involves potentiality. Things are potentially in motion but must be moved by something that is actually in motion.

2.3.6. The Unmoved Mover- God?

In the world of nature, the best things would be those that come closest to these ideals. Aristotle believes these are the heavenly bodies that move eternally in great circles. They change their positions constantly, but in a perfectly regular way, without beginning or ending. But even such eternal motion is not self-explanatory.

There is something that is always being moved in an incessant movement, and this movement is circular . . . : and so the first heaven will be eternal. There must, then, be something that moves it. But since that which is moved, as well as moving things, is intermediate, there must be something that moves things without being moved; this will be something eternal, it will be a substance, and it will be an actuality. (M 12.7)

Think about baseball. A bat may impart movement to a ball, but only if put into movement by a batter. The bat is what Aristotle calls an “intermediate” mover; it moves the ball and is moved by the batter. The batter himself is moved to swing the bat by his desire to make a hit. Aristotle would put it this way: Making a hit is the final cause (the goal) that moves him to swing as he does. So the batter himself is only an “intermediate” mover. He moves as he does for the sake of making a hit. The goal of making a hit in turn exists for the sake of winning the game, which has as its goal the league championship. In the world of baseball, the ultimate final cause putting the whole season in motion is the goal of winning the World Series. Each batter is striving to embody the form: Member of a Team That Wins the World Series.

Let’s return to the world of nature, containing the eternal movements of the heavenly bodies. Is there any ultimate mover here? There must be, Aristotle argues; otherwise we could not account for the movement of anything at all. Not all movers can be “intermediate” movers. If they were, that series would go on to infinity, but there cannot be any actually existing collection of infinitely many things. There must, then, be “something that moves things without being moved.”

Moreover, we can know certain facts about it. It must itself be eternal because it must account for the eternal movement of the heavenly bodies and so cannot be less extensive than they are. It must be a substance, for what other substances depend on cannot be less basic than they are. And, of course, it must be fully actual; otherwise, its being what it is would cry out for further explanation—for a mover for it. What kind of cause could this unmoved mover be? Let's review the four causes. It clearly couldn't be a material cause, since that is purely potential. It couldn't be an efficient cause, for the eternal movement of the heavens does not need a temporal trigger. It is not the formal cause of a compound of form and matter because it contains no matter. It could only be a final cause. This conclusion is driven home by an analogy.

Now, the object of desire and the object of thought move things in this way: they move things without being moved. (M 12.7)

Our baseball example already indicated this. What sets the whole baseball world in motion is a goal, namely, winning the World Series. Within the world of baseball, there is no further purpose. It moves the players, managers, umpires, and owners, but without being moved itself. It is "the object of desire and thought" and functions that way as a final cause. It is what they all "love."

The ultimate cause of all things is a final cause; it is what all other things love. Their love for it puts them in motion, just as the sheer existence of a bicycle stimulates a boy or girl into activity, delivering papers, mowing lawns, and saving to buy it. As the object of desire and love, this first mover must be something good. Can we say anything more about the nature of this unmoved mover?

Its life is like the best that we can enjoy—and we can enjoy it for only a short time. It is always in this state (which we cannot be), since its actuality is also pleasure. . . . If, then, God is always in the good state which we are sometimes in, that is something to wonder at; and if he is in a better state than we are ever in, that is to be wondered at even more. This is in fact the case, however. Life belongs to him, too; for life is the actuality of mind, and God is that actuality; and his independent actuality is the best life and eternal life. We assert, then, that God is an eternal and most excellent living being, so that continuous and eternal life and duration belong to him. For that is what God is. (M 12.7)

There must be such an actuality, Aristotle argues, to explain the existence and nature of changing things. As the final cause and the object of the "desire" in all things, it must be the best. What is the best we know? The life of the mind. So God must enjoy this life in the highest degree.

God, then, is an eternally existing, living being who lives a life of perfect thought. But this raises a further problem. What does God think about? Aristotle's answer to this question is reasonable, but puzzling, too.

It would not be appropriate for the best thought to be about ordinary things, Aristotle argues. It must have only the best and most valuable object. But that is itself! So God will think only of himself. He will not, in Aristotle's view, have any concern or thought for the world. He will

engage eternally in a contemplation of his own life—which is a life of contemplation. His relation to the world is not that of creator (the world being everlasting needs no efficient cause), but of ideal, inspiring each thing in the world to be its very best in imitation of the divine perfection. God is not the origin of the world, but its goal. Yet he is and must be an actually existing, individual substance, devoid of matter, and the best in every way. God, then, is to the world as winning the World Series is to the “world” of baseball. He functions as the unifying principle of reality, that cause to which all other final causes must ultimately be referred. There is no multitude of ultimate principles, no polytheism. The world is one world. As Aristotle puts it, *The world does not wish to be governed badly. As Homer says: “To have many kings is not good; let there be one.” (M 12.10)*

2.4. St. Augustine: God and the Soul

GOD

Augustine was not interested in mere theoretical speculations about the existence of God. His philosophical reflections about God were the product of his intense personal pursuit of wisdom and spiritual peace. His deep involvement in sensual pleasures gave him dramatic evidence that the soul cannot find its peace among the bodily pleasures or sensation. Similarly, in his quest for certainty of knowledge, he discovered that the world of things was full of change and impermanence. His mind, too, he discovered, was imperfect, since it was capable of error. At the same time, he had the experience of knowing certain truths that were eternal. He was able to compare the experience of contemplating truth with the experience of having pleasure and sensations. Of these two experiences he found that the mental activities could provide more lasting and profound peace. He considered the technical question of how it was that his finite human mind was capable of attaining knowledge beyond the capacity of his mind. He concluded that this knowledge could not have come from finite things outside of him; nor could it be produced fully by his own mind. Since the knowledge available to him was eternal and could not come from his limited or finite mind, he was led to believe that immutable truth must have its source in God. What led to this conclusion was the similarity between the characteristics of some of his knowledge and the attributes of God, namely, that both are eternal and true. The existence of some eternal truths meant for Augustine the existence of the Eternal Truth, which God is. In this way Augustine moved through various levels of personal experience and spiritual quest to what amounted to a “proof” of the existence of God.

Since God is truth, God in some sense is within us, but since God is eternal, he also transcends us. But what else can a person say by way of describing God? Actually, like Plotinus, Augustine found it easier to say what God is not than to define what he is. Still, to say that God is superior to finite things was a major step. Taking the scriptural name for God given to Moses, namely, “I Am That I Am,” Augustine interpreted this to mean that God is being itself. As such God is the highest being. This is not the same thing as the beingless One of Plotinus. Instead, it is the “something than which nothing more excellent or more sublime exists”—a phrase that centuries later influenced Anselm to formulate his famous ontological argument. As the highest being God

is perfect being, which means that he is self-existent, immutable, and eternal. As perfect he is also “simple,” in that whatever attributes are assigned to him turn out to be identical. That is, his knowledge, wisdom, goodness, and power are all one and constitute his essence. Further, Augustine reasoned that the world of everyday things reflects the being and activity of God. Although the things we see are mutable in that they gradually cease to be, nevertheless, insofar as they exist they have a definite form, and this form is eternal and is a reflection of God. Indeed, Augustine sees God as the source of all being insofar as things possess any being at all.

But unlike the things of the world, God, as Augustine says, “is . . . in no interval or extension of place” and similarly “is in no interval or extension of time.” In short, Augustine described God as pure or highest being, suggesting thereby that in God there is no change either from nonbeing to being or from being to nonbeing. God is; “I Am That I Am.” Again, the principal force of this line of thought is its relevance in solving Augustine’s spiritual problem— although Augustine was convinced that this reasoning had sufficient philosophical rigor. As the source of being and truth and the one eternal reality, God now becomes for Augustine the legitimate object both of thought and affection. From God there comes both enlightenment for the mind and strength for the will. Moreover, all other knowledge is possible because God is the standard for truth. His essence is to exist, and to exist is to act, and to act is to know. Being both eternal and all-knowing, God always knew all the possible ways in which he could be reflected in creation. For this reason the various forms in which the world is shaped were always in God as ideal models. All things, therefore, are finite reflections of God’s eternal thought. If God’s thought is “eternal,” difficulties arise in our language when it is said that God “foresees” what will happen. What is important to Augustine, however, is that the world and God are intimately related, and that the world reflects God’s eternal thought, even though God is not identical with the world but is instead beyond it. Because there is this relation between God and the world, to know one is to know something of the other. This is why Augustine was so convinced that the person who knew the most about God could understand most deeply the true nature of the world and especially human nature and human destiny.

2.4.2. THE CREATED WORLD

Augustine concluded that God is the most appropriate object of thought and affection, and that the physical world could not provide us with true knowledge or spiritual peace. In spite of his emphasis on the spiritual realm, Augustine nevertheless paid considerable attention to the material world. After all, we must live in the physical world, and we need to understand this world in order to relate ourselves appropriately to it. From what he already said about the nature of knowledge and about God, we can see that Augustine believed that the world is the creation of God. In his *Confessions* Augustine says that, wherever we look, all things say, “We did not make ourselves, but He that lives forever made us.” That is, finite things demand that there should be some permanent being to explain how they could come into existence. Just how God is related to the world was explained by Augustine in his unique theory of creation.

Creation from Nothing

Augustine's distinctive theory was that God created all things *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). This was in contrast to Plato's account of the world, which was not "created" but came about when the Demiurge combined the Forms and the receptacle, which always existed independently. Augustine also departed from the Neoplatonic theory of Plotinus, which explained the world as an emanation from God. Plotinus said that there was a natural necessity in God to overflow, since the Good must necessarily diffuse itself. Moreover, Plotinus's theory held that there is a continuity between God and the world insofar as the world is merely an extension of God. Against all these notions Augustine stressed that the world is the product of God's free act, whereby he brings into being, out of nothing, all the things that make up the world. All things, then, owe their existence to God. There is, however, a sharp distinction between God and the things he created. Whereas Plotinus saw the world as the overflowing, and therefore continuation, of God, Augustine speaks of God as bringing into being what did not exist before. He could not have created the world out of an existing matter because matter, even in a primary form, would already be something.

To speak of a formless matter is really to refer to nothing. Actually, according to Augustine, everything, including matter, is the product of God's creative act. Even if there were some formless matter that was capable of being formed, this would also have its origin in God and would have to be created by him out of nothing. Matter is essentially good in nature since God creates matter, and God cannot create anything evil. The essential goodness of matter plays an important role in Augustine's theory of morality.

2.4.3. The Seminal Principles

Augustine was struck by the fact that the various species in nature never produce new species. Horses produce horses, and flowers produce flowers; at the human level, human parents produce human children. What fascinated Augustine about all of this was its relevance to the general question of causality. Although in a sense parents are the cause of children, and older flowers the cause of new flowers, still, none of these things is able to introduce new forms into nature. In the created order existing things are able to animate only existing forms into completed beings. Augustine drew from this fact (for which he admittedly did not have decisive empirical support) the conclusion that the causality behind the formation of all things is God's intelligence. There is no original causal power in things capable of fashioning new forms. How, then, do things, animals, and people produce anything? Augustine's answer was that in the act of creation God implanted seminal principles (*rationes seminales*) into matter, thereby setting into nature the potentiality for all species to emerge.

These seminal principles are the germs of things; they are invisible and have causal power. Thus, all species bear the invisible and potential power to become what they are not yet at the present time. When species begin to exist, their seminal principle—that is, their potentiality—is fulfilled. Actual seeds then transmit the continuation of the fixed species from potentiality to actuality.

Originally, God, in a single act of complete creation, furnished the germinating principles of all species.

With this theory Augustine explained the origin of species, locating their cause in the mind of God, from which came the seminal principles. With this theory of seminal principles, Augustine thought he had also solved a problem in the Bible, where it says in the Book of Genesis that God created the world in six days. It seemed inconsistent with Augustine's view of God that God should have to create things step by step. There was some question, too, about what is meant here by "six days," especially since the sun was not "created" until the fourth day. The theory of seminal principles enabled Augustine to say that God created all things at once, meaning by this that he implanted the seminal principles of all species simultaneously. But, since these germs are principles of potentiality, they are the bearers of things that are to be but that have not yet "flowered." Accordingly, though all species were created at once, they did not all simultaneously exist in a fully formed state. They each fulfilled their potentiality in a sequence of points in time.

CHAPTER THREE- EPISTEMOLOGY: RATIONALISM AND EMPIRICISM

3.1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemology is one of the main and basic branches of philosophy. It studies the nature of human knowledge, sources of human knowledge, and the extent and limits of it. It also investigates the criteria of the validity of knowledge. Two main sources of human knowledge are sense-experience or perception, and reason or inference. Modern Western philosophy is characterized by the controversy between Empiricism and Rationalism. Advocates of both schools tried to break with the past and to think afresh. According to Empiricists, sense-experience is the necessary source of knowledge. According to Rationalists, reason or intellect is the source of knowledge. Locke advocated Empiricism, while Descartes stood for Rationalism.

The source of knowledge is an important epistemological problem. Generally two sources of knowledge are acceptable to the majority of thinkers—reason and experience. The term experience in this context stands for sensational and perceptual experience. On the other hand, the term reason indicates reasoning or inference, which is the function of the human intellect and mind. Both Descartes and Locke advocated a break with the traditional authoritarian method and verbal testimony. One has to think for oneself. Descartes and Locke tried their best to develop new theories of knowledge. Knowledge is objective and universal. According to Descartes, reason is the source of such knowledge. While according to John Locke, sense-experience is the source of simple ideas and with the help of them the mind actively develops complex ideas or knowledge. During Medieval Europe, the authority (Bible, Biblical tradition, and the Church) were considered the source of knowledge.

3.2 – Controversy Between Rationalism and Empiricism:

According to Empiricism, perceptual experience or sense- experience is a necessary basis to all human knowledge. Empiricists claim that all knowledge requires empirical premises based on empirical data. Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and J.S. Mill are classical example of this type of empiricism. According to Rationalism, reason or intellect is the source of all human knowledge. Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Wolff are classical examples of this kind of rationalism. There is the central question at issue between these classical philosophical rationalists and philosophical empiricists. That issue is about the doctrine of innate ideas, or a priori concepts (17th century).

Advocates of innate ideas claim that there are some ideas which are not derived from sense-experience. It is fundamental to empiricist claims to deny the existence of such ideas. The rationalists accept the mathematical model, while the empiricists admire the model of rational sciences such as physics. Both schools of thought reject authoritarianism or the authoritarian method of traditional philosophy. In this unit we are mainly concerned with some philosophers' view regarding the sources of knowledge. We are not concerned with the recent developments in this context.

3.3 – RENE DESCARTES (1596-1650): Reason as the Source of Knowledge

Descartes is well known as the Father of modern European or Western Philosophy. He was born in France. His three discourses, which contain the Discourse on Method, published in 1637 are considered as the first great philosophical work to be written in French. In 1641, he published his Meditations. Descartes was not only a philosopher but also a natural scientist who was interested in physics and physiology. Above all he was a great mathematician. He treated mathematics as an instrument of science. This thought profoundly influenced Descartes' philosophical thinking. He thought that mathematics gave a paradigm or model of certain knowledge and of the method of attaining such knowledge.

What is the reason of certainty in mathematical knowledge? Mathematical knowledge is based on self-evident axioms, or first principles. They are clearly and distinctly pursued as self-evident truths. In other words, they are indubitable. That is to say that it is hard to doubt them. They are intrinsically valid or self-certifying. Once we have such self-evident first principle or truths, then with the rules of reasoning or logic, theorems can be validly deduced from them. If axioms are characterized by certainty, then the theorems validly deduced from axioms are also characterized by certainty. Descartes wanted to apply this method to philosophy. In mathematics, there is no appeal to the sense-experiences or the reports of sense-experiences. Human reasoning is the sole source of mathematical knowledge. In this sense, Descartes claimed that by pure reasoning, we can achieve knowledge.

Rationalism thus is a philosophical theory which claims that reason, and not empirical experiences, are the source of human knowledge. Rationalism is therefore opposed to

Empiricism, which believes sense- experience is a necessary basis to all human knowledge. Descartes accepted mathematics as the model of his philosophical method and tried to construct a system of thought which would possess certainty. Such knowledge cannot be attained from traditional authoritarian methods or scholastic philosophy since there are many different opinions on one and the same subject. Even today, every subject in philosophy is still being disputed. Therefore, we ought to follow the method of mathematics. In order to find out the body of certain and self-evident first principles or axiomatic truths, Descartes begins with a method of methodical doubt. It is not a position of skepticism but a method of doubt to get at the indubitable starting point which will be the unshakable foundation of the edifice of knowledge. We should not be influenced by traditional beliefs and prejudices. We also cannot rely upon our sensations because they often deceive us. So Descartes argues that we must begin doubting whatever beliefs we have received from traditional scholastic systems or from our teachers and parents. Any belief can be doubted. But one thing is certain that I cannot doubt that I am doubting. Doubting is a kind of thinking. I cannot doubt that I am thinking when I am doubting different beliefs and thoughts. Thus to doubt means to think and to think means to be. This led Descartes to his famous dictum: Cogito ergo sum– I think, therefore I am.

This is the first and foremost certain knowledge that occurs to anyone who thinks methodically. Self-existence is an indubitable, self- evident truth. It cannot be doubted. It is self-defeating to doubt it. There is no appeal to empirical psychological act or fact. There is no appeal to reasoning or inference either. It is a kind of intuitive truth that everyone has to accept. The act of doubting implies a doubter. The act of thinking implies a thinker. This truth is immediately perceived. According to Descartes, this principle also gives us a criteria or a test of truth. Any proposition which is clearly and distinctly perceived like it is true. Thus Descartes' methodical doubt leads to the self-evident truth, viz. self- existence is absolutely certain. Since 'self' is a thinking substance according to him, Descartes tried to analyze the contents of this thinking substance (Res Cogitans).

He found that we think by means of ideas. Among them some ideas are innate, e.g. one as the same thing cannot both be and not be, the same proposition cannot both be true and false at the same time (Law of Non- Contradiction). We need not discuss here what he deduced from this self-evident truth.

3.4 – JOHN LOCKE (1632-1704): Representative Realism

John Locke studied philosophy, natural science and medicine at Oxford. He was not happy with the scholastic methods of instruction. He obtained a medical degree in 1674 to practice medicine. His interest in philosophy was mainly aroused and strengthened by the study of Descartes' books. He was influenced by the writings of Descartes but he was not satisfied with the doctrine of innate ideas. Human knowledge consists of ideas or operates with ideas.

Locke's first task is to investigate the origin of knowledge. In other words, it means to investigate the origin of ideas with which knowledge operates. Ideas are something or anything of which we can think. Idea means whatsoever the human mind directly apprehends. In other

words, an idea is the immediate object of perception, thought or understanding. Locke first directs his critical enquiry against the doctrine of innate idea. Innate ideas are supposed to be inborn ideas. They are there in the human mind since man's birth. Simple ideas possess validity. They agree with the reality from which they proceed. The secondary qualities do not belong to the objects. Yet they correspond to the objects because they are their constant effects. But complex ideas are derived ideas. They are the result of active combination and comparison on the part of the human mind. They are not copies of things.

The concept of substance is the concept of an unknown bearer of qualities. In this sense, knowledge is the perception of the agreement and disagreement of ideas. Empirical knowledge of external things is probable and the knowledge of God is demonstrative and not perceptual. Surprisingly, Locke himself has accepted the truth that substance is something which he did not know. This is true in regard to both material substance (matter) and spiritual substance (God). When he was asked what matter was, Locke's reply was simply, "I know not what." Locke's empiricism does not give the guarantee that the complex ideas of material and spiritual substance correspond to the objectively existing entities because they are formed by humans by comparing and combining simple ideas.

In short, the materials of human knowledge are supplied to the human mind by external sensation and inner reflection. Mind is passive in receiving these materials; but it is active in acting upon them and making complex ideas. Thus all human knowledge is gained by means of ideas. Knowledge is intuitive if we grasp it directly. For example, white is not black, and a circle is not a triangle. Such knowledge is self-evident and immediate. Knowledge of one's existence is intuitive. Mediate or rational knowledge is demonstrative. It is found in mathematics. It shows the limits of human knowledge. It cannot reach further than our ideas. If there are no ideas, then there is no knowledge. Simple ideas represent external things. The case of complex ideas of substances and relation is different. The substances remain the unknown bearer of certain qualities.

3.5 – Theories of Truth:

Man is a rational animal. Truth seeking is already present in human nature. The quest for Truth raises two questions –

- 1) What truth is i.e. the meaning of Truth.
- 2) How to know Truth i. e. the criterion of Truth.

The problem of Truth does not arise in the case of our implicit thoughts. It arises when we express our thoughts through words. A sentence is a meaningful combination of words. Sentences are the means of communication. They express our emotions, thoughts desires, wishes, doubts, commands, requests questions and information. The problem of Truth is related with informative sentences only. The informative sentences are directed towards what does or does not exist. They are related to what we believe or what we judge. The assertive or declarative sentences are either true or false. Such informative sentences are called as statements.

A statement is a sentence which is either true or false. In this way only declarative or indicative sentences which are either true or false express knowledge. Knowledge is a set of statements. So truth of knowledge is truth of statements which are declarative in nature. The question about truth does not arise in the case of interrogative, optative, imperative or exclamatory sentences. As per our syllabus, we are going to study the Coherence theory of idealism and the Pragmatic theory of Truth.

3.5.1 – The Coherence Theory of Truth:

Idealism advocates the Coherence theory of Truth. Idealism is a view that the object of knowledge depends upon the perceiving mind for its existence. Knowledge consists in the ideas of the perceiving mind. Truth is the consistency among the ideas. The Idealist thinkers like Berkeley, Leibnitz, Spinoza, Hegel, Bradley, advocate the Coherence theory of Truth.

For Idealist thinkers, Reality is rational. There is only one comprehensive and harmonious system of knowledge. Truth is coherence or harmony of one statement with another statement. An isolated and alone statement does not have truth value of its own. Different statements of one system are logically connected with one another. Every statement or proposition is in harmony with the rest propositions. Non – contradiction among these statements is truth and contradiction or inconsistency among these propositions is falsity. Truth is an internal relation among statements. Truth consists in complete coherence among all the statements of a system.

Truth of a statement can be known only with its relation to the whole system. That is why any proposition is partly true. Knowledge is a coherent whole of propositions. Every statement in it has its own definite place. Every statement contributes to the coherence of the whole system. A complete system can be wholly true. Truth is extensive and all inclusive. Human intellect is finite. It can conceive the statement in the limited sphere. Any error is partial truth. From the absolute stand point there is no error at all.

There are different branches of knowledge, such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, botany. The statements of one branch should be consistent with another. They must also be coherent with the statements of another branch of knowledge. In other words the different systems of knowledge must be consistent with one another. All branches are the parts of one comprehensive unique system of knowledge. Truth consists in the rational unity of all the systems of knowledge. The principle of comprehensiveness resolves the inconsistencies among these constituent systems and manifests the reality as one organized harmonious whole. Truth is neither made nor determined by human intellect Truth is in reality.

Criticism:

The Coherence theory of Truth faces the following difficulties -

- 1) The Coherence theory believes that no statement is absolutely true. As truth depends upon the consistency between propositions, the propositions will be more or less true. One statement which is more consistent with other statement may be more true other statement. It seems absurd. The Coherence theory thus advocates degrees of Truth. The idealist thinkers try to resolve this difficulty. They argue that the inherent limitations of human intellect lead to the conception of degrees of Truth.
- 2) The Coherence theory presupposes truth. Statement B is true because it is consistent with statement A. The theory presupposes the truth of A. Even if we seek another coherent statement for the truth of statement A, the process will bend less.
- 3) The Coherence theory presupposes the truth of laws of logic. The laws of logic themselves cannot be tested by Coherence theory. We need something else outside the scope of this theory.
- 4) It is very difficult to attain a completely coherent theory, in empirical science. In the case of empirical sciences, we have to think of correspondence with facts.
- 5) The Coherence theory cannot explain the meaning of truth. It provides the criterion of truth i. e. Coherence of one statement with another is the test of truth. The nature and criterion of truth coincide in the coherence theory.
- 6) The criterion of consistency can help us to discover the falsity of a proposition. It is not sufficient to establish the truth of a proposition. There can be a completely false but logically consistent and harmonious system. Many science fictions are good examples of such a consistent but false system. The question arises, why should be we believe in only one coherent system? There can be many compatible systems. Philosophy itself believes th

3.5.2 – The Pragmatic Theory of Truth:

For Pragmatism, Truth is the workability and fruitful consequence of our ideas. The thinkers like Peirce, William James, Schiller, John Dewey advocate Pragmatic theory of Truth. Pragmatist thinkers believe that there is no Absolute or Eternal Truth as such. Truth is empirical. We observe the changing world. It is obvious that our understanding of the world also changes. Truth is that which survives in the course of time. Truth goes through the process of verification. The process of evolution points out the survival of the fittest. Truth consists solely in practical satisfaction of will and desire. Our knowledge about the path of IDE is true if we really reach to the institute. The Perception of mirage in a desert is false because it does not quench our thirst. Truth is an adventitious feature, added to knowledge when successful practice follows it. According to William James, Truth is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief.” There can be different, equally correct approaches towards reality. Truth is the successful adjustment between our purposes and the world. A true idea is that which leads to successful consequences where as a false idea is that which leads to unfruitful consequences.

Truth has practical bearing. It must satisfy in individuals needs. Scientific truths keep changing from time to time. Truth is constructed in the course of our experiences. The fruitful consequences of our action reconstruct the concept of Truth. Our ideas or statements or

judgments are not valid in themselves. They are validated by the satisfaction of the purpose. John Dewey's theory is called as instrumentalism. He believes that thinking process is closely connected with our life. Thought is a function among other functions originating from the needs of life.

Knowledge helps us to survive through the struggle of life. It helps us to lead good life. Our thoughts, beliefs and ideas are working tools i. e. instruments to live the life in a better way. Truth is relevant to a specific situation and valuable for a purpose. For Instrumentalism, true knowledge is an instrument of successful life. The belief which leads to promotion of life is true. Truth serves the purpose of survival. It is the fittest possible response in the struggle of life. A wrong response may cost even the life.

Truth is tested in practice. There is no ultimate truth. Truth must be constantly revised and reconstructed. Truth is made by different events. It is still in the process of making and awaits the parts of its completion from the future. John Dewey believed that social reforms and changes in educational set up can lead to better life. Such changes bring about fruitful consequences. We know that the problem of Truth is closely connected with the problem of reality for pragmatist thinkers; there is no ultimate reality as such. Ultimate Reality is shaped in accordance with the purpose of the individual. Human 'intellect' can offer many equally plausible alternative solutions to the same problem. Human 'will' chooses the alternative that results in greatest satisfaction. Thus for pragmatist conative satisfaction or utility becomes the criterion of truth.

Criticism:

The Pragmatic Theory of Truth faces the following difficulties.

1. Pragmatists reject the concept of Absolute Truth. They make Truth subjective and relative.
2. Every belief or idea which works is not necessarily true. A cancer patient may live a better life, if he does not know about his mysterious disease.
3. Many false or incorrect ideas lead to fruitful consequences in human life. Using unfair means in examination may lead to success but it does not justify nor does prove the truth of unfair means.
4. The ideas often work because they are basically true. Truth of our judgments leads to success of our activities.
5. Pragmatism reduces Truth to a personal and private affair. What works for one man may not work for another man even the idea which is useful at one time.
6. There are many ideas whose truth can never be denied, though none of these ideas lead to successful consequences e.g. knowledge of starvation on the part of a man of broken legs, cannot lead him to any fruitful activity to fetch food.

7. The Pragmatic thinkers make truth to be a species of Good. For these thinkers truth is valuable for a purpose. However, Truth is as fundamental as Good and Beauty. None of Truth, Good or Beauty is subordinate to other.

8. The Pragmatic theory of Truth also gives us the criterion of truth. It does not explain the meaning of truth. This theory signifies “fulfillment of purpose” as the test of Truth.

3.5.3– TRUTH IS UNANALYSABLE:

The Coherence Theory of Truth or the Pragmatic theory of Truth cannot give satisfactory answer to the question. “What is truth?” The question still remains. Whether we really do not know what truth is? Many times we know with certainty what truth is. We surely understand truth. We have direct apprehension of truth. The difficulty arises when we want to explain what truth is. When we try to express What truth is, it results in verbal confusions and disputes. We cannot explain the meaning of truth properly. We have to admit that truth is indefinable it does not mean that we do now know what truth is. It simply means that we can, directly and immediately know what truth is. Truth is intuitively known but cannot be expressed in words.

True statements must have correspondence to the external world. These statements must be consistent with one another to form a comprehensive system of knowledge. Finally, truth must have a cash value. It must work and lead to success. Thus, truth is an unanalysable relation between the proposition and fact.

3.6. Immanuel Kant- Phenomena and Noumena

“Thoughts without content are empty,” Kant says, and “intuitions without concepts are blind”. Thoughts are made up of concepts united in various ways. But unless those concepts are given a content through some intuition, either pure (as in geometry) or empirical (as in physics), they are “empty”—sheer rules that for all we know may apply to nothing. They provide us with no knowledge. However, merely having an intuition of space, or of blue-and-solid, provides no knowledge either. Intuitions without concepts are “blind.” To know, or to “see” the truth, we must have concepts that are applied to some matter. Kant insists on this point again and again, for we are

subject to an illusion from which it is difficult to escape. The categories are not, as regards their origin, grounded in sensibility, . . . and they seem, therefore, to allow of an application extending beyond all objects of the senses. (CPR, 266)

We have ideas of “substance,” for example, and “cause.” And it seems there is no barrier to applying them even beyond the boundaries of possible experience. In fact, nearly all previous philosophers think we can do that! Plato, for example, is convinced that reality is composed of substances (the Forms) that cannot be sensed but are purely intelligible. Descartes asks about the cause of his idea of God. One of the assumptions of traditional metaphysics is that these concepts can take us beyond the sphere of experience. But, if Kant is right, these concepts *are nothing but forms of thought, which contain the merely logical faculty of uniting a priori in*

one consciousness the manifold given in intuition; and apart, therefore, from the only intuition that is possible for us, they have even less meaning than the pure sensible forms [space and time]. (CPR, 266)

The categories, Kant claims, cannot be used apart from sensible intuitions to give us knowledge of objects. Why not? Because they are merely “forms of thought.” Compare them to mathematical functions, such as x^2 . Until some number is given as x , we have no object. If a content for x is supplied, say two or three, then an object is specified—in these cases the numbers four or nine. The categories of substance, cause, and the rest are similar. They are merely operators, the function of which is to unite “in one consciousness the manifold given in intuition.” If a certain manifold of sensations is given, our possession of the concept “substance” allows us to produce the thought of a book; a different manifold of sensations produces the thought of a printing press; and the category of “causation” allows us to think a causal relation between the two. Objects are the result of the application of the categories as operators to some sensible material.

A concept is just a formal rule for structuring some material. The material is supplied by our intuitions. Without the sensible intuitions, there are no objects. But it can seem as though there are. This is the illusion.

The categories . . . extend further than sensible intuition, since they think objects in general, without regard to the special mode (the sensibility) in which they may be given. But they do not thereby determine a greater sphere of objects.

(CPR, 271)

One common form of the illusion is the claim that we can know things as they are, apart from the way they appear to us. This is the illusion of speculative metaphysics. The illusion is reinforced because we do have the concept of things-in-themselves. Kant even gives it a name: Something as it is in itself, independent of the way it reveals itself to us, is called a noumenon. This contrasts with a phenomenon, its appearance to us. But this concept of a noumenon is not a concept with any positive meaning. Its role in our intellectual life is purely negative; it reminds us that there are things we cannot know—namely what the things affecting our sensibility are like, independent of our intuitions of them. The phenomenal world of appearance is all we can ever know.

CHAPTER FOUR- AXIOLOGY: VALUE THEORY

4.1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO AXIOLOGY

Axiology is the study or theory of value. The term *Axiology* stems from two Greek words—“*Axios*”, meaning “value, worth”, and “*logos*”, meaning “reason/ theory/ symbol / science/study of”. Hence, *Axiology* is the philosophical study of value, which originally meant the worth of something. *Axiology* asks the philosophical questions of values that deal with notions of what a person or a society regards as good or preferable, such as:

- ❖ What is a value?
- ❖ Where do values come from?

- ❖ How do we justify our values?
- ❖ How do we know what is valuable?
- ❖ What is the relationship between values and knowledge?
- ❖ What kinds of values exist?
- ❖ Can it be demonstrated that one value is better than another?
- ❖ Who benefits from values?
- ❖ Etc.

Axiology deals with the above and related issues of value in three areas, namely Ethics, Aesthetics, and Social/Political Philosophy.

4.2. Ethics- The Question of the Good

Ethics is the study of what are good and bad ends to pursue in life and what is right and wrong to do in the conduct of life. It's therefore, above all, a practical discipline. Its primary aim is to determine how one ought to live and what actions one ought to do in the conduct of one's life. (John Deigh)

It's in short the philosophical study of moral judgments – value judgments about what is virtuous or base, just or unjust, morally right or wrong, morally good or bad or evil, morally proper or improper.

What is a moral judgment? How do we distinguish it from other judgments?

Every ethical question involves a decision about what one should do in a specific instance, not with what one would do. The choices that are implicated by our decisions imply the existence of a moral judgment. Every choice, in effect, involves an assessment of worth.

In general ethics/moral philosophy is the attempt to achieve a systematic understanding of the nature of morality and how we ought to live.

4.2.1. Normative Ethics

Implies appeal to a moral standard or 'norm' in making moral judgment. It involves an attempt to determine precisely what moral standards to follow so that our actions may be morally right or good. It includes applied and general ethics.

4.2.1.1. Applied Ethics

It is the attempt to explain and justify positions on specific moral problems. It refers to the philosophical examination, from a moral standpoint, of particular problems in private and public life that are matters of moral judgment. It's called applied because the ethicist applies or uses general ethical principles in an attempt to resolve specific moral problems.

There is no consensus regarding the meaning of the term "applied ethics." Some people hold that applied ethics involves methods of enforcing ethics. Others view it as a kind of ethics that is used up over a period of time. In academic circles, however, there is an increasing tendency to view applied ethics as the large body of codes that define desirable action and are required to conduct normal human affairs. These codes may produce rules that come to be regarded as formal, legal ethics.

Every kind of ethics has been applied at one time or another. A prehistoric cave dweller, for example, who hit his wife or child with a club and afterward felt sorry and vowed to refrain from beating members of his family was developing an applied ethic. Such a rule remained in the realm of applied ethics until some prophet wrote it down or until a chieftain or legislative body adopted it as a law.

Many varieties of ethics have developed by themselves. As modern civilization developed, new applied ethics were developed for specific vocations or specific households. When Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, she helped many men and women to understand that slavery was unethical because of its effects on men, women, and children; in doing so, she introduced an applied ethic. Later, a constitutional amendment changed this applied ethic to a permanent, legal ethic.

In the United States, many professional and vocational groups have established rules for conducting business. The rules that they devised probably grew out of applied ethics. Groups endeavor to secure in their work certain rules that initially do not have the force of law but can certainly be described as applied ethics. These ethics are used as the basis for determining which rules should become rules of law.

4.2.1.2. General Normative Ethics

It is the reasoned search for principles of human conduct, including a critical study of the major theories about which things are good, which acts are right, and which are acts are blameworthy. It involves the attempt to determine exactly what moral standards to follow so that our actions may be morally right or good. General normative ethics tries to come up with and defend a system of basic ethical principle which is supposed to be valid objectively- it ensues from the common assumption that ethical actions spring from some standard. Generally speaking three broad theories of general normative ethics may be identified- Virtue ethics, Consequentialist ethics and Deontological ethics.

1- Virtue Ethics

A virtue is a state or disposition of a person. This is a reasonable intuitive claim; if someone is generous, say, then he has a character of a certain sort; he is dispositionally, that is, habitually and reliably, generous. A virtue, though, is not a habit in the sense in which habits can be mindless, sources of action in the agent that bypass her practical reasoning. A virtue is a disposition to act, not an entity built up within me and productive of behavior; it is my disposition to act in certain ways and not others. A virtue, unlike a mere habit, is a disposition to act for reasons, and so a disposition that is exercised through the agent's practical reasoning; it is built up by making choices and exercised in the making of further choices. When an honest person decides not to take something to which he is not entitled, this is not the upshot of a causal buildup from previous actions but a decision, a choice that endorses his disposition to be honest. The exercise of the agent's practical reasoning is thus essential to the way a virtue is both built

up and exercised. Because of this feature, classical virtue ethics has been criticized as being overly intellectualist (even “elitist”) on this basis.

However, the reasoning in question is just what everyone does, so it is hard to see how a theory that appeals to what is available to everyone is elitist. Different virtue theories offer us differing ways of making our reflections more theoretically sophisticated, but virtue ethics tries to improve the reasoning we all share, rather than replacing it by a different kind.

What is the role of the agent’s practical reasoning? Virtue is the disposition to do the right thing for the right reason, in the appropriate way—honestly, courageously, and so on. This involves two aspects, the affective and the intellectual.

What is the affective aspect of virtue? The agent may do the right thing and have a variety of feelings and reactions to it. he may hate doing the right thing but do it anyway; do the right thing but with conflicted feelings or with difficulty; do the right thing effortlessly and with no internal opposition. One feature of the classical version of virtue ethics is to regard doing the right thing with no contrary inclination as a mark of the virtuous person, as opposed to the merely self controlled. Mere performance of the right action still leaves open the issue of the agent’s overall attitude; virtue requires doing the right thing for the right reason without serious internal opposition, as a matter of character. This is, after all, just one implication of the thought that in an ethics of virtue it matters what kind of person you are. Of course, what it takes to develop your character in such a way that you are wholehearted about being generous, act fairly without regrets, and so on is a large matter. There is no single unified theory of our affective nature that all virtue theories share, and so there is a variety of views as to how we are to become virtuous, rather than merely doing the right thing for the right reason.

All theories in the classical tradition, however, accept and emphasize the point, familiar from common sense, that there is an important moral difference between the person who merely acts rightly and the person who is wholehearted in what he does. Some modern theories implicitly deny the importance of this distinction, without giving a reason for this. The virtuous agent, then, does the right thing, undividedly, for the right reason—he understands, that is, that this is the right thing to do. What is this understanding? In classical virtue ethics, we start our moral education by learning from others, both in making particular judgments about right and wrong, and in adopting some people as role models or teachers or following certain rules. At first, as pupils, we adopt these views because we were told to, or they seemed obvious, and we acquire a collection of moral views that are fragmented and accepted on the authority of others. For virtue ethics, the purpose of good moral education is to get the pupil to think for himself about the reasons on which he acts, and so the content of what he has been taught. Ideally, then, the learner will begin to reflect for himself on what he has accepted, will detect and deal with inconsistencies, and will try to make his judgments and practice coherent in terms of a wider understanding which enables him to unify, explain and justify the particular decisions he makes.

This is a process that requires the agent at every stage to use his mind, to think about what he is doing and to try to achieve understanding of it.

We can see this from an example. In many modern societies, the obvious models for courage are macho ones focusing on sports and war movies. A boy may grow up thinking that these are the paradigmatic contexts for courage, and have various views about courage and cowardice that presuppose this. But if he reflects about the matter, he may come to think that he is also prepared to call people in other, quite different contexts brave—a child struggling with cancer, someone standing up for an unpopular person in high school, and so on. Further reflection will show that the macho grasp of courage was inadequate, and will drive him to ask what links all these very diverse cases of bravery; this will lead him to ask what the reasons are on which brave people act, rather than to continue uncritically with the views and attitudes he initially found obvious.

The development of ethical understanding, leading the agent to develop a disposition that is a virtue, is in the classical tradition standardly taken to proceed like the acquisition of a practical skill or expertise. As Aristotle says, becoming just is like becoming a builder. With a practical skill, there is something to learn, something conveyable by teaching; the expert is the person who understands through reflection what she has been taught, and thinks for herself about it. We are familiar with the notion of practical expertise in mundane contexts like that of car repair, plumbing, and so on. In the classical tradition of virtue ethics, this is an important analogy, because ethical development displays something that we can see more clearly in these more limited contexts: There is a progress from the mechanical rule- or model-following of the learner to the greater understanding of the expert, whose responses are sensitive to the particularities of situations, as well as expressing learning and general reflection.

The skill analogy brings out two important points about ethical understanding: It requires both that you learn from others and that you come to think and understand for yourself. (The all-important progress from the learner to the expert is lost in the modern tendency to reduce all practical knowledge to ‘knowing how’, as opposed to ‘knowing that’.) Ethical reflection begins from what you have learned in your society; but it requires you to progress from that. Virtue begins from following rules or models in your social and cultural context; but it requires that you develop a disposition to decide and act that involves the kind of understanding that only you can achieve in your own case.

Virtue is like a skill in its structure. But the skill analogy, of course, has limits. One is that practical skills are devoted to achieving ends from which we can detach ourselves if we cease to want them, whereas virtue is devoted to achieving our final end, which is not in this way an end we can just cease to want. Another limit is that the development of practical understanding in a skill can be relatively independent of emotion and feeling, whereas the development of practical understanding goes along with a development in the virtuous person’s affect and response.

Some modern theorists have difficulty grasping the role of practical reasoning in the classical version of virtue ethics because it offends against a common modern dogma to the effect that reason functions only instrumentally, to fulfill whatever desires we happen to have. The issue is too large to discuss here, but it is important to notice that the classical theory of practical reasoning is a theoretical rival to this account, so that assuming it against the classical version of virtue ethics is begging the question. (One of the most interesting and fruitful modern debates in ethics is opening up the question of the tenability of the instrumentalist account.) The classical account can be shown to be empirically well supported, and this makes it easier to show that virtue ethics of the classical kind is not vulnerable to some criticisms that assume the truth of an account of practical reasoning that it rejects.

The classical account has also been criticized because of the notions of disposition and character that are central to it. Some modern theories object to making character basic to ethical discourse, as opposed to single actions; this reflects a difference between types of ethical theory that focus on actions in isolation and types that emphasize the importance of the agent's life as a whole, and, relatedly, the importance of moral education and development. Recently, virtue ethics of the classical kind has been attacked on the ground that its notion of a disposition is unrealistic. These attacks rely on some work in 'situationist' social psychology that claims that unobvious aspects of particular situations have a large role in explaining our actions. Some philosophers have claimed from this that we are not justified in thinking that people have robust character traits; for, if they did, these would explain their actions reliably and across a wide variety of types of situation, excluding this kind of influence.

However, these studies assume a notion of disposition that is defined solely in terms of frequency of actions, where the actions in question are defined with no reference to the agent's own reasons for acting. For virtue ethics, however, a virtue is a disposition to act for reasons, and claims about frequency of action are irrelevant to this, until some plausible connection is established with the agent's reasons, something none of the situationists have done.

2- Consequentialist Ethics

Traditionally many ethicists have contended that moral rightness must be determined by appeal to the consequences of an action. If the consequences are good, the act is right. If the consequences are bad, the act is wrong. Thus, a consequentialist theory measures the morality of an action on the basis of the nonmoral consequences. Consequentialists consider the ratio of good to evil that an action produces. The right action is the one that produces, will probably produce, or is intended to produce at least as great a ratio of good to evil as any other action. The wrong action is the one that does not.

For example, suppose that while driving down an almost deserted street one night, you momentarily take your eyes off the road and then strike a parked car. You stop and cautiously look around. There's no one in sight, and no house lights are on. Using a flashlight, you estimate the damage to the parked car at about \$200. You'd like to leave a note on the windshield, but you

don't have insurance or the money to pay for the damage. Besides, the parked car is a new Corvette and you assume that the owner must have insurance.

If you were a consequentialist, in determining what you should do, you'd evaluate the nonmoral consequences of the two choices. If you left a note, you would probably have to pay for the damage. That would greatly complicate your life: you'd have to work to pay off the debt, let other expenses slide, greatly reduce your luxuries, and possibly need to quit school. In contrast, if you don't leave a note, you might go unpenalized while the owner foots the bill. Of course, the owner is likely to be hopping mad, perhaps even deciding to treat other motorists spitefully. Furthermore, you may be found out; that could mean considerable trouble. This is a consequentialist analysis.

An obvious question arises here: In evaluating the nonmoral consequences of an action, whom do consequentialists have in mind? Clearly, if you evaluate the consequences just for yourself in the preceding illustration, you would likely make a different judgment than if you evaluate the consequences for the Corvette's owner. In deciding what to do, then, should we evaluate the consequences only for ourselves, or should we consider the effects on all people involved? The answers to these questions form the bases for two consequential theories namely, egoism- a consequentialist theory which contends that we should always act in a way that promotes our own best long term interests; and Utilitarianism- which claims that we should always act so as to produce the greatest possible ratio of good to evil for all concerned (the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people). Now let's touch upon the pleasure principle which is the basis for consequentialism.

Hedonism

The simplest theory of value is hedonism, which holds that only pleasure is intrinsically good and only pain intrinsically evil. Hedonism was defended in the ancient world by Epicurus and criticized by Plato and Aristotle; it was also defended by the classical utilitarians, notably Jeremy Bentham and Henry Sidgwick, and retains adherents today.

It is a simple theory because it restricts good and evil to the one dimension of felt pleasure and pain, so there is only the one intrinsic good and one intrinsic evil. Despite its simplicity, hedonism can be formulated in different ways, depending, first, on how the concept of pleasure is understood. One view identifies pleasures as sensations with an introspectible quality of pleasantness and pains as ones with the contrary quality of painfulness; this leads to a version of hedonism in which the only values are feelings with these introspectible qualities. Against this view it is sometimes objected that there are no such qualities; there is no feeling in common between, say, the pleasure of drinking beer and that of solving a crossword puzzle. But the view's defenders can reply that the quality of pleasantness is never experienced alone. Pleasurable sensations always have other introspectible qualities that make them as wholes very different, but they share the quality of pleasantness and can be ranked in pleasantness, just as we

can rank the loudness of sounds that differ radically in pitch and timbre. A rival view identifies pleasures as those sensations people want to have and to continue having just for their qualities as sensations.

Hedonism is persuasive when it says that pleasure is a good and pain an evil, but its stronger claim that these are the only intrinsic values has met with many objections. One is that hedonism can count as morally ideal a life containing only mindless pleasures and none of the higher achievements in art, science, and personal relations that are the distinctive prerogative of human beings. This objection has been raised in fiction, from the lotus-eaters of Homer's *Odyssey* to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*; it is also expressed in Robert Nozick's fantasy of an "experience machine" that, by electrically stimulating the brain, can give one the illusion and therefore the pleasure of any activity even though one is not actually engaged in it. While hedonism implies that a life spent entirely on the experience machine would be ideal, Nozick and others find it deeply impoverished. A second objection is that hedonism gives positive value to pleasures that are morally vicious. If a torturer takes sadistic pleasure in his victim's pain, hedonism says this makes the overall situation better than if the torturer were indifferent to the pain or, worse, pained by it. But surely it is compassion that is good and sadism that is bad. Those who are persuaded by these objections may adopt a rival "perfectionist" theory that values human excellences or perfections such as knowledge, difficult achievements, and moral virtue instead of or as well as pleasure.

Two psychological theses about motivation have sometimes been put forward as having particularly important, perhaps disastrous, consequences for moral philosophy. These are psychological egoism and psychological hedonism. Psychological egoism (PE) is the thesis that each person is motivated, ultimately, only by self-interest (alternatively: selfish desires). According to this theory one might on occasion do things which are in the interests of others, but in every case this will be only as a means to one's own self-interest. In such cases one can be said to desire the wellbeing of others, but only as a means to one's own well-being.

According to the psychological egoist, the only thing one desires as an end (or, for itself) is one's own self-interest. Psychological hedonism (PH) is the thesis that each person is motivated, ultimately, only by the desire for his own pleasure (understood as including the aversion to pain). One could be a psychological egoist without being a psychological hedonist, provided one had a notion of 'self-interest' that included more than just maximization of the balance of pleasure over pain for oneself (or a notion of 'selfish' that could apply to other desires than the desires to get pleasure and avoid pain for oneself). For example, such a psychological egoist might hold that success of some sort was an important ingredient in self-interest (or that the desire for success was selfish), but without thinking that success had to be regarded merely as something one desires as a means to pleasurable sensations and experiences. Hence, psychological egoism does not automatically entail psychological hedonism. On the other hand, psychological hedonism looks like it should be an instance of psychological egoism. The desire for one's own pleasure looks like a sufficiently selfish motivation to count as egoistic.

Psychological egoism and psychological hedonism are motivational, and hence psychological, theses. They are descriptive in the sense that they try to describe what it is that always motivates people. These descriptive theses are not to be confused with the following normative ethical theories:

(a) Ethical egoism: the normative ethical theory that the only feature making one's act right is its maximizing one's own self-interest (in comparison with the other acts available).

(b) Ethical hedonism: the normative ethical theory that the only feature making one's act right is its maximizing the balance of pleasure over pain for oneself (in comparison with the other acts available).

Each of the above ethical theses claims that a certain feature and only that feature can justify acting. Both theses claim to give the sole grounds relevant to the issue of how one ought to act. By contrast psychological egoism and psychological hedonism claim to describe how we actually do act and what motivates us. They say that we do act in these ways, not necessarily that we should.

Perhaps it is even too strong to say they are theories about how we do act. The psychological egoist does not have to claim that each individual will always do the act which is the most in his self-interest. It must be very rare that one is so lucky as to do just that. At best, he will say, one does the act one believes is most in his own self-interest.

But a psychological egoist doesn't even have to say that. Most psychological egoists admit that we can fail to do even what we believe to be most in our own self-interest, because of such things as weakness of will, irrationality, etc. But even in those sorts of cases, the psychological egoist will insist that all of our desires are selfish or self-interested ones, even if these do not always lead us to act in the optimally self-interested manner. Likewise a psychological hedonist doesn't have to say we will always do the act which in fact will maximize our own pleasure-over-pain balance, or even that we will always do the act we believe has this feature. But he will say that all the motivations we have are either desires for pleasure and the avoidance of pain or else are desires for the means to these things. There are no other motivations that are not reducible to these.

3- Deontological Ethics

Deontological or nonconsequentialist ethics involves the so called duty-based theories. These theories of ethics determine the goodness or otherwise of an action not on the basis of their consequences rather based on their conformity to certain rules or duties. One such theory is divine command theory.

Divine Command Theory

It is one of the deontological theories and it claims that we should always do the will of God. In other words, whatever the situation, if we do what God wills, then we do the right thing; on the contrary if we fail to do what God wills we do wrong regardless of the consequences. The sole justification for obeying God's law is that he wills it, not because it promotes our good. Under this section we shall look at the moral philosophies of St. Augustine and St. Aquinas.

St. Augustine

Every philosophical notion developed by Augustine pointed, in one way or another, to the problem of the human moral condition. For him, therefore, moral theory was not some special or isolated subject. Everything culminates in morality, which clarifies the sure road to happiness, which is the ultimate goal of human behavior. In fashioning his ideas about morality, then, Augustine brought to bear his major insights about the nature of human knowledge, nature of God, and the theory of creation. From the vantage point of these ideas, he focused on human moral constitution.

Our human moral quest is the outcome of a specific and concrete condition. The condition is that we are made in such a way that we seek happiness. Although the ancient Greeks also considered happiness to be the culmination of the good life, Augustine's theory provided a novel estimate of what constitutes true happiness and just how it can be achieved. Other philosophers also held that happiness is our aim in life, such as Aristotle, who said that happiness is achieved when people fulfill their natural functions through a well-balanced life. Augustine, though, held that true happiness requires that we go beyond the natural to the supernatural. He expressed this view in both religious and philosophical language. In his Confessions he writes, "Oh God You have created us for

Yourself so that our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You." In more philosophical language he makes this same point by saying that human nature is so made that "it cannot itself be the good by which it is made happy." There is, in short, no purely "natural" person. The reason there is no purely natural person, Augustine says, is that nature did not produce people; God did. Consequently, human nature always bears the mark of its creation, which means, among other things, that there are some permanent relations between people and God. It is not by accident that we seek happiness, but rather is a consequence of our incompleteness and finitude. It is no accident that we can find happiness only in God, since we were made by God to find happiness only in God. Augustine elaborates on this aspect of human nature through the theory of love.

The Role of Love

According to Augustine, we inevitably love. To love is to go beyond ourselves and to fasten our affection on an object of love. It is again our incompleteness that prompts us to love. There is a wide range of objects that we can choose to love, reflecting the variety of ways in which we are incomplete. We can love (1) physical objects, (2) other persons, or even (3) ourselves. All of

these things will provide us with some measure of satisfaction and happiness. Further, in some sense, all of these things are legitimate objects of love since nothing is evil in itself—as we’ve seen, evil is not a positive thing but the absence of something. Our moral problem consists not so much in loving or even in the objects of our love. The real issue is the manner in which we attach ourselves to these objects of love and our expectations regarding the outcome of this love. Everyone expects to achieve happiness and fulfillment from love, yet we are miserable, unhappy, and restless. Why? Augustine lays the blame on “disordered” love—that is, the fact that we love specific things more than we should and, at the same time, fail to devote our ultimate love to God.

Evil and Disordered Love: Augustine believed that we have different human needs that prompt different acts of love. There is in fact some sort of correlation between various human needs and the objects that can satisfy them. Love is the act that harmonizes these needs and their objects. In addition to the worldly needs that prompt our love of objects, other people, and ourselves, we also have a spiritual need that should prompt our love of God. Augustine formulates this point in somewhat quantitative terms. Each object of love can give only so much satisfaction and no more. Each of the person’s needs likewise has a measurable quantity. Clearly, satisfaction and happiness require that an object of love contain a sufficient amount of whatever it takes to fulfill or satisfy the particular need. Thus, we love food and we consume a quantity proportionate to our hunger. But our needs are not all physical in that primary sense. We love objects of art too for the aesthetic satisfaction that they give. At a higher level we have the need for love between persons. Indeed, this level of affection provides quantitatively and qualitatively more in the way of pleasure and happiness than love of mere physical things can. From this it becomes clear that certain human needs cannot be met by an interchange of objects. For example, our deep need for human companionship cannot be met in any other way than by a relationship with another person. Things can’t be a substitute for a person because things do not contain within themselves the unique ingredients of a human personality.

Accordingly, although each thing is a legitimate object of love, we must not expect more from it than its unique nature can provide. But this is particularly the case with our spiritual need. People were made, says Augustine, to love God, and God is infinite. In some way, then, we were made so that only God, the infinite, can give us ultimate satisfaction or happiness. “When,” says Augustine, “the will which is the intermediate good, cleaves to the immutable good . . . people find therein the blessed life,” for “to live well is nothing else but to love God.” To love God, then, is the indispensable requirement for happiness, because only God, who is infinite, can satisfy that peculiar need in us that is precisely the need for the infinite. If objects are not interchangeable—if, for example, things cannot substitute for a person—neither can any finite thing or person substitute for God. Yet we all confidently expect that we can achieve true happiness by confining our love to objects, other people, and ourselves. While these are all legitimate objects of love in a limited way, our love of them is disordered when we love them for the sake of ultimate happiness. Disordered love consists in expecting more from an object of love

than it is capable of providing, and this produces all kinds of pathology in human behavior. Normal self-love becomes pride, and pride is the cardinal sin that affects all aspects of our conduct. The essence of pride is the assumption of self-sufficiency.

Yet the permanent fact about human nature is precisely that we are not self-sufficient, neither physically, emotionally, nor spiritually. Our pride, which turns us away from God, leads us to many forms of overindulgence, since we try to satisfy an infinite need with finite entities. We therefore love things more than we should in relation to what they can do for themselves. Our love for another person can become virtually destructive of the other person, since we try again to derive from that relationship more than it can possibly give. Appetites flourish, passions multiply, and there is a desperate attempt to achieve peace by satisfying all desires. We become seriously disordered and then exhibit envy, greed, jealousy, trickery, panic, and a pervading restlessness. It does not take long for disordered love to produce a disordered person, and disordered people produce a disordered community. No attempt to reconstruct an orderly, peaceful community or household is possible without reconstructing each human being. The rigorous and persistent fact is that personal reconstruction and salvation are possible only by reordering love, that is, by loving the proper things properly. Indeed, Augustine argued that we can love a person properly only if we love God first, for then we will not expect to derive from human love what can be derived only from our love of God. Similarly, we can love ourselves properly only as we subordinate ourselves to God, for there is no other way to overcome the destructive consequences of pride than by eliminating pride itself.

Free Will as the Cause of Evil

Augustine did not agree with Plato that the cause of evil is simply ignorance. There are indeed some circumstances in which we do not know the ultimate good, and thus are not aware of God. Still, Augustine says that “even the ungodly” have the capacity to “blame and rightly praise things in the conduct of people.” The overriding fact is that in daily conduct we understand praise and blame only because we already understand that we have an obligation to do what is praiseworthy and to abstain from what is blameworthy. Under these circumstances our predicament is not that we are ignorant but that we stand in the presence of alternatives. We must choose to turn toward God or away from God. We are, in short, free. Whichever way we choose, it is with the hope of finding happiness. We are capable of directing our affections exclusively toward finite things, other people, or ourselves, and thereby away from God. Augustine says that “this turning away and this turning to are not forced but voluntary acts.”

According to Augustine, evil, or sin, is a product of the will. It is not, as Plato said, ignorance, nor, as the Manichaeans said, the work of the principle of darkness permeating the body. In spite of the fact of original sin, we still possess freedom of the will. This freedom (*liberum*) of the will is not, however, the same as spiritual freedom (*libertas*), for true spiritual liberty is no longer possible in its fullness in this life. We now use free will to choose wrongly. But, Augustine argues, even when we choose rightly, we do not possess the spiritual power to do the good we

have chosen. We must have the help of God's grace. Whereas evil is caused by an act of free will, virtue is the product not of our will but of God's grace. The moral law tells us what we must do, but in the end it really shows us what we can't do on our own. Hence, Augustine concludes that "the law was . . . given that grace might be sought; grace was given that the law might be fulfilled."

ST. Thomas Aquinas

To treat the moral theory of St. Thomas in detail would be impracticable here, but a discussion of some important points may help to show its relation to the Aristotelian ethic.

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle argues that every agent acts for an end and that the human agent acts for happiness, with a view to the acquisition of happiness. Happiness, he says, must consist in an activity, primarily in the activity which perfects the highest faculty in man directed to the highest and noblest objects. He comes to the conclusion, therefore, that human happiness consists primarily in *theoria*, in contemplation of the highest objects, chiefly in the contemplation of the unmoved Mover, God, though he held that the enjoyment of other goods, such as friendship and, in moderation, external goods, is necessary to perfect happiness.¹ Aristotle's ethic was thus eudaemonistic in character, teleological, and markedly intellectualist, since it is clear that for him contemplation meant philosophical contemplation: he was not referring to a religious phenomenon, such as the ecstasy of Plotinus. Moreover, the end (*telos*) of moral activity is an end to be acquired in this life: as far as the ethics of Aristotle are concerned there is no hint of any vision of God in the next life, and it is indeed questionable whether he believed in personal immortality at all. Aristotle's truly happy man is the philosopher, not the saint.

Now, St. Thomas adopted a similar eudaemonological and teleological standpoint, and his theory of the end of human conduct is in some respects intellectualist; but a change of emphasis soon becomes visible which marks a very considerable difference between his ethical theory and that of Aristotle. The only acts of man which fall properly within the moral sphere are free acts, acts which proceed from man precisely as man, as a rational and free being. These human acts (*actiones humanae*, as distinguished from *actiones hominis*) proceed from man's will, and the object of the will is the good (*bonum*).

It is the prerogative of man to act for an end which he has apprehended, and every human act is performed for an apprehended end; but the particular end or good, for the attainment of which a particular human act is performed, does not and cannot fully perfect and satisfy the human will, which is set towards the universal good and can find its satisfaction only in the attainment of the universal good. What is the universal good in the concrete? It cannot consist in riches, for example, for riches are simply a means to an end, whereas the universal good is necessarily the final end and cannot be itself a means to a further end. It cannot consist in sensible pleasure, since this perfects only the body, not the whole man; nor can it consist in power, which does not perfect the whole man or satisfy the will completely and which, moreover, can be abused,

whereas it is inconceivable that the ultimate and universal good can be abused or employed for an unworthy or evil purpose. It cannot consist even in consideration of the speculative sciences, since philosophic speculation certainly does not satisfy completely the human intellect and will.

Our natural knowledge is drawn from sense-experience; yet man aspires to knowledge of the ultimate cause as it is in itself, and this cannot be acquired by metaphysics. Aristotle may have said that the good of man consists in the consideration of the speculative sciences, but he was speaking of imperfect happiness, such as is attainable in this life. Perfect happiness, the ultimate end, is not to be found in any created thing, but only in God, who is Himself the supreme and infinite Good. God is the universal good in the concrete, and though He is the end of all things, of both rational and irrational creatures, it is only rational creatures who can attain this final good by way of knowledge and love: it is only rational creatures who can attain the vision of God in which alone perfect happiness lies. In this life man can know that God exists and he can attain an imperfect and analogical notion of God's nature, but it is only in the next life that he can know God as He is in Himself and no other end can fully satisfy man.

Aristotle, says St. Thomas, was speaking of imperfect happiness such as is attainable in this life; but Aristotle, as I have already mentioned, says nothing in the Ethics of any other happiness. His ethic was an ethic of human conduct in this life, whereas St. Thomas has not proceeded far before he has brought in consideration of the perfect happiness attainable only in the next life, this happiness consisting principally in the vision of God, though it also includes, of course, satisfaction of the will, while other goods, such as the society of friends, contribute to the *bonum esse* of beatitude, though no good save God is necessary for happiness. At once, therefore, St. Thomas's moral theory is seen to move on a different plane from that of Aristotle, since however much St. Thomas may use Aristotle's language, the introduction of the next life and of the vision of God into moral theory is foreign to the thought of Aristotle. What Aristotle calls happiness, St. Thomas calls imperfect happiness or temporal happiness or happiness as attainable in this life, and this imperfect happiness he regards as ordered to perfect happiness, which is attainable only in the next life and consists principally in the vision of God.

Moral Constitution

As we said earlier Aquinas built upon Aristotle's theory of ethics. Like Aristotle he considered ethics a quest for happiness. Moreover, following Aristotle's lead, Aquinas argued that happiness is connected closely with our end or purpose. To achieve happiness we must fulfill our purpose. But whereas Aristotle envisioned a naturalistic morality whereby people could achieve virtue and happiness by fulfilling their natural capacities or end, Aquinas added to this his concept of a person's supernatural end. As a Christian, Aquinas viewed human nature as having both its source and ultimate end in God. For this reason human nature does not contain its own standards of fulfillment. It is not enough for us simply to be human and to exercise our natural functions and abilities in order to achieve perfect happiness. Aristotle thought such a naturalistic ethics was possible. Aquinas agreed with most of this claim, adding only that the Aristotelian ethics is

incomplete. Aquinas therefore argued that there is a dual level to morality corresponding to our natural end and to our supernatural end.

The ingredients of our moral experience are provided by human nature. For one thing, the fact that we have bodies inclines us to certain kinds of acts. Our senses become the vehicle for appetites and passions. Our senses also provide a certain level of knowledge about sensible objects so that we are attracted to some objects, which we perceive as pleasurable and good (concupiscent appetite), and repelled by other objects, which we perceive as harmful, painful, or bad (irascible appetite). This attraction and rejection are the rudiments of our capacity for love and pleasure, and hate and fear.

In animals these irascible and concupiscent appetites immediately control and direct behavior. In a person, however, the will, in collaboration with the power of reason, consummates the human act. The will is the agency that inclines a person toward the achievement of good. That is, our full range of appetites seeks to be satisfied, and the process of satisfaction requires that we make choices between alternative objects. We must make this choice by our wills under the direction of reason. If we make right choices, then we achieve happiness. But not every choice is a correct one. For this reason the will by itself cannot always make the right move; the intellect must be the guide. Nor is the intellect the final source of knowledge, for our supernatural end requires God's grace and revealed truth. Still, the will represents our appetite for the good and right, whereas the intellect has the function and capacity for apprehending the general or universal meaning of what is good. The intellect is our highest faculty, and a natural end requires that the intellect, as well as all the other faculties, seek its appropriate object. The appropriate object of the intellect is truth, and truth in its fullness is God. When the intellect directs the will, then, it helps the will to choose the good. The intellect knows, however, that there is a hierarchy of goods and that some goods are limited and must not be mistaken for our most appropriate and ultimate good. Riches, pleasure, power, and knowledge are all goods and are legitimate objects of the appetites, but they cannot produce our deepest happiness because they do not possess the character of the universal good that our souls seek. The perfect happiness is found not in created things but in God, who is the supreme good.

Moral constitution consists, then, of sensuality, appetites, the will, and reason. What confers on a person the attributes of morality is that these elements are the ingredients of free acts. If I am moved to act by my appetites in a mechanical or rigorously determined way, then my acts will not be free and cannot be considered from a moral point of view. Not only is freedom a prerequisite for an act to be considered moral, but Aquinas adds that an act is human only if it is free. For freedom is possible only where there is knowledge of alternatives and the power of will to make choices. Virtue, or goodness, consists in making the right choices, the mean between extremes. Aquinas agreed with Aristotle that the virtues of the natural person are achieved when the appetites are duly controlled by the will and reason. The dominant or "cardinal" natural virtues are courage, temperance, justice, and prudence. In addition to these particular virtues, our natural end is further realized through our knowledge of the natural law, that is, the moral law.

Natural Law

Morality, as Aquinas viewed it, is not an arbitrary set of rules for behavior. Rather, the basis of moral obligation is found, first of all, in human nature itself. Built into our nature are various inclinations, such as the preservation of life, the propagation of species, and, because people are rational, the inclination toward the search for truth. The basic moral truth is simply to “do good and avoid evil.” As rational beings, then, we are under a basic natural obligation to protect our lives and health, in which case suicide and carelessness are wrong. Second, the natural inclination to propagate the species forms the basis of the union of wife and husband, and any other basis for this relation would be wrong. And third, because we seek for truth, we can do this best by living in peace in society with all others who are also engaged in this quest. To ensure an ordered society, human laws are fashioned for the direction of the community’s behavior. These activities of preserving life, propagating the species, forming an ordered society under human laws, and pursuing the quest for truth—all these, again, pertain to us at our natural level. The moral law is founded upon human nature, upon the natural inclinations toward specific types of behavior, and upon the reason’s ability to discern the right course of conduct. Because human nature has certain fixed features, the rules for behavior that correspond to these features are called natural law.

Aristotle already developed much of this theory of natural law. In his *Ethics* Aristotle distinguished between natural justice and conventional justice. Some forms of behavior, he said, are wrong only after a law has been made to regulate such behavior. It is wrong, for example, to drive a vehicle at certain speeds only because a speed limit has been set, but there is nothing in nature that requires that vehicles travel at that speed. Such a law is, therefore, not natural but conventional, because before the law was passed, there was nothing wrong with traveling at speeds exceeding the new limit. On the other hand, there are some laws that are derived from nature, so that the behavior they regulate has always been wrong, as in the case of murder. But Aquinas did not limit his treatment of natural law to the simple notion that in some way human reason is able to discover the natural basis for human conduct. Instead, he reasoned that if human existence and nature can be fully understood only when seen in relation to God, then natural law must be described in metaphysical and theological terms, as the Stoics and Augustine had done.

Law, Aquinas says, has to do primarily with reason. Human reason is the standard of our actions because it belongs to reason to direct our whole activity toward our end. Law consists of these rules and measures of human acts and therefore is based on reason. But Aquinas argues that since God created all things, human nature and the natural law are best understood as the product of God’s wisdom or reason. From this standpoint Aquinas distinguishes between four kinds of law.

Eternal Law:- This law refers to the fact that “the whole community of the universe is governed by Divine Reason. Because of this, the very notion of the government of things in God the Ruler

of the universe, has the nature of a law. And since the Divine Reason's conception of things is not subject to time but is eternal . . . therefore it is that this kind of law must be called eternal."

Natural Law:- For Aquinas natural law consists of that portion of the eternal law that pertains particularly to people. His reasoning is that "all things share somewhat of the eternal law . . . from its being imprinted on them" and from this all things "derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends." This is particularly true of people, because our rational capacity "has a share of the Eternal Reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end." And, Aquinas says, "this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law," and again, "the natural law is nothing else than the rational creature's participation in the eternal law." We have already noted the basic precepts of the natural law as being the preservation of life, propagation and education of offspring, and pursuit of truth and a peaceful society. Thus the natural law consists of broad general principles that reflect God's intentions for people in creation.

Human Law:- This refers to the specific statutes of governments. These statutes or human laws are derived from the general precepts of natural law. Just as "we draw conclusions of the various sciences" from "naturally known indemonstrable principles," so also "from the precepts of the natural law . . . human reason needs to proceed to the more particular determination of certain matters." And "these particular determinations, devised by human reason, are called human laws." What was so far-reaching about this conception of human law was that it repudiated the notion that a law is a law only because it is decreed by a sovereign. Aquinas argued that what gives a rule the character of law is its moral dimension, its conformity with the precepts of natural law, and its agreement with the moral law. Taking Augustine's formula, namely, that "that which is not just seems to be no law at all," Aquinas said that "every human law has just so much of the nature of law, as it is derived from the law of nature." But, he adds, "if in any point it defl ects from the law of nature, it is no longer a law but a perversion of law." Such laws no longer bind in conscience but are sometimes obeyed to prevent an even greater evil. Aquinas went further than simply denying the character of human law that violated the natural moral law; such a command, he said, should not be obeyed. Some laws, he said, "may be unjust through being opposed to the Divine Good: such are the laws of tyrants inducing to idolatry, or to anything else contrary to the Divine Law." He concluded that "laws of this kind must nowise be observed, because . . . we ought to obey God rather than human beings" (emphasis added).

Divine Law:- The function of law, Aquinas said, is to direct people to their proper end. Since we are ordained to an end of eternal happiness, in addition to our temporal happiness, there must be a kind of law that can direct us to that supernatural end. Here, in particular, Aquinas parted company with Aristotle, for Aristotle knew only about our natural purpose and end, and for this purpose the natural law known by human reason was considered a sufficient guide. But the eternal happiness to which people are ordained, said Aquinas, is "in proportion to a person's natural faculty." Therefore, "it was necessary that besides the natural and the human law, people should be directed to their end by a law given by God." The divine law, then, is available to us

through revelation and is found in the Scriptures. It is not the product of human reason but is given to us through God's grace to ensure that we all know what we must do to fulfill both our natural and, especially, our supernatural ends. The difference between the natural law and divine law is this: The natural law represents our rational knowledge of the good by which the intellect directs our wills to control our appetites and passions. This, in turn, leads us to fulfill our natural end by achieving the cardinal virtues of justice, temperance, courage, and prudence. The divine law, on the other hand, comes directly from God through revelation and is a gift of God's grace. Through this we are directed to our supernatural ends and obtain the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. These virtues are infused into human nature by God's grace and are not the result of our natural abilities. In this way Aquinas both completed and surpassed the naturalistic ethics of Aristotle. He showed how the natural human desire to know God can be assured and how revelation becomes the guide for reason. He also described the manner in which our highest nature is perfected through God's grace.

4.2.2. Non-normative Ethics

It consists of either a factual investigation of moral behavior or an analysis of the meaning of the terms used in moral discourse and an examination of the moral reasoning by which moral beliefs can be shown to be true or false. It comprises of two subfields: scientific or descriptive and meta-ethics.

- 1- **Scientific/Descriptive Ethics**-refers to the factual investigation of moral behavior. It's concerned with how people actually behave. The report on how moral attitudes and codes differ from society to society, investigating and describing the values and behaviours of different societies.

This description of a marked difference in societies' values and in their conceptions of right and wrong has led many to advance the doctrine of ethical relativism.

- 2- **Meta-Ethics**- is the investigation of the meaning of ethical terms, including a critical study of how ethical statements can be verified.

Meta-ethical theories are meant to explain moral psychology, moral reality, and moral reason. Moral psychology considers the actual moral judgments, moral interests, and moral motivation people experience. Moral reality refers to the nature behind true moral statements—what makes our statements true. Moral reason describes our moral knowledge and how we can decide which moral beliefs are best or “most likely true.” Moral realists believe that there are moral facts (moral elements of reality) and they are often optimistic about how well we can understand such facts, but moral anti-realists reject moral realism and don't think we need moral facts to understand morality. I will briefly discuss three meta-ethical theories, two of which are forms of moral realism and one that is a form of moral anti-realism: Moral naturalism and moral intuitionism are both forms of moral realism; noncognitivism/emotivism is a form of moral antirealism. There are many forms of each of these theories, but I will concentrate on one version of each theory.

4.3. Aesthetics- The Question of Art

Unlike most other academic disciplines, philosophy is not confined to a specific subject matter. History concerns the past, biology concerns organisms, and education studies concern learning. In principle, it is possible to do the philosophy of X, where you may substitute anything you please for X. In practice, however, philosophers conserve their energies for topics of some importance. Philosophy of art, also called aesthetics, illustrates this process in two ways.

First, artistic achievement is a life goal for some people, and almost everyone values listening and dancing to music, reading stories, and looking at images. The value of art is obvious, but it is also puzzling. The point can be put abstractly: What sense could intelligent beings inhabiting an art-free environment make of our art? What could you tell them about the value of dancing, for example? The point also has a practical side: Why should public resources belonging either to the state or to private foundations be used to support the arts, especially when other needs are pressing? Puzzlement about art is one reason to do philosophy of art, and you may wish to study the subject because you care about art.

Second, art interests philosophers because philosophical questions about art connect to all the central areas of philosophy. Here is a sample. What is art (metaphysics)? What makes some art good (value theory)? How can we judge art good or bad (epistemology)? How is it possible to tell stories about things that do not exist (philosophy of language)? What is creativity (philosophy of mind)? Doing philosophy of art is one way of doing philosophy. You may be surprised to learn that some philosophers of art are not great art lovers, and you may wish to study aesthetics only because you are interested in some of the toughest problems in philosophy.

What Is Art?

This question is the first a philosopher of art might think to pose. After all, a prudent first step in any inquiry is to fix upon what you want to understand, keeping in mind that what you decide will have an impact on how you answer other questions. The task for the philosopher of art is especially tricky because art and ideas about art have changed rapidly and radically during the past century.

What is art? is not merely a philosopher's question. It arises for every gallery visitor and every pop music fan. At one time, art—or fine art—referred to the sorts of pictures housed in art galleries, music performed in concert halls, and novels found in the literature department of the bookstore. During the past forty years, philosophers have embraced a more expansive conception of art, one that includes children's drawings, popular music, pulp fiction, B movies, and vernacular architecture. These items all fall within the extension of art—the class of things the term art picks out. Presumably philosophers and others noticed that comic books and television shows have certain features that qualify them as art.

One possibility is that these features define art. A definition is a statement of the features that are necessary and sufficient for anything to be art. A piece of writing, for instance, is art only if it has these features, and if it has the features, then it is art. Philosophers have devised several definitions of art. Plato thought that art is the imitation of objects and actions. Tolstoy thought

that art is the expression of feelings that bind a community or culture. Clive Bell, an important early theorist of painting, thought that visual artworks express a special “aesthetic emotion” through arrangements of shapes and colors. None of these ideas is very convincing. Not all art is imitation (e.g., most instrumental music), and not every imitation is art. Not all art is expressive (e.g., Mondrian’s grid paintings), and many expressions of feeling are not artistic. Still, you may suspect that art must have something to do with imitation and expression. Sharing this hunch, some philosophers reject the assumption that the answer to the question What is art? should take the form of a definition (a statement of necessary and sufficient conditions for being art). Art is a cluster of items. Nothing is common to all works of art and nothing separates all art from all nonart. Some are imitative and not expressive; others are expressive and not imitative.

4.4. Social and Political Philosophy-

Social and political philosophy may appear to overlap at times with the social sciences, such as sociology and political science, but its task is really a different one. The social-political philosopher is not concerned with descriptive or empirical questions (we might call these “surface” questions), but with normative questions, or questions of value: What is the public good? How should it be implemented? What is the basis for talk of rights and justice?

It is hardly possible to examine all of even the most relevant social- political theories. To be sure, in the next chapter we will look fairly carefully at democracy and the issues and perspectives that bear most importantly on our own contemporary situation. Following that we will raise the more general but fundamental idea of justice. For the moment, though, we will look at liberalism, not only because of intrinsic interest but also because of the way it sets the stage for subsequent developments.

THE LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE: LOCKE

When you see the word “liberal” you may think of something leftish or socialistic—something opposite to “conservative.” In our present context, however, the word refers to a general social-political theory that, indeed, underlies our whole social and political system, including both liberals and conservatives. We might better call it classical liberalism. The heart of liberalism in this sense is evident from the word itself. “Liberalism” comes from the Latin *libertas*, “liberty” or “freedom.” It insists on the freedom of the individual: both freedom from undue external and governmental controls, and freedom to pursue individual interests.

Classical liberalism may also be called individualism, inasmuch as it affirms the individual over the state, which is seen not as the master but as the servant of the individual, and as the guarantor of the individual’s interests and rights. The primary moving force of the classical liberal perspective was the English philosopher John Locke, who, as we saw in Chapter 3, was also one of the founders of modern empiricism. Several ideas are basic to an understanding of Locke’s social-political theory.

First, like many who preceded him, Locke believed that all private and public good is based on the natural law that immediately displays fundamental rights and liberties. As with St. Thomas, the real foundation of the natural law is God. And, as with St. Thomas, this natural and divine law is “plain and intelligible to all rational creatures”—at least to as many who will take the time and trouble. (Locke’s idea of natural law was no more a contradiction to his empiricism than was St. Thomas’ idea a contradiction to his empiricism. Knowledge, natural law, and all other ideas as well result from reflection on experience.)

Next is Locke’s idea of the state of nature. Others before him had stressed the state of nature as the only adequate starting point for the development of a system of social and political life. For we must seek to understand what the human situation really is, before this becomes possibly confused or distorted by the imposition of the rules and regulations of civil government. For example, it was very important for Locke, in his time, to question and challenge the prevailing notion of the divine right of kings—that monarchs are established by God, and that all others are, therefore, by nature subservient to them. Locke asks whether this is justified by an analysis of humanity in its natural state. And he answers with a resounding No! The natural state is governed by natural law, and natural law legislates freedom, equality, and therefore inherent rights for all.

The theoretical state of nature is, thus, very important. But it is only theoretical. In spite of its advantages of freedom and equality, we do not, nor can we, actually live in such a state, at least not for long. In the selection below, Locke tells us why. For one thing, most people do not pay sufficient attention to the rational dictates of natural law, and even if they did, their selfish concerns would prevent an unbiased application of it. Second, in such a state there would be no way of judging or arbitrating between the differences that would inevitably arise. And even so, third, no such judgment would have backing or authority so that it could be meaningfully enforced. Locke mentions these specific problems, but you can easily imagine others that would make life in a state of nature impossible from a practical standpoint. The conclusion: Men are quickly driven into society.

Enter the idea of the social contract. As you know, any contract involves giving up something and getting something in return. A social contract is an agreement between members of a society according to which each forfeits certain rights and privileges in order to preserve others. Thus I see that it is much to my advantage to submit myself to government, to obey laws, and so on, if thereby I can secure my fundamental freedoms and rights, and especially if I, as one of the contractors, have a say, either directly (pure democracy) or indirectly (as in representative democracy), in the character of that government, its law, and the like.

It is important to see that the order of (1) state of nature and (2) social contract is a logical rather than a historical order. How many of us have ever actually lived in a state of nature? Do we not,

rather, just find ourselves already members of some social system? No matter. That does not undermine the idea of the social contract, for as long as we remain in such a system (however we got there) we give tacit consent, says Locke, to that system. That is, the social contract is not necessarily something that is drawn up “once upon a time,” but rather all the time: By their participation in the system, the members continually consent to, agree to, and support the contract.

LIBERALISM AND CAPITALISM

Classical liberalism means many different kinds of freedom. One of these is economic freedom, the freedom of the individual, either alone or (as with corporations) in union with others, to own the means of production (land, tools, factories, etc.) and to produce and sell goods for a profit. This is capitalism. That Locke himself saw this as a legitimate aspect of his liberal and individualistic vision is clear from the recurring references to “property” in the quotation from his Second Treatise, as in the inherent right of the individual “to preserve himself, his liberty and property”.

One could argue, in fact, that Locke regarded the right of property as the most important of natural rights. Certainly he has already told us that it is primarily out of interest in personal property that people enter into social contracts in the first place: “The great and chief end, therefore, of men’s uniting into common-wealths, and putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property.”

However, it was after the time of Locke, during the period of the Industrial Revolution, that this economic implication of liberalism became most clearly focused. More specifically, it was the Scottish writer Adam Smith (1723–1790) who, in his *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, gave decisive expression to the rights of the individual in a free marketplace—that is, capitalism. Smith’s watchword was *laissez faire*, French for “let it alone,” and often rendered as “hands off!” But it must be stressed that Smith and the *laissez faire* economists were not advocating the principle of allow-the individual-complete-liberty-in commerce-and-let-the-rest-be-damned. They believed—and is not the idea still believed?—that a *laissez faire* approach to economics would provide the best for everyone. The mechanisms involved in supply and demand and free enterprise make for an efficient and satisfying arrangement for all concerned: owner, merchant, worker, consumer. So, even though Smith advocated a hands-off economy, he believed in an “invisible hand,” or the mechanisms we just spoke of, such that whatever the capitalist’s own intention might be, the interest and good of a capitalist society as a whole would be promoted.

A RADICAL RESPONSE: MARX

If the perspectives we are considering in this part of the book seek to address actual, practical, social, and political life, then Marxism takes the prize. Perhaps no philosophy has had more of a

direct impact on the social and political existence of untold numbers of people than that introduced by the German thinker and social theorist Karl Marx (1818–1883). By its nature, the Marxist program presses for change—radical and revolutionary change.

It is often the case that we must look for the roots of a philosophy in some earlier philosophy. In some important ways, the roots of Marxism lie in the German idealist thinker G. W. F. Hegel⁷ (1770–1831). Hegel’s philosophy is an enormous intellectual monument, but a few basic points will suffice for the moment. First, Hegel was an objective idealist. As you recall objective idealist believes that reality is “idea-istic” or spiritual in nature, but that it exists objectively or independently of us, “out there.” Hegel himself believed in this way that reality was spirit, but, second, that this spiritual reality is constantly on the move, changing, advancing, and actualizing the ultimate state that he called Absolute Spirit, otherwise represented as the complete consciousness and freedom of reality. Finally, the mechanism by which this historical-spiritual process is achieved is called dialectic. In this context, “dialectic” means the give-and-take between opposite states resulting in always-emerging higher unities. More technically, this process is represented as the synthesis (or unity) of thesis and antithesis (opposite states), a process going on constantly in all spheres of existence, and where, at any moment, a synthesis of opposites becomes itself an opposite to be synthesized with another.

What can this superspeculative and abstract conception have to do with the superpractical and down-to-earth concerns of Marxism? How does Hegel’s process of the historical dialectic bear on Marx’s political theory?

Marx took over the idea of the historical dialectic, but under the influence of another German philosopher, Feuerbach, gave it a materialistic twist. The result was dialectical materialism. This phrase was never used by Marx himself. Nevertheless, it serves well enough to suggest the character of the philosophical principles underlying his whole social and political program: Reality is matter, and its concrete expression and development are governed by the dialectic of history. But this is given a further twist when Marx focuses more specifically on matter as it reveals itself in economics, which, as you know, concerns money, but more accurately concerns the principles of production, distribution, and use of wealth and products. And now we are in a position to say what Marx’s real concern was. It was to aid and abet the class warfare that is the social and economic expression of the historical dialectic: to achieve—even through revolutionary tactics—a classless society in which private ownership of the means of production (tools, factories, and so forth) would be abolished and wealth would be equitably distributed. This, of course, is communism, the social and economic and political expression of dialectical materialism. So far, all ideas and theories. What really propelled Marx were two facts that stood in stark and dismal contradiction. First, Marx was a humanist. His exalted view of humanity included a belief in the innate goodness of persons, their perfectability, and their powers of self-realization. But, second, this is overpowered and thwarted by their actual social and economic

condition. It must be remembered that Marx lived when the Industrial Revolution was playing right into the hands of capitalism. It was a time when increased and frantic production meant the enslavement of the working class (Marx called it the proletariat) to the owning class (the bourgeoisie); and it meant the degradation of the working class through, for instance, squalid working conditions, child labor, and a wage wholly determined by the owners. In a word—and this is a most important word in Marxism—it meant alienation.

“Alienation” means separation or estrangement. By alienation Marx intended considerably more than just the bitter estrangement of the workers from their capitalist superiors. In his Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts Marx explains the different kinds of alienation spawned by capitalist controlled labor: Workers become alienated (1) from the objects they produce, (2) from themselves, (3) from their human nature, and (4) from their fellows. It is important to understand these four forms of alienation and to see exactly how labor, as Marx knew it, results in them

Marxism has undergone many changes, most notably through Marx’s contemporary and compatriot Friedrich Engels and, later, the Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. But Marxism in any form begins with the contradiction Marx saw between a high estimation of the human being and the actual repressive and alienating conditions inflicted on the working classes, and it seeks, through varying levels of revolutionary force, to transcend the contradiction by means of communism. Its battle cry has been:

*WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR CHAINS!*

Chapter Five- LOGIC: HOW TO DO PHILOSOPHY

5.1. Arguments: Validity and Strength

When you see the word “argument” you might think of disagreements or quarrels, often accompanied by shouting, clenched fists, tears, and the like. Well, an argument might or might not involve these things. Consider the following interchange:

A: Capital punishment is immoral.

B: No it isn’t!

A: Yes it is!

B: Well, what do you know about it?!

A: I know more about it than you do!

B: Oh yeah? You’re an idiot!

There is plenty of disagreement and lots of noise here but no argument. An argument is an attempt to show that something is true by providing evidence for it. More technically, it is a group of statements in which one is said to follow from at least one other. The statement that follows from the others—that is, the “something to be shown”—is called the conclusion; the statements from which the conclusion follows—that is, the evidence—are called premises. Thus we have the argument

It is immoral to kill persons.

Capital punishment is the killing of persons.

Therefore, capital punishment is immoral.

in which the first two statements are the premises of the argument and the third is the conclusion. Naturally, in an argument not just any old statements can serve as premises and conclusion, as in

In fourteen hundred and ninety- two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue. Switzerland exports many cuckoo- clocks. Therefore, capital punishment is immoral.

but there must be some connection between them. This connection, by which the conclusion is said “to follow” from the premises, is called an inference, or, more technically, an entailment.

In ordinary discourse, arguments may be presented in a variety of ways. Usually, though, there are certain words or expressions that introduce premises and other words that introduce conclusions. We list here just a few of them:

Premise signals: Since, because, for, as, inasmuch as, otherwise, in view of the fact that, for the reason that.

Conclusion signals: Therefore, thus, accordingly, we may infer, which shows that, points to the conclusion that, as a result

What is the nature of the connection between premises and conclusion— the inference—that results in arguments? Here the important distinction between deductive and inductive arguments comes into play. It is sometimes said that deductive arguments reason from the whole to the part, or from the general to the specific, as in

All humans are mortal.

Socrates is a human.

Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

whereas inductive arguments reason from the part to the whole, or from the specific to the general, as in

Socrates is mortal.

Plato is mortal.

Aristotle is mortal.

Vivaldi is mortal.

Tim is mortal.

·Therefore, all humans are mortal.]

While this is certainly true of some deductive and inductive arguments, it fails to express their real nature. What is more important, again, is the kind of connection that exists between premises and conclusion in deductive and inductive arguments. In a valid deductive argument the premises ensure, or guarantee, the conclusion: If the premises are true, the conclusion must be true also. It is a matter of necessity. In a good inductive argument, on the other hand, the premises suggest the conclusion (“to induce” means “to influence” or “to persuade”): If the premises are true, the conclusion is probably true. It is a matter of probability.

Let us consider deductive arguments a little further. What is this necessity we spoke of when we said that if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true? Why must the conclusion be true? Answer: By virtue of a relation of entailment, or logical implication, between terms or propositions in the premises: “To entail” means “to include” or “to involve.”

Thus deductive entailment has to do with the way in which a term or proposition may be included in another. And the way in which this may be done so as to result in a valid argument is specified by valid argument forms.

The most traditional and yet one of the most common forms of a deductive argument is the syllogism. This is a type of argument consisting of two premises and a conclusion (“syllogism” comes from a Greek word meaning “propositions considered together”). An example of a valid syllogism, or at least the form of one, is

All X are Y.

All Y are Z.

Therefore, all X are Z.

A possible translation, or substitution for the symbols, might be

All politicians are liars.

All liars are despicable.

Therefore, all politicians are despicable.

One of the most important things to appreciate here is that deductive validity has to do with form, and form alone. What makes an argument valid is that it conforms to a valid argument form. But there is a big difference between validity and truth. An argument may be absolutely valid even though every statement in it is false:

All politicians are Communists.

Haile Gebresellasie is a politician.

Therefore, Haile Gebresellasie is a Communist.

It goes without saying that every proposition, including the conclusion, in an argument might be true, and the argument be invalid nonetheless:

All Ethiopian Prime Ministers have been males.

Dr. Abiy is male.

Therefore, Dr. Abiy is an Ethiopian Prime Minister.

Obviously, what we are interested in is both validity and truth. We may call a deductive argument that is valid and whose premises are true a “sound” argument.

We have seen above that in deductive arguments validity in the form results in a conclusion that follows as a matter of necessity. In the case of inductive arguments, however, there is no question of validity at all, and therefore no logical necessity in the conclusion can be expected. What is aimed at is truth in the premises and probability in the conclusion. It cannot be stressed too strongly that no inductive argument can deliver a conclusion that is demonstratively certain. The most that can be hoped for is a degree of probability, though the more supportive the premises, the more reasonable and the higher the probability of the conclusion. Thus, as with deductive arguments, not just any old premises will do. Here too there must be an inference between premises and conclusion, just as in deductive arguments. On the other hand, whereas in deductive arguments the inference is a strictly logical one resulting in a necessary conclusion, in inductive arguments the inference is a supportive one resulting in a probable conclusion.

What is the connection, this “supportive inference,” between premises and conclusion in an inductive argument that makes the conclusion at least reasonable and probable? We note here just two of the ways in which inductive arguments can take shape.

The first and most obvious form of inductive reasoning is to generalize on the basis of particular instances. The simplest of this kind of argument is called universal generalization and has the form

Instance 1 of A is observed to be X.

Instance 2 of A is observed to be X.

Instance 3 of A is observed to be X.

Instance 4 of A is observed to be X.

Instance 5 of A is observed to be X.

·Therefore, all A is X.

Quite different from the inductive methods of generalization is the method of analogy. This kind of reasoning can take many different forms, but its essential nature is indicated by

A is observed to be X and Y.

B is observed to be X and Y.

C is observed to be X and Y.

D is observed to be X and Y.

M is observed to be X.

Therefore, M is Y.

That is, if M is analogous, or similar, to A, B, C, D . . . in being X, it is probably also similar in being Y.

5.2. FALLACIES

Although logic covers many topics, understanding faulty reasoning or fallacies is one key component. Logical fallacies are often divided into two types: formal and informal. Formal fallacies are mistakes in reasoning that result from breaking some rule of validity: mistakes with respect to the form of an argument. A course in logic focuses primarily on deductive arguments and formal fallacies. Informal fallacies are quite different. They are mistakes that arise from carelessness with respect to the relevance of ideas or carelessness with respect to the clarity and consistency of our language. There are many such fallacies. We list here only some of the most common ones. Mastery of them will prevent many unnecessary blunders in philosophical discussion and, for that matter, any discussion whatsoever.

1. **Loaded language** is language with the sole purpose of swaying the emotions of the audience for or against an argument. Example: “It’s murder in cold blood. How could anyone say she has a right to have an abortion?”

2. **Equivocation** occurs when a word or expression changes its meaning in the course of an argument, sometimes referred to as a “weasel word.” Example: “Everyone says she has good taste, so I would love to nibble her ear.”
3. **Begging the question** occurs when the conclusion of an argument is already present, usually disguised, in one of its premises; also called circular reasoning. Example: “You can’t expect eighteen-year-olds to vote intelligently because they are too young to have good judgment about the issues.”
4. **Ad hominem (appeal to the person)** irrelevantly attacks the person making a claim rather than attacking the claim itself. Example: “You pro-choice people are selfless, godless, and immoral—probably Communists, too!”
5. **Straw man** inappropriately simplifies an opposing argument so that it becomes a cartoon or caricature of the true argument and is easy to refute. Example: “Now the anti-handgun fundamentalist will tell you that the mere presence of a loaded pistol means that Mr. Finnegan is going to get drunk and shoot Mrs. Finnegan. Or that the Finnegan grandchild will one day play with the pistol, it will go off, and there will be tragedy.”
6. **Hasty Generalization** is the fallacy of generalizing or drawing a conclusion from too little information. It often takes the form of “I knew a person who . . .” and then draws a conclusion based on one instance. Example: “Smoking does not cause cancer. My Uncle Joe smoked three packs of Camels every day for fifty-three years; then he died in an auto accident without even a trace of cancer.”
7. **Ad populum (appeal to the masses)** seeks to strengthen a claim by an emotional appeal to the passions and prejudices of the listeners. Example: “Don’t you think we all should get out early today?”
8. **Ad ignorantiam (appeal to ignorance)** affirms the truth of something on the basis of the lack of evidence to the contrary. Example: “The superb quality of her character can be demonstrated by the fact that I’ve never heard a word spoken against her.”
9. **Red herring** introduces an irrelevant or unimportant topic in order to divert attention from the main question. The term “red herring” comes from the practice of dragging a strong-smelling fish across the trail during fox hunts in order to confuse the hounds. Example: Q: “Should handguns be banned?” A: “Everybody talks about handgun accidents. But think of how many people are killed each year in auto accidents! Why don’t we ban automobiles?”
10. **False dilemma** involves limiting the options considered to only two in a way that is unfair to the person facing the dilemma. This is the same as the failure to adequately consider alternatives. Example: “It seems to me that a person just can’t win when it comes to what you eat. Either you eat meat and cause veal calves to be tortured or you starve to death on bread and water.”

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