PGPH S1 01

# Metaphysics : Western

## SEMESTER I

# PHILOSOPHY

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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## COURSE INTRODUCTION

The first course of First Semester of M A in Philosophy of KKHSOU is "Metaphysics: Western". It is designed to help the learners to have a deep understanding of the theoretical knowledge of metaphysics. As a learner of Master Degree in Philosophy one must have proper and thorough understanding about different theories and thoughts of metaphysics. Metaphysics is an important branch of philosophy. As a philosophy or theory of the 'real' or 'being' it concerns itself with basic question whether the reality or being, wholly or partially, reveals itself in the process of knowing. This question also leads to another important question, that is, is there any scope of distinction between the known world and the real world? The Answer to this question involves a vital issue which is technically known as 'Appearance and reality'. It is considered the core of any metaphysical enquiry, because it involves the important issues like idealism, realism, agnosticism and the skepticism. That is why, metaphysics as one of the important branches of philosophy forms the core of any philosophical enquiry. Again it is found that 'epistemology' or the theory of knowing is essentially connected with metaphysics because we cannot start the enquiry of the theory of 'real' or 'being' unless and until we already justify our claim and prove by the process of knowing that knowledge of the enquiry is possible. If it is supposed that we cannot know the 'real' or 'being', it is meaningless to investigate the nature of reality. So, the issue of the nature and validity of our knowledge and the enquiry of the nature of reality or being are the two aspects of the same enquiry.

This course consists of fifteen units in total.
First unit of this course is 'The Nature of metaphysical enquiry: Metaphysical Arguments'. After going through this unit one will be able to know what metaphysics is and to find out what metaphysical enquiry is. Differentiate between a metaphysical enquiry and a non-metaphysical enquiry. This unit will also try to answer if Metaphysics is possible and will try to acquaint with some metaphysical problems.

The name of the second unit of this course is 'Universals: Conceptualism'. This unit is going to study the basic outlines of universals. After going through this unit one will be able to know the nature of universal and its relation to particulars. Conceptualism is one of the important branches of universal. By reading this unit, you will be able to know about conceptualism.

'Universals: Realism (Plato and Aristotle)' is the third unit of this course. This unit introduces to you the problem of universals sprang from our experience, thought and language. It is a matter of common experience that particular things exist in space and time. Particular things like a chair, a table, a red colour, a cow, a tree etc exist in a particular space and in a particular time. They are different from and exclusive of one another. This unit will specially emphasis on realism and views of Plato and Aristotle.

The fourth unit of the course one is 'Nominalism'. After going through this unit, one will able to know that nnominalism is a theory according to which reality is only made up of particular items. It denies the real existence of any general entities such as properties, species, or other categories. The term "nominalism" stems from the Latin "nomen", "name." According to nominalism there is nothing general except names.

The fifth unit of this course is 'Personal Identity'. This unit introduces to you about the problem of personal identity is a philosophical enquiry of re-identifications of persons. Some philosophers have said that we are never concerned with this problem because sameness and changes are themselves incompatible, while some others opine that sameness and changes are compatible. In this regard philosophers accept two criteria of personal identity in order to explore the mystery of personal identity. They are: i) Bodily identity and ii) Memory identity. Now, we will discuss the above two criteria one by one in order to discuss the problem.

The sixth unit of this course is 'Cause: Necessary Connection and Constant Conjunction'. This unit consists of cause and causal connection. Common people believe that a cause is a power or force which produces the effect. Physical science improves upon this popular view and interprets causality in the light of the doctrine of conservation of energy. By conservation of energy we mean that the total amount of energy in the universe is constant, that it is neither increased nor decreased but that it undergoes modification in different forms.

The seventh unit is 'Contemporary Analysis of Causal Language.' This unit deals with the notion of causality. Generally, the relation between cause and effect is known as causality. A very definition of causality can be expressed as if 'C' then 'E'. It is a formula of 'constant conjunction' that advocated by David Hume. According to the formula, 'C' causes 'E' means the same as 'C' is constantly conjoined with 'E' or 'C' is regularly followed by 'E'. Hume appears to be describing causal relationship, and in this description, psychology and philosophical analysis are interwoven.

'Space and Time' is the eighth unit of course one. This unit introduces to you the concept of Space and time which are categories of knowledge. The simplest form of knowledge is judgment. A judgment consists of subject and predicate. Different judgments have different predicates .There are certain predicates which are universally present in all judgments. These universal notions involved in all judgments are called categories of knowledge. The word "category" means what predicated or affirmed of something in thinking of it.

The ninth unit is Mind-Body Relation'. This unit introduces to you different theories forwarded by different philosophers regarding the problem of Mind- Body relation. We will discuss here the theories like Interactionism given by Descartes, Parallelism by Spinoza, Pre-established harmony by Leibnitz, Russell's view on Leibnitz's concept of Mind- Body relation, and Strawson's view on Mind-Body relation etc.
The tenth unit of the course four is, 'Substance'. This unit introduces to you that substance is one of the central metaphysical concepts attracting the interest of philosophers over time. The problem is as old as philosophy itself. It is discussed with equal significance both in Indian and Western philosophy. A number of philosophical problems have centered round the concept of substance.

The eleventh unit is, 'Appearance and Reality'. This unit introduces to you the concepts of appearance and reality and will try to find out whether they are different from each other or not. Daniel Webster once stated, "The world is governed more by appearances than realities, so that it is fully as necessary to seem to know something as to know it." In other words, much of what goes on in the world is due to what people think rather than what actually is; therefore, the only thing one must do is present himself in the way he wants others to believe he truly is.

The twelfth unit of this course is 'The Problem of Categories of Kant and Ryle'. After reading this unit one will be able to explain categories in Kant's philosophy and will be able to discuss the relation between synthetic unity of Apperception and the categories. This unit will also try to elaborate schematism. After going through this unit one will not only be able to describe critically Kant's problem of categories but will be able to explain category mistake.

The thirteenth unit of the course one is, 'Aristotle's Concept of Causation'. After going through this unit one will be able to know that Aristotle was not the first person to engage in a causal investigation of the world around us. From the very beginning, and independently of Aristotle, the investigation of the natural world consisted in the search for the relevant causes of a variety of natural phenomena. The so-called "inquiry into nature" consisted in a search for "the causes of each thing; why each thing comes into existence, why it goes out of existence, why it exists".

The fourteenth unit is 'The Concept of Person'. This unit will consist of the concept of person from the different perspective. According to the concept of person, a person is an individual capable of moral agency. Although the details of their theories of human nature differ widely, Descartes, Locke, Kant and Strawson, all accepted a functional description of the person that includes both mental and physical features: the attribution of responsibilities to a moral agent requires both the ability to choose and an ability to act on that choice.

The fifteenth unit of this course is 'Language and Reality'. The main contention of this unit is to show the relationship between language and reality. This unit may be segmented into three different sub-sections. Section one deals with the very nature of language; section two deals with the very nature of reality or ontology and section three deals with the relationship between language and reality.

While going through this course you will come across some boxes which are put on the left side or right side of the text. These boxes will give us the meanings of some words and concepts within the text. Apart from this, there will be some broad and short questions included under Activity and Check Your Progress in every unit. Activities will increase our thinking capacity because questions put in Activity are not directly derived from the text. But answers to the short questions are put in the section Answers to Check Your Progress. Besides, there are some text-related questions which are put in Model Questions. These questions will help you in selecting and mastering probable topics for the examination so that you can prepare for the examination with confidence.

# UNIT-1: THE NATURE OF METAPHYSICAL ENQUIRY: METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENTS

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

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1.2 Introduction

1.3 The Subdivisions of Metaphysics

1.4 Nature of Metaphysics

1.5 Is Metaphysics Possible?

1.6 Let Us Sum Up

1.7 Further Reading

1.8 Answer to Check Your Progress

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## 1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Know what metaphysics is
- Know what metaphysical enquiry is
- Differentiate between a metaphysical enquiry and a non-metaphysical enquiry
- Answer if Metaphysics is possible
- Acquaint with some metaphysical problems

## 1.2 INTRODUCTION

The word "Metaphysics" is derived from the two Greek words: 'meta' (after) and 'physika' (physics). Metaphysics is a systematic study of noumena or substance or reality. It is a study that goes beyond the phenomenal world. Aristotle used the word 'first philosophy' to refer to this sort of study which is later on known as metaphysics. His first philosophy was meant for the study of the highest principles of all that exists. In it, he studied something over and above individual things. Metaphysics is about things that do not change. In the history of philosophy, this highest principle is known by means of diverse names in the philosophy of both east and west. And also there is

agreement and disagreement regarding the number of the principle from philosopher to philosopher.

The artificial derivation of the term, 'metaphysics' has a very interesting background. After the publication of Aristotle's Physics, a batch of Aristotle's writings was ready for publication. The editor in charge of the project, a librarian in Alexandria, Andronicus of Rhodes who studied Aristotle's manuscripts, gave this other work a title in ancient Greek that literally means, After the Physics. The librarian put the treatises dealing with the sphere of the so-called First Philosophy, or philosophical wisdom, after his physics, a doctrine on nature. From that time onward philosophical works as a whole were called metaphysics. The word 'metaphysics' is derived from a collective title of the fourteen books by Aristotle that we currently think of as making up Aristotle's Metaphysics. Aristotle had four names for the branch of philosophy that is the subject-matter of Metaphysics: 'first philosophy', 'first science', 'wisdom', and 'theology'. Aristotle identifies the subject-matter of first philosophy as "being as such", and as "first causes." In Metaphysics 4.1, Aristotle proposes a science of being as being, in contrast to sciences which have as their field of study only some part of being. It is a science that seeks the highest causes and principles, and these must be causes of some nature.

Aristotle describes metaphysics what he himself calls "first philosophy" (prôtê philosophia), or "theology" (theologikê) as a science of "being as being" and as distinct from those sciences which study only a part of being. Ordinary sciences give us the knowledge of the characters of existent facts only. They cannot say anything about their existence or reality itself. Ordinary science is, in fact, scientific information in descriptive statements. It speaks about what a thing is and how it is related to other things, but not about what actually it is. Metaphysics seeks the highest or most ultimate causes, principles that are eternal and unchanging. Aristotle is followed by this description of metaphysics - that it "is the science of the first principles."

The rationalists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, by contrast, expanded the scope of metaphysics. They took it to be concerned not merely with the existence and nature of God, but also with the distinction between mind and body, the immortality of the soul, and freedom of the will. Kant thought that there can be a legitimate kind of metaphysical knowledge. Its aim is to delineate the most general structures at work in our thought about the world. This Kantian conception of metaphysics continues to enjoy popularity among contemporary philosophers, who insist that metaphysics has as its aim the characterization of our conceptual scheme or conceptual framework. These philosophers typically agree with Kant that the structure of the world as it is in itself is inaccessible to us and that metaphysicians must be content to describe the structure of our thinking about that world.

Metaphysics is also known as Ontology. The term 'ontology' is derived from two Greek words: 'onto' (being) and 'logos' (discourse or science). Hence, 'ontology' means the 'Theory of Being' or 'the Science of Pure Being'. It inquires into the nature of the 'reality.' It seeks to know whether reality is one or many. On the basis of this question, diverse tendencies like monism, dualism, pluralism etc have cropped up. Ontology investigates into the nature of the world which makes an investigation into matter and life, soul, God or the Absolute.

## 1.3 THE SUBDIVISIONS OF METAPHYSICS:

The scope of metaphysics has expanded beyond the boundaries that Aristotle drew. The traditional metaphysical studies include Philosophy of Self, Eschatology, Cosmogony, Cosmology and Ontology. The study "Philosophy of Self" deals with the philosophical analysis of self and it's relation to the body. Eschatology discusses the position of the soul without its relational to the body. It also deals with the nature of the other world if any. Cosmogony is the study of creation. It discusses the creation of the world as well as enquiries if there is any purpose of the creation of anybody's part. Cosmology enquires whether the world is one or many. Ontology is the study of reality. Since this branch deals with the science of ultimate

reality, metaphysics is also sometimes referred to as ontology.

Metaphysician seeks to provide an account of the nature of being; but there is a variety of different perspectives from which one can provide such an account, and corresponding to these different perspectives are different sub-disciplines within metaphysics. The modern subdivisions of metaphysics are found in the interpretation of A. E. Taylor's account of metaphysical enquiry in Elements of Metaphysics (1978) and Michael J. Loux's Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction (1998). Loux's account of this subdivision says that one can examine being from the perspective of its being just that - being. Since this represents the most general perspective from which one can consider being, the branch of metaphysics that considers being from this perspective was dubbed general metaphysics. But the rationalists insisted that we can also examine being from a variety of more specialized perspectives. When we do, we are pursuing this or that branch of what the rationalists called special metaphysics. Thus, we can consider being as it is found in changeable things; we can, that is, consider being from the perspective of its being changeable. To do so is to engage in cosmology. We can, as well, consider being as it is found in rational beings like ourselves. To consider being from this perspective is to pursue that branch of special metaphysics the rationalists called rational psychology. Finally, we can examine being as it is exhibited in the Divine case, and to examine being in this light is to engage in natural theology.

Again Taylor subdivides metaphysics into Ontology or the general doctrine of Being, Cosmology or the philosophy of Nature and Rational Psychology or the philosophy of Mind. He says that metaphysics is concerned with the meaning and validity of universal conceptions of the nature of the individual objects which make up the experienced physical world. It is called Ontology. In order to see the nature of an object one has to deal with the experience of an object in the form of extension, succession, space, time, number, magnitude, motion, change, quality, matter, force, causality etc. In other words, one is to see what character is to be ascribed to the whole of Being as such, before pointing out the problem of the particular

kind of Being which belongs to the various realities of common life. It is the relation of Being in general to experience. Thus, ontology enquires the sense in which Being may be said to be inseparable from and yet again to transcend experience.

Again, metaphysics has to deal with the meaning and validity of the universal predicates by which one seeks to interpret the nature of the experiencing mind itself and its relation to others. This "others" may be other objects of the physical world and other minds or spirits. The contents of the world of experience may fall into two groups of mere things and things which are sentient and purposive. The metaphysical inquiry that deals with the most general characteristics of the external nature are known as Cosmology. Again, the metaphysical inquiry that deals with the most general characteristics of the conscious mind, is known as Rational Psychology. Of course, the separate dealing of external nature and the mind does not suggest the absolute disparity between matter and mind. It is a matter of philosophical criticism to decide whether this difference may persist or not. Besides, Taylor speaks about another pre-Kantian subdivision of metaphysics, namely Rational Theology that deals with the doctrine of the existence and attributes of God since something related to God can be deduced from general philosophical principles apart from the appeal to specific revelation.

J. N. Sinha speaks about three essential parts of metaphysics, namely, Ontology of Nature, Ontology of the Soul or Mind, and Ontology of the Absolute. "Ontology of Nature" investigates the nature of matter, time, space, causality, life, evolution, mechanism and teleology. "Ontology of the Soul" investigates the nature, origin and destiny of the soul and its relation to the body. "Ontology of God" investigates the nature and attributes of God and his relation to the world and the souls. It discusses and examines proofs for the existence of God.

P. F. Strawson draws a distinction between two kinds of metaphysics: descriptive and revisionary metaphysics. Descriptive metaphysics discusses

the categorical framework within which human thinking operates. On the other hand, revisionary metaphysics is concerned with replacing our categorical framework by another categorical framework.

## 1.4 NATURE OF METAPHYSICAL INQUIRY:

It is not easy to say what metaphysics is. Philosophers have disagreed about the nature of metaphysical inquiry. It is a branch of study which discusses and tries to determine the real nature of the world, life, God and reality. It investigates into the nature of reality. In the sense of being a study of reality or being, in general, it is an integral part of philosophy. Our reflections show that things are not always what they seem to be. This means there is the difference between apparent and real things. Everything has two aspects: an external and an internal. The external aspect, the way a thing appears to us, is always changing. The internal aspect, the original nature of a thing remains unchanged. One is to admit the unchanging aspect of a thing as the denial of such aspect the appearance of a thing cannot be explained. The admission of some permanent, unchangeable reality behind our changing states is necessary for the explanation of the fact themselves. Thereby, for a complete explanation of the object consideration of the empirical as well as transcendental is necessary. Metaphysics is concerned with the transcendental aspect of a thing.

Metaphysical tendency lies in the fact that there lies the world that transcends sense experience. It is the study of reality or a principle that goes beyond what can be known by sense experience. In another word, it is a study of super-phenomenal reality. In order to know the world that transcends the knowledge of sense experience, one is required a non-sensous knowledge. The reason, that does not depend on sense experience and intuition which is a non-discursive form of knowledge are non-sensous faculties of knowledge. Metaphysical question enquires whether these two faculties are capable of grasping something an extra sensual world, if there really is, or not. The important features of a metaphysical enquiry are:

Firstly, metaphysics has as its goal the apprehension of truth for its own sake. Metaphysics has immaterial substance as its subject matter. The relationship between the discipline and its subject matter gives metaphysics an intriguing status. Unlike the other disciplines, it does not simply assume the existence of its subject matter; it must actually prove that there is an immaterial substance for it to be about. So the project of proving that there is an Unmoved Mover outside the world of nature is a part of metaphysics itself.

Secondly, it is an alternative way of understanding the notion of an object not as that which is the ultimate subject of a predicate but as that which persists through changes. The question what is ultimately real can be regarded as the question about the ultimate stuff of which the universe is made. Metaphysical enquiry distinguishes between phenomena and noumena, reality and appearance. A thing is not that as it always seems to be. The way a thing appears to be may not be same with its real nature. The reality is hidden behind the appearances and metaphysics enables us to see that reality and this reality is always independent of our experience. So metaphysics considers things as beings or as existents and attempts to specify the properties or features they exhibit just insofar as they are beings or existents. Accordingly, it seeks to understand not merely the concept of being, but also very general concepts like unity or identity, difference, similarity, and dissimilarity that apply to everything that there is.

Thirdly, a metaphysical inquiry is sceptical in nature. But it is different from the vulgar sceptic schools of thought both in its method and its moral purpose. A metaphysical inquiry is not dogmatic. It does not disbelieve something for no reason. A metaphysician takes scepticism only as a preliminary stage of his final objective of the attainment of determinate truth. A metaphysical enquiry is characterised by the presence of criticism. It critically examines the postulates and the results of the knowledge of the external world. It is a process of examining the postulates and conclusions of other philosophers to present a more comprehensive worldview by synthesising different philosophies. It is a critical investigation into the nature

of being and its relative issues. It's critical nature demands it to be synthetic. Fourthly, a metaphysical inquiry is speculative, not imaginative. Philosophy often takes the help of speculation in a philosophical synthesis. This process is not a putting together of bits of knowledge. In contrast, it is the formation of a worldview by the synthesis of the conclusions of diverse experiences. The Metaphysical enquiry, as such, is constructive and thereby it involves the most fundamental concepts like reality, existence, substance, causality, universals etc. It is not based on sensory experiences. It leads to an understanding of reality what lies behind appearances. It is based on rational insight or analysis. It discusses in the light of the first principle and does not take anything for granted. It is not emotional, it is fully intellectual.

Fifthly, metaphysical study has some affinity with religion and imaginative literature since it is an inquiry into the meaning of reality. Both religion and an imaginative literature aim at getting behind mere appearances and interpreting the reality that lies beneath them. Like them, a metaphysical inquiry is directly concerned with the ultimate reality. At the same time, a metaphysical inquiry is different from religion and an imaginative literature in its spirit and method. Unlike religion, metaphysics adopts a purely scientific spirit. The objective of a metaphysical inquiry is intellectual satisfaction. The method it appeals is not to go with an immediate intuition or unanalyzed feeling. Metaphysical inquiry is established on the critical and systematic analysis of our conceptions. Thereby, in virtue of its spirit and method, a metaphysical inquiry belongs to the realm of science.

Sixthly, although it is said that a metaphysical inquiry belongs to the realm of science, it widely differs from other sciences that are related to study of a particular discipline. Unlike a branch of science, it is not concerned with one particular aspect of things. Metaphysics turns out to be not another departmental discipline with a special subject matter of its own. It is rather a universal science, one that considers all the objects that there are. On this characterization, then, metaphysics examines the items that constitute the subject matter for the other sciences. What is distinctive about metaphysics is the "way" or "method" in which it examines those objects; it examines

them from a particular perspective, from the perspective of their being beings or things that exist. Since it is non-numerical and non-quantitative, metaphysics differs from mathematics. At the same time, it differs from experimental sciences as well as logic and ethics. A metaphysical inquiry does not add anything to the stock of one's knowledge facts or events. It only helps one to grasp the way in which facts or events are to be interpreted. According to Taylor, the question of a metaphysical inquiry is not what in detail we must regard as the reality of any special set of processes, but what are the general conditions to which all reality, as such, conforms.

Seventhly, metaphysics is a difficult branch of study. The first difficulty is the simplicity and generality of a metaphysical problem. It is not easy to say precisely what is the subject dealt with by the metaphysician. This difficulty arises since one cannot specify any particular class of objects as its exclusive subject matter. Moreover, a metaphysical problem, by virtue of it's nature, is cut off from the support of physical experiment. The entire system is based on the rigid and systematic mental analysis of conceptions. Taylor is of the view that "metaphysics stands alone among the sciences, or alone with logic." The result of a metaphysical inquiry is to be found only by unassisted efforts of thought.

## 1.5 IS METAPHYSICS POSSIBLE?

Since the time of David Hume, there have been philosophers who have proposed that metaphysics is "impossible."The impossibility is asserted either because its questions are meaningless or because they are impossible to answer. According to Hume, a proposition can either be empirical or definite. But a metaphysical proposition is neither definite nor empirical. He maintains that propositions of mathematics and science alone are possible. The Humean thesis of rejection of metaphysics aroused Kant to the need of critically examining the position of metaphysics. With regard to the possibility of metaphysics two versions are found in the development of this study of philosophy. While one is the weak version, the other is the strong version. The weak form of the thesis that metaphysics is impossible is found in the

Kantian philosophy. According to Kant, metaphysics as science is not possible. He is of the view that knowledge in the proper sense is not possible unless the impression which we receive from the faculty of sensibility are systematically arranged by the understanding with the help of categories. The categories can be applied only when sense impressions or sense materials are presented to the mind. They are valid only within the realm of experience. This is the weak or moderate version that says that though metaphysics is beyond experience, yet it is not possible. In Kantian interpretation, metaphysics is possible at least in the realm of phenomena though not in the field of noumena. Again, Colin McGinn, in his book, Problems in Philosophy: The Limits of Inquiry (1993), maintains that the human mind is incapable of a satisfactory treatment of a large range of philosophical questions. McGinn particularly mentions about one's incapability to include any sort of metaphysical questions by the limit of human minds.

The strong form of the thesis that metaphysics is impossible is held by the logical positivists. According to logical positivists, metaphysical statements are meaningless. The logical positivists maintain that the meaning of a statement consisted entirely in the predictions it made about the possible experience. They further add that metaphysical statements made no predications about the experience. They further add that the predicate of a real proposition refers to some known facts. Facts stand for what is subject to experience. Therefore, real propositions are concerned only with the subjects which can easily undergo verification on the basis of experience. Therefore, they conclude, metaphysical statements are meaningless.

According to logical positivism any sentence to be cognitively meaningful it must express a statement that is either analytic or empirically verifiable. A sentence to have "cognitive," "factual," "descriptive," or "literal" meaning, must express a statement that could be shown to be true or false by reference to empirical observations. According to the verifiability principle many sentences of traditional philosophy are cognitively meaningless for they say about some non-verifiable existence like God, soul etc. Most of the

statements to be found in traditional philosophy in the form of metaphysical judgements are not false but nonsensical. Only meaningful statements were to be permitted scientific consideration and to be conferred the status of knowledge. Meaningfulness was strictly defined as being attributable only to those statements which are either analytic or synthetic. By this measure, metaphysical statements are neither analytic nor subject to empirically verifiable. Therefore, metaphysical statements must be considered Meaningless.

The meaning of a statement depends upon verification according to positivists. But the objects to which a metaphysical statement point cannot be verified. One cannot determine the truth or falsity of such statements. Therefore, metaphysics is not possible. The positivists try to show the nonsensical character of all metaphysical statements. Since the propositions of metaphysics are pseudo-propositions, they are concerned only with pseudo-problems. The science of metaphysics is in its very nature impossibility or that, if possible, it is useless, superfluous and unprogressive. According to Ayer, metaphysicians produce sentences which fail to conform to the condition under alone a sentence can be literally significant. Ayer is an anti-metaphysician and he wants to eliminate metaphysics with the help of the verifiability criterion. According to Walsh also the metaphysical system embodies the metaphysicians' imaginative pictures of the world.

Now, point is, if we rigorously stick to the verifiability principle as the positivists point out, then many of the laws of science would be meaningless. The metaphysical statements cannot be conclusively verified by experience, but they can be verified by the facts of experience. Logical positivists unduly equate experience with sense experience alone. There are other experiences also such as moral, religious, intuitive etc. Philosophy tries to see phenomena not as phenomena but as phenomena of reality. Therefore, metaphysics is not possible. The criticism of logical positivists against metaphysics does not hold ground. Criticising the logical positivists, Weismann remarks that, "To say metaphysics is nonsense is nonsense." The argument is that the proposition refuting metaphysics itself is nonsensical proposition because

it is not subject to verification. Against Walsh's opinion it may be said that when metaphysicians claim that reality is rational, he is not merely advocating a point of view, rather it makes a claim about the way things are.

The divergent opinion related to the metaphysical argument is not the indication of the vagueness of metaphysics but of its complex and multifaceted subject matter. Each philosopher interprets a fact in the light of his own perspective.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q1:** What is Metaphysics?

……

**Q2:** Who has regarded metaphysics to be first philosophy?

……

**Q3:** Who thought that there can be legitimate kind of metaphysical knowledge?

……

**Q4:** What is 'ontology'?

……

**Q5:** Who is the author of the book 'Elements of Metaphysics'

……

**Q6:** What is concerned with the transcendental aspect of a thing?

……

**Q7:** What distinguishes between phenomena and Noumena?

……

**Q8:** Who has written the book, "Problems in Philosophy: the Limits of Inquiry"?

……

**Q9:** According whom, metaphysical system embodied the metaphysicians imaginative pictures of the World?

.....

**Q10:** How philosophy tries to see phenomena?

.....



## 1.6: LET US SUM UP

- The word "Metaphysics" is derived from the two Greek words: 'meta' (after) and 'physika' (physics). Metaphysics is a systematic study of noumena or substance or reality.
- Metaphysics is also known as Ontology. The term 'ontology' is derived from two Greek words: 'onto' (being) and 'logos' (discourse or science). Hence, 'ontology' means the 'Theory of Being' or 'the Science of Pure Being'. It inquires into the nature of the 'reality.'
- The scope of metaphysics has expanded beyond the boundaries that Aristotle drew. The traditional metaphysical studies include Philosophy of Self, Eschatology, Cosmogony, Cosmology and Ontology.
- The study "Philosophy of Self" deals with the philosophical analysis of self and it's relation to the body. Metaphysician seeks to provide an account of the nature of being; but there is a variety of different perspectives from which one can provide such an account, and corresponding to these different perspectives are different sub-disciplines within metaphysics.
- In the sense of being a study of reality or being, in general, it is an integral part of philosophy. Our reflections show that things are not always what they seem to be. This means there is the difference between apparent and real things.
- According to logical positivism any sentence to be cognitively meaningful it must express a statement that is either analytic or empirically verifiable.
- A sentence to have "cognitive," "factual," "descriptive," or "literal" meaning, must express a statement that could be shown to be true or false by reference to empirical observations.

- The metaphysical statements cannot be conclusively verified by experience, but they can be verified by the facts of experience. Logical positivists unduly equate experience with sense experience alone.



## 1.7 FURTHER READING:

1. Taylor, A. E. 1978. Metaphysics, London: Oxford University Press
2. McGinn, Colin, 1993.Problems in Philosophy: The Limits of Inquiry, Oxford: Blackwell
3. Loux, Michael J. 1998. Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction. New York: Routledge



## 1.8: ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q1:** A systematic study of noumena or substance or reality.

**Ans to Q2:** Aristotle

**Ans to Q3:** Kant

**Ans to Q4:** The theory of being or 'science of pure being'

**Ans to Q5:** A.E. Taylor

**Ans to Q6:** Metaphysics

**Ans to Q7:** Metaphysical Enquiry

**Ans to Q8:** McGinn

**Ans to Q9:** Walse

**Ans to Q10:** Philosophy tries to see phenomena not as phenomena but as phenomena of reality.



## 1.9: MODEL QUESTIONS:

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Write the etymological meaning of the term, 'Metaphysics'?

**Q2:** Mention the literal meaning of the term 'Ontology'.

**Q3:** Who has written the book 'Metaphysics'?

**Q4:** What is 'first philosophy' or 'theology'?

**Q5:** Who is the author of the book, 'Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction'?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Why metaphysics can also be called ontology?

**Q2:** How Taylor subdivides metaphysics?

**Q3:** How metaphysic deals with the meaning of validity of the universal predicated?

**Q4:** What is cosmology?

**Q5:** What are the three essential parts of metaphysics mentioned by J.N.Sinha?

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** What is metaphysics? Explain.

**Q2:** How Metaphysics is sub-divided? Discuss.

**Q3:** What is the nature of metaphysics? Discuss.

**Q4:** Is metaphysic possible? Critically Explain.

*** ***** ***

# UNIT-2: UNIVERSALS: CONCEPTUALISM

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

2.1: Learning Objectives

2.2: Introduction

2.3: Universals

2.4 The nature of universal and its relation to particulars

2.5. Conceptualism

2.6: Let us sum up

2.7: Check your progress

2.8: Answer to check progress

2.9: Model Questions

## 2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Know what is universal
- Explain the universals and its relation to particulars.
- Know what is conceptualism

## 2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you the concept of universal. This unit is going to see what is universal and what its relationship with the particulars is. This unit will try to focus on the conceptualism.

## 2.3 UNIVERSALS:

The term universal which is used is used in metaphysics means that which is common to and shared by all the particulars of a certain class or kind. Particulars are limited in space and time. The universal is not limited to any particulars space and time, but is said to be present in many particular occupying different spaces and different times. For example, there are virtuous acts. Underlying them all there is one common element and that common element is the universal called virtue. Justice is similarly the

universal shared by all particulars just acts. Beauty, humanity etc are similarly universal.

## 2.4 THE NATURE OF UNIVERSAL AND ITS RELATION TO PARTICULARS:

The concept of universal may be presented in another way also. It may be pointed out here that in language there are general words ('table,' 'horse,' 'dislike,' 'beauty,' etc). These general words can be applied to anyone of a whole range of objects or activities. A. D. woozley has pointed out that apart from proper names ( john, Socrates, William etc) and indicator words (such as this, that, here, there etc) all the remaining words of English language are general words. We may provisionally say that a universal is that which is common to all objects which we normally call by the same name. In other words we may say that universal is that which is indicated by a general word. A.D. Woozley of course points out that this provisional definition of universal labors under two major problems, which may be formulated and presented as two questions. These two questions are-

1. Can there be a universal common to a group of objects, even if they have no common name?
2. Can there be universals without instances?

If we accept the definition of universal that which is common to and shared by all the particulars of a class then the answer to both the questions would be an emphatic 'No.' It may be noted here that in philosophy there are different conceptions of universals and consequently there is no single definition of universal which is acceptable to all philosophers. In order to understand the nature of universals and also to understand the relation between universals and particulars we have to know that there are three theories here. Each theory gives it own version of the nature of universals and its relation to the particulars. These theories are often presented as a group of theories. They are- realism, nominalism and conceptualism. A.D. Woozley has written about the realist theories of universals. The nominalistic theories are sometimes also called similarity theories. The realistic views

about the nature of universals differ significantly from the nominalistic theories. Both Plato and Aristotle gave their versions of the nature of universals and its relation to the particulars. Plato presented one form of the realist theory while Aristotle presented another form of it. According to Plato a universal is a substantive. Universals do not require mind their existence. Universals also do not require particulars for their existence. The universals belong to a world of their own which is beyond space and time. The particulars are the copies of universals. But the universals will continue to exist even though there are no particulars. But critics point out that Plato did not succeed in giving a satisfactory account of the relation between universals and particulars. Aristotle has his own version of the realist view. Aristotle could not accept Plato's mysterious realm of substantive universals. He also found the idea of substantive universal completely unnecessary. For Aristotle a universal is not a substantive entity. It is for him a characteristic or property. It is something that belongs to particulars. According to Aristotle's view logically the universals are dependent on particulars and particulars are also dependent on universals. If we look for linguistic analogous then we shall have to say that Plato's universals are like nouns while Aristotle's universals are like adjectives (Woozley wrote, "That would be far from giving the whole story, but it would be sufficient for our purposes.") This theory, critics point out, would not explain the relationship between universals and particulars. Dissatisfaction with this vie led to the nominalistic theory of universals. According to nominalism various particular things resemble one another and therefore for convenience they are called by the same name. Various cats resemble one another and therefore they are called cats. So the nominalistic theory emphasizes the factor of similarity existing among various individual of a class.

The nominalistic theory states that various particulars resemble one another. Because of the resemblance the same name may be applied to them. Again conceptualism states that the universal is just a concept formed by the mind. But theory also cannot be accepted as the final theory about the nature of universal and its relation to the particulars.

Thus nature of universal is understood and presented in diverse ways.
Let us now discuss the third theory of universals, i.e. conceptualism

## 2.5 CONCEPTUALISM:

Here we will discuss the conceptualistic theory of universals. It is a philosophical theory that explains universality of particulars as conceptualized frameworks situated within the thinking mind. Conceptualism is sometimes seen as a midway position between (Medieval) Realism and Nominalism. Conceptualism is not the same as Nominalism, it is more comprehensive, and it is far more informative. But this theory is also not accepted as the final view about the nature of universal and its relation to the particulars. According to this theory a universal is a predicate, but predicates can be truly or falsely predicated of things only because they stand for concepts. As a product of mind, universals can be instantiated by many particulars at the same time. They are mental representations or ideas, conceptualized out of the particular things to which they apply. Their main function is to serve as principles of classification. "Conceptualism holds that there are universals but they are mind-made." Conceptualism admits the existence within us of abstract and universal concepts (whence its name), but it holds that we do not know whether or not the mental objects have any foundation outside our minds. The concepts have an ideal value; they have no real value, or at least we do not know whether they have a real value.
The conceptualist, however, denies that the similarity in virtue of which is common and shared by all particulars, to be analyzed in terms of identity, and thus rejects the moderate realist's claim that genus and species are real, metaphysical constituents of things. Genus and species are nothing over and above ideas or concepts in the mind.

Gyula Klima describes the difference between moderate realism and conceptualism and states that:

Moderate realists "Assert the existence of real universals in…particular things," while conceptualists "allow universals only, or primarily, as concepts of the mind."

Locke is constantly dependent on, and clearly committed to, conceptualism as a theory of universals which undoubtedly sustains marks of consistency with the rest of his philosophy. In this respect he differs from several of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries. Incidentally, we may mention the case of Descartes in particular whose conceptualism, it may be argued, conflicts with certain elements in his rationalism. Besides, Locke in the Essay offers a thread-bare analysis and .thereby weighs the theory into rigorous examination.

Locke writes: "General and Universal, belong not to the real existence of Things; but are the Inventions and Creatures of the Understanding, made by it for its own use, and concern only Signs, whether Words, or Ideas." So in other words as a conceptualist, Locke rejects the realist's position and he appears to hold the conceptualist position, characterized by the view that "similarity is a primitive, two term relation that is not to be further analyzed in terms of identity" In summary, on the conceptualist's view, particulars that satisfy or agree with a particular species by virtue of resembling one another, where that latter relation is not to be further analyzed in terms of a real constituent that is numerically multiplied in those particulars. Though this theory looks so organized, it too suffers from problems. In some cases concepts can be misapplied, such as when we say of a horse that it is a donkey. And misapplied concepts explain nothing deep about generality. Conceptualism's appeal to concept application must concern only correct concept application. As such, it is fair to ask, "What makes it the case that the concept black is rightly applied to both p and q but not of some third individual, r?" So it seems the Conceptualist must say that the concept black applies to p and q, but not r, because common feature is shared by both p and q and r lacks that feature. Otherwise, the application of black is permitted by the individuals to whom it applies. But simply noting that p and q resemble each other isn't going to help, because that just is the fact we originally sought to explain, put differently. The Conceptualist might now say that p and q share a property. But if this isn't to amount to a confirmation of the original datum, it must now be interpreted as the claim that some

entity is in both p and q. but that will be like going back to realism. Critics finally conclude that conceptualism cannot solve any problem on its own.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q1:** Another name of metaphysics is _____ (fill in the blank).

.....

**Q2:** Who wrote the book Leviathan?

.....

**Q3:** How many theories are there to understand the nature of universals?

.....

**Q4:** What do you mean by metaphysics?

.....

**Q5:** Define realism.

.....

**Q6:** Define nominalism

.....

**Q7:** Define conceptualism

.....



## 2.6 LET US SUM UP:

- Aristotle by 'first philosophy' means metaphysics. The word metaphysics means after physics. After the death of Aristotle his writings were collected together. His books on the First Philosophy were placed after his work on metaphysics. The word metaphysics which means after physics signifies to his arrangements.
- The nominalistic theory, because of its emphasis upon the factor of resemblance may also be called the resemblance theory.

- Conceptualism is that theory of universals that claims that universals exist as thoughts or concepts formed by the knowing mind.
- The other two are nominalism, which claims that universals are merely common names, and realism, which claims that universals exist in some mind independent fashion.
- Thomas Hobbes was a supporter of nominalism.
- Hobbes presented his conception in two ways- A. In his book 'Leviathan' he wrote, "There being nothing in the world of universal, but name for the things named are every one of them individual and singular." B. In another book he wrote, "A man denotes anyone of a multitude of men, and a philosopher anyone of many philosophers, by reason of their similitude."
- When Locke writes that "the great Business of Genera and Species, and their Essences, amounts to no more" than abstract ideas in the minds of men, Locke is giving hint towards his commitment to conceptualism for roughly the reasons just outlined



## 2.7. FURTHER READING


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2. Kuklok, Allison Sara. 2013. Conceptualism and Objectivity in Locke's Account of Natural Kinds. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University. URL: http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:11181128
3. Mary C. MacLeod & Eric M. Rubenstein. Universals, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. URL: https://www.iep.utm.edu/universa/
4. Armstrong, D.M. (1989) Universals: An Opinionated Introduction Westview Press,




## 2.8 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

**Ans to Q 1:** First Philosophy

**Ans to Q 2:** Thomas Hobbes

**Ans to Q 3:** Three theories- realism, nominalism and conceptualism.

**Ans to Q 4:** Metaphysics is that branch of philosophy which studies being as being. This is a subject often understood as study of reality.

**Ans to Q 5:** Realism is that philosophical theory according to which universals are real entities. They are substantive entities. Realism may be understood as the philosophical theory which accepts the idea of objective universals.

**Ans to Q 6:** Nominalism is that philosophical theory which states that various particulars resemble one another. Because of the resemblance the same name may be applied to them.

**Ans to Q 7:** Conceptualism is that theory of universals that claims that universals exist as thoughts or concepts formed by the knowing mind.

## 2.9: MODEL QUESTIONS:

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Who describes the differences between moderate realism and conceptualism?

**Q2:** What is the meaning of Universal?

**Q3:** What are the three theories of universal?

**Q4:** What is the other name of similarity theory?

**Q5:** According to who universal is substantive?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Write a short note on universal.

**Q2:** Why nominalistic theory states that various particular resembled one another? Briefly explain.

**Q3:** Briefly discuss Locke's view on conceptualism

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Is there any difference between Plato and Aristotle's versions of the nature of universals and its relation to the particulars?

**Q2:** Describe the nature of universals and its relation to particulars

**Q3:** Describe the theory of conceptualism

**Q4:** Why conceptualism is not a satisfactory theory?

*** ***** ***

# UNIT-3: UNIVERSALS: REALISM (PLATO AND ARISTOTLE)

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

3.1 Learning objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Universal: Its nature and theories

3.4 Realism

3.4.1 Plato's realism

3.4.2 Aristotle's realism

3.5 Let us sum up

3.6 Further reading

3.7 Answers to check your progress

3.8 Model questions

## 3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to

- The problem of universal
- Relation between universal and particular
- Theories of universal
- Realism
- Views of Plato and Aristotle

## 3.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you the problem of universals sprang from our experience, thought and language. It is matter of common experience that particular things exist in space and time. Particular things like a chair, a table, a red colour, a cow, a tree etc exist in a particular space and in a particular time. They are different from and exclusive of one another. However, we do not call each one of them by a specific name like we call our friends by their names. Rather we group them, give them a collective name which says they belong to a particular class. Now, questions bound: what makes them come under a particular class? What underpins our attempt

to bind them in a group? Why are all cows, to cite an example, named by the term 'cow' regardless of their innumerable differences? Is it essence which is shared in common by all the members of a class? Or, is it simply similarity among them? The problem of universal, so to speak, mainly deals with these questions.

## 3.3 UNIVERSAL: ITS NATURE AND THEORIES

In nature, we have broadly two kinds of knowledge of things- sensuous and conceptual. Sensuous knowledge presents a thing in a particular part of space and time. Thus we have particular knowledge of manifold of objects viz. chair, a table, a red colour, a cow etc. Conceptual knowledge, on the other hand, presents a thing without any note of particularity. It is not limited to any space and time. However, it is a sort of thing without which we cannot think of particular objects. Though we can see and touch particular objects, we have to use general concepts while thinking or talking about them. For they are perceived by us as belonging to a certain class. The particular things have something common in them by virtue of which they are grouped together in the same class and called by the same name. Red, white, yellow, blue, green etc. have something common in them on account of which they are grouped into the class of colours and called by the same name 'colour'. Similarly cows, dogs, cats, horses etc. have something common in them because of which they are brought under the same class of animal and called by the same name 'animal'. This something which is common to all the members of a class is called universal or generality. Thus the universal may generally be defined as something which is common to and shared in common by all the members of a particular class, and is the ground of their being grouped into the same class and called by the same name.

Now the knotty questions that often churn up the philosophers' mind are- what is common to a group of things (or particulars)? What sort of thing is universal? Does the universal stand for something that is objectively real? Or is it merely a word that we use for a group of things due to their similarity

between them? Philosophers answer to these questions from their own stance. And since their views are different, we have several theories regarding the nature of universal, viz., Realism, Conceptualism, Nominalism etc. All these theories have got supporters from both the corners of Indian and Western philosophy.

Realism is a theory according to which the universal is extra-mental. It has independent reality. It is the essence residing equally in all the members of a class. Conceptualism states that universal is a concept in mind; it is a pure mental entity. There is no universality in things outside mind. According to Nominalism, universals are mere words or names. For this theory, names are made universal by being used for a number of different particulars.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q1:** State whether the statements are true or false (True/False)

a) Womanhood is universal. (True/False)

b) Tree, cow, table, etc are not particulars. (True/False)

c) Sensuous knowledge presents a thing in a particular part of space and time. (True/False)

d) Conceptual knowledge presents a thing without any note of particularity. (True/False)

e) According to the theory of realism, universal is mind-dependent. (True/False)

**Q2:** Define universal.

.....

**Q3:** What are particulars?

.....

**Q4:** Mention the main theories of universal.

.....

**Q5:** What is conceptualism?

.....

**Q6:** Define nominalism in a sentence.

.....

## 3.4 REALISM

Realism holds that universal exists independent of the knowing mind. It has objective reality. Universal is the essence that is equally present in all the members of a class. However, this theory has got various forms in the hands of its upholders as they have espoused their views in accordance with their own philosophy. While some regard universals to be substantive, some others hold them to be adjectival even though they all agree on the core notion of realism. Thus we have many supporters of this theory both from Indian and Western camps. They are- Nyaya-Vaisesika amd Mimamsa, Plato, Aristotle, St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas, Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore and S. Alexander. Here, however, we shall discuss the views of Plato and Aristotle, the champions in realism, in a brief detail.

### 3.4.1 PLATO'S REALISM

Plato advocates extreme realism. For him, a universal is substantive, an entity which exists in a non-temporal, non-spatial world without depending on mind. It is not affected by whatever happens to the particulars in the world of space and time. Although the existence of the particulars in the universals logically depends upon the existence of the universals in the particulars, the other way round is not true. Even if there is not any example of perfect square anywhere, perfect squareness exists in the transcendental world of universals. To Plato, a universal is a model to which particular things approximate.

In his theory of Ideas, Plato advocates the existence of universal entities which are different from the particular things. Plato maintains that there must be an essence common to all things of a given kind. For him, a

thing will not be a table unless it has the essence of tablehood that all other tables possess in common. A table may differ from other tables in shape, size and colour, but it must possess a single form or essence which constitutes their being table and which distinguishes them from other things like chairs, beds or doors etc. Thus Plato holds that we always postulate one single form for every class of particulars to which we assign the same name. It is not only true of objects indicated by nouns, such as chairs, tables, beds, trees, etc but also of qualities indicated by predicates, such as beautiful, ugly, greater than, less than etc. Just as there must be a form or essence of tablehood common to tables, so there must be a form or essence of ugliness common to all ugly things. Plato gives the name 'Ideas' or 'Forms' to these objective essences.

Thus for Plato, there is an absolute difference between the Forms or universals, and sensible objects or particulars. The universals are patterns in the nature of things, while the particular things are made in their image and hence are likenesses of the 'Forms'. The 'Forms' exist in themselves. According to Plato, the universals are substances. A substance is that which has its whole being in itself and which does not derive its reality from anything else except itself. It is the ground of other things, but it does not have any ground except itself. In this sense, the universals are self-caused and self-determined; they are absolute and ultimate realities. The particulars, on the other hand, are not self-caused or self-determined; they are relative, for they have to depend upon other things for their existence. Unlike the particular things, the universals are thoughts. Universals are not found in nature like any particular thing. There is no such thing as the cow-in-general. However, 'thought', in this case, should not be taken as my thought or your thought or the thought of God. For it is absurd to think that our thoughts can be the cause of the universe. They are not subjective ideas, but are objective Ideas having reality on their own. The universal or the Idea is a unity. It is one amidst many. But the particular things are many. The Idea of horse is one, but the horses are many. There cannot be more than one Idea for every class of things. Universals are immutable and imperishable, while the particulars are ever-changing and perishable.

In spite of these differences, there is a close connection between universals and the particulars. Their relationship is described in two ways: (i) as a participation of the particular thing in the Idea (ii) as an imitation of the Idea by the particular thing, the particular things being the copy of the Idea and the Idea being the exemplar.

Now, as universals are not given in sense-perception, the question pertinent here is: How are they known? Plato's answer, however, is mythical. For, he said that the soul is said to possess the universals (in Plato's words, pure Forms or Ideas) in the incorporeal world before embodying the present body. When we perceive the similar things in the present life, we remember the Forms forgotten in earthly life. Again in the Timaeus, Plato said that God makes the things of this world according to the model of the Forms. God takes the model of the Forms in creating things of the world. This implies that the Ideas or the Forms exist apart, not only from the things of the sensible world, but also from God. Hence, the Ideas are something hanging in the air.

Plato also spoke about different levels of Forms related as higher and lower in a hierarchy. Just as many individual things are presided over by one Idea which is the common element in them, so many lower Ideas are presided over by one higher idea which is the common element in them. Again, over this higher Idea together with many others still a higher Idea will rule. For example, the Ideas of whiteness, blackness, greenness, blueness, yellowness, all come under the Idea of colour. The Ideas of sweetness, sourness, bitterness, all come under the Idea of taste. Now these two Ideas of colour and taste are subsumed under the still higher Idea of quality. In this way, the Ideas form a pyramid with an apex. Over all these Ideas, there must be one highest Idea which is the supreme of all of them. This is the final and absolutely real being. It is the ground of itself, of other Ideas and of the whole universe. Plato calls this Idea the Idea of Good. Thus we find that though the Ideas are many, they culminate in one single Idea. In brief, the Ideas form one organised system culminating in one supreme Idea which is the highest expression of its unity. And every individual Idea is a many in

one. Considered in itself, it is one and as considered in relation to others, it is many.

### 3.4.2 ARISTOTLE'S REALISM

Aristotle rejects the mysterious world of substantive universals. He advocates a moderate form of realism. According to him, a universal is not a substantive at all but a property which belongs to particulars. While Plato treats universals as nouns, Aristotle treats them as adjectives. According to Aristotle, there is a logical interdependence between the universals and the particulars. Just as there can be no chairs, unless each chair possesses the property of being a chair, so no such property (chairness) can exist unless there are chairs.

Aristotle sharply criticises Plato's theory of universals and regards the 'Ideas' as quite unnecessary. His objections to Plato's theory of Ideas go like this-

1. Plato unnecessarily doubled the number of things to be explained. The Forms or Ideas are as many as the particular things whose causes are the Ideas themselves. For Plato holds that there is an entity corresponding to each thing bearing the same name with it that exists independently of the particular things. Such postulation does not solve any problem, as it makes repetition on a different level. The same questions that are raised in cases of the particulars may also be raised in cases of the Ideas or Forms. Thus, mere multiplication of objects cannot be said to be a solution to any problem.

2. Plato's Ideas fail to explain the existence of things. The main problem of philosophy is to explain why the things exist. By following Plato's theory of Ideas, we cannot explain this. Even if we accept that the Idea of whiteness exists, we cannot see how it produces white objects.

3. Even if the existence of things is explained, their motion will be left unexplained. The world of things is a world of change, motion, life and

becoming. But Plato's Ideas cannot explain this fact. According to Plato, the Idea of whiteness produces white things, the Idea of beauty beautiful things and so on. But, since the Ideas themselves are changeless, motionless, so the world of things, which are their copies, will be alike. Thus the world will turn into a static one, which is impossible.

4. Plato has not explained properly the relation between the Ideas and particular things. He holds that particular things are the "copies" of Ideas and they "participate" in them. For Aristotle, such a contention is nothing but talking in empty metaphor.

5. The Ideas, which are supposed to be non-sensuous by Plato, are, in fact, sensuous. Plato thinks it necessary to seek a non-sensuous principle to explain the sensible world. But not finding such a principle, he takes the sensible things over again and regards them non-sensuous. In fact, there is no difference between the cow and the Idea of the cow, between the man and the Idea of man, except a meaningless and unnecessary "in-general" or "in-itself" which is attached to each sensible thing to give it a different look. Aristotle holds that Ideas are like the anthropomorphic gods of popular religion. These are nothing but the eternalized things of nature. He alters Plato's version by stating that things are not the copies of Ideas, but Ideas are the copies of things.

6. The view of Plato that the Ideas cause the particular things cannot be said to be true because the Ideas being changeless patterns without any principle of motion cannot function as the efficient cause. Even Plato's recognition of Ideas as the final cause cannot solve the problem, since it does not explain the efficient causality.

7. Plato commits the logical mistake of regarding Form or Idea both as an individual substance and a property. Forms are regarded as individual substances, as they have separate existence, and they are regarded as properties, since they are universals. But the question is: how can one and the same thing be both an individual substance and a property?

Aristotle argues that it is impossible for anything 'general' to become an individual substance or a 'primary being', as an individual substance or primary being is such a thing which is peculiar to an individual object and on the other hand, 'general' is something which is common to a group of things. According to Aristotle, a substance is the same as subject to which predicates are assigned. It is not a predicate of something else. So, if Forms or Ideas are treated as individual substances, they cannot be universals, since substances possess properties. Again, if Forms are treated as universals, they cannot be individual substances, as common property never indicates a "this-something" but a "this-such". Hence it is a logical impossibility to regard Form as both individual substance and a universal.

8. Aristotle's argument of the "Third Man" is noteworthy. The 'Third Man' argument states: An individual man is like the idea of man in being man and so there must be a further Idea, the 'third man', in which both the individual man and the idea of man participate. It leads to infinite regress.

9. If the Ideas are the essences of things, they must reside in the things themselves and not outside them. But Plato has isolated the Ideas from particular things and has placed them in a non-sensuous, non-temporal, mysterious world. Plato seems to have ended in absurdity when he asserts that there is horse-in-general existing independently somewhere beyond the particular horses. Plato's theory of Ideas is self-contradictory as it starts with stating that the universal is real and the particular is unreal and ends by lowering the universal at the level of the particular.

10. Even if Forms are supposed to exist apart, it is not possible to say in which cases it does so and in which it does not. Definitely, it cannot exist apart in the cases of all particulars or individuals, e.g., individual men. It is absurd to say that the essence of all men is the same, because all particular things whose essence is same or one are themselves one. It is also unreasonable to take essence as multiple and different.

All these criticisms against Plato's Ideas or Forms may be subsumed under two headings - first, that Plato introduced an unnecessary and useless duplication by making the Forms perfect and independent or separate substance. Secondly, Plato confused the categories of substance with property.

Thus Aristotle rejects Plato's view that universals exist apart from particular objects. The universal is not something which has a higher reality than the individual things experienced by us. It is a common predicate which resides in many objects of a class. Thus the concept of cow is what is common to all cows. The concept of cow is the same thing as the predicate 'cowness'. Now this 'cowness' cannot exist apart from cows , just as softness cannot exist apart from the soft things. The universal is real in the particular in the sense that it realises itself in particular. Unlike Plato, Aristotle holds that the individual man is not the imperfect copy of the universal man. He is an actual man. He is called man because he has certain essential qualities of man. These certain essential qualities constitute the nature of man. Likewise, being an object of certain kind is determined by the properties possessed by the object. As the universals cannot exist by themselves, they cannot be called substances; nor are they particular substances, for there is not anything like absolute particular or isolated thing. If cowness does not exist independently of cows, then cows also do not exist independently of cowness. If we take away from cow what it has in common with other cows, we shall find nothing, as all qualities are taken away from it.

Both Aristotle and Plato hold that the knowledge of universal is acquired by the intellect. But while Plato regards it to be a priori, Aristotle regards it to be derived from sense-experience by abstraction.

From the foregoing discussion, what comes in the fore is that Aristotle's theory of universals is more moderate than that of Plato. Moreover, Aristotle's theory is more economical than Plato's, as he recognizes one world instead of two. Plato's theory is a theory of universalia ante rem, i.e.,

universals independent of particulars and Aristotle's is universalia in rebus, i.e., universals in things.

Aristotle's theory of universals is similar to the Indian realistic theories of universals in certain respects. Like Aristotle, the Nyaya-Vaisesika also holds that the universals do not exist independently of the particulars in a world of their own. They reside in the particular things as their predicates which are the basis of their classification and generalization. However, a subtle difference is there between these two camps. For Aristotle, the universals do not have existence different from and independent of the particular things. But the Nyaya, as differed from Aristotle yet being closer to Plato, holds that the universals are existentially independent of the particulars, although they depend on the particulars for their awareness.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 7:** What is the main thesis of realism?

**Q 8:** Name some supporters of realism.

**Q 9:** State briefly Plato's view of realism.

**Q 10:** How are the Ideas known according to Plato?

**Q 11:** Define Aristotle's realism.

**Q 12:** Write whether the following statements are true or false. (True/ False)

a) Plato treats universals as properties. (True/False)

b) Aristotle regards universals as adjectives. (True/False)

c) According to Plato, universals exist in a separate world beyond the particulars. (True/False)

d) Aristotle's theory is universalia in rebus. (True/False)



**Activity 3.1**

- Whose view do you think to be more plausible- Plato's or Aristotle's?

Ans: .....
.....
.....
.....
.....



## 3.6 LET US SUM UP:

- What we have understood from the foregoing discussion is the problem of universal is a very knotty one.
- The two views discussed here seem to be right from their own perspectives, though none of them are above criticism.
- However, the definition of universal that is commonly held is- universal is something which is common to and shared in common by all the members of a particular class, and is the ground of their being grouped into the same class and called by the same name.
- According to realism, this common element is mind-independent and has objective reality.
- While for Plato, universal exists in a non-spatial and non-temporal world, for Aristotle, it exists in particular things.
- The problem of universal is originated from our experience, thought and language.

- Universal provides the ground of grouping things together. It establishes a unity among the discrete particulars.
- Realism, conceptualism and nominalism are the some main theories of universal.
- Realism is the theory according to which universals have independent reality. Champions of this theory are Plato and Aristotle.
- According to Plato, universals are substantive, but for Aristotle, they are adjectival. For Plato, universals exist apart from the particulars, but for Aristotle, it is impossible.



## 3.6 FURTHER READING

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## 3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** a) True b) False c) True d) True e) False

**Ans to Q no 2:** The universal may generally be defined as something which is common to and shared in common by all the members of a particular class, and is the ground of their being grouped into the same class and called by the same name.

**Ans to Q no 3:** Particular things are those that exist in a particular space and time. For example, a chair, a table, a red colour, a cow, a tree etc.

**Ans to Q no 4:** Realism, Conceptualism and Nominalism.

**Ans to Q no 5:** According to conceptualism, universal is a concept in mind; it is a pure mental entity. There is no universality in things outside mind.

**Ans to Q no 6:** According to Nominalism, universals are mere words or names which are made universal by being used for a number of different particulars.

**Ans to Q no 7:** The main thesis of realism is that universal exists independent of the knowing mind. It has objective reality. It is the essence that is equally present in all the members of a class.

**Ans to Q no 8:** Nyaya-Vaisesika amd Mimamsa, Plato, Aristotle, St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas, Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore and S. Alexander are the supporters of realism.

**Ans to Q no 9:** Plato's realism is extreme realism. For him, a universal is substantive, an entity which exists without depending on mind in a non-temporal, non-spatial world. It is not affected by whatever happens to the particulars in the world of space and time. Particulars depend on universals for their existence, but the other way round is not true.

**Ans to Q no 10:** According to Plato, Ideas are known through the theory of reminiscence. He said that the soul is said to possess the universals (in Plato's words, pure Forms or Ideas) in the incorporeal world before embodying the present body. When we perceive the similar things in the present life, we remember the Forms forgotten in earthly life.

**Ans to Q no 11:** Aristotle advocates a moderate form of realism. He rejects the mysterious world of substantive universals. According to him, a universal is not a substantive at all but a property which belongs to particulars. For him, there is a logical interdependence between the universals and the particulars.

**Ans to Q no 12:** a) False b) True c) True d) True

## 3.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Is Russell a supporter of realism?

**Q2:** Which Indian thinkers advocate realism?

**Q3:** Which theory of universal admits essence as identically present in all the particulars of a class?

**Q4:** What is particular?

**Q5:** Give an example of universal.

**Q6:** Give some examples of particular.

**Q7:** Name the theory by which Ideas are known according to Plato?

**Q8:** According to Aristotle, does universal exist apart from the particulars?

**Q9:** Which Indian theory assimilates Aristotle's view?

**Q10:** Which philosopher is associated with the concept the Idea of Good?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Define universal.

**Q2:** What is realism?

**Q3:** Write the difference between universal and particular.

**Q4:** Write short notes on Plato's Idea of Good?

**Q5:** Write how Aristotle's view assimilates that of Nyaya-Vaisesika.

**Q6:** Mention some differences between the views of Plato and Aristotle.

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Discuss critically Plato's theory of universal.

**Q2:** How does Aristotle criticise Plato's theory of Ideas?

**Q3:** Give an account of Aristotle's realism.

**Q4:** In what sense is Aristotle's realism more moderate than that of Plato?

**Q5:** What do you mean by the hierarchy of universals? Discuss in the light of Plato's view.

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# UNIT- 4: NOMINALISM

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

4.1 Learning Objectives
4.2 Introduction
4.3 Problem of Universals
4.4 Abstract objects and universals: arguments against them
4.5 Different forms of Nominalism
4.6 Criticism
4.7 Let us sum up
4.8 Further Reading
4.9 Answers to check your progress
4.10 Model Questions

## 4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Know about what Nominalism is and how it is related to the problem of universals,
- Know how to build the concepts of abstract objects and abstract universals,
- know the nominalist's arguments for the non-existence of the universals,
- Explain different types of nominalism,
- Distinguish between nominalism about proposition and about possible world,
- Give a critical account of nominalism.

## 4.2 INTRODUCTION

Nominalism is a theory according to which reality is only made up of particular items. It denies the real existence of any general entities such as properties, species, or other categories. The term "nominalism" stems from the Latin "nomen", "name." According to nominalism there is nothing general except names.

Nominalism comes in at least two varieties. In one of them it is the rejection of abstract objects; in the other it is the rejection of universals. Philosophers have often found it necessary to postulate either abstract objects or universals. And so Nominalism in one form or another has played a significant role in the metaphysical debate since at least the Middle Ages.

Nominalism is the theory that is related to the solution of one of the most important questions in philosophy, which is the problem of universals. It was a favorite subject for discussion in ancient times, and especially in the Middle Ages, is still in modern and contemporary philosophy.

## 4.3 PROBLEM O F UNIVERSALS

Nominalism arose in reaction to the problem of universals. The problem of universals is the problem of the correspondence of our mental concepts to things existing outside our intellect. Whereas external objects are determinate, individual, and they are excluded from all multiplicity, our concepts or mental representations offer us the realities independent of all particular determination; they are abstract and universal. The question, therefore, is to discover to what extent the concepts of the mind correspond to the things they represent; how the flower we conceive represents the flower existing in nature; in a word, whether our ideas are faithful and have an objective reality.

What is often called the "problem of universals" has emerged in the attempts that have been going on since Greek antiquity to understand and interpret. There are at any rate, two groups of questions about universals and are frequently distinguished as 'ontological' and 'epistemological', respectively. The first group is closely related to the themes - problems of Meaning: Meaning and reference) and deals with the kind of "reality" or "ontological status" that is to be assigned to the connotation (or meanings) of general terms.

The notion of universals has its genesis in attempts directed to different objectives to clarify the use of general terms.However, the

introduction of the notion leads directly to further questions about the sort of "existence" or "ontological status" and also to the questions about how universals are related to particulars. The various positions that have been taken on these ontological issues are frequently divided in to three main types. They are realism (extreme and moderate), conceptualism, and nominalism.

According to the so-called "realistic" view, universals are "objectively real," in the sense that their "existence" does not depend on the presence of human minds. But while the "extreme realism" advocated by Plato maintains that universals exist independently of any spatio-temporal particulars that may embody them, the "moderate realism" of Aristotle holds that universals exist only in particulars.

The Second type of view on the nature of universals is known as "conceptualism." According to it, universals are simply ways of thinking about particular things and do not exist independently of or external to human minds.

Finally, the third type of view on about universals is called "nominalism." It is usually described as the view maintaining that words alone are universals, and that the only attribute common to the things designated by a general term is the common name given to them. That means the common attribute of things is a general term. It is the common name given to the things that have a common attribute. However, it is doubtful whether anyone has consistently held such a thesis. Thinkers who are traditionally classified as nominalists (for example, Hobbs) do not deny that things receive a common name for reasons that are not wholly arbitrary because there are certain resemblances between them. What they deny is that individual objects designated by a general term posses an attribute that is identical in all the objects. They emphasize the conventional character of classification, the indeterminate range of application of most words, and the role played by language in the intellectual organization of experience. Recent thinkers with nominalistic leanings deal with the ontological problem

of universals almost exclusively from the perspective of logical grammar.

For the second group of the problem of universals, it is the epistemological problem. It is concerned with the inclusive question of what the grounds are, for maintaining that the use of general terms can be understood only on the assumption that at least some of them stand for universals. However, philosophers who deal with the question usually do so by discussing a congeries (a collection of items or parts in mass) of more specific ones, some of them are the questions for experimental psychology. Various issues have been raised by philosophers in this connection and some important among them are-(I) what is the function of general terms in acquiring knowledge and in the communication of thought? (2) What are the prerequisites involving sensory or introspective experience for the ability to use general terms and understand their meanings? (3) What mental occurrences are associated with the use of general terms, and how do images, ideas, or other psychic events-which are all particular existents-achieve generality of reference? (4) Does the use of general terms presuppose that things of which they are correctly predicated posses an identical common character? (5) Are there criteria for determining unambiguously the reality of universals? (6) Are assumptions about the existence of universals or other abstract entities comparable to scientific theories that postulate the existence of "unobservable" entities? And what is the ground of assessing the validity or acceptability of such assumptions?

## 4.4 ABSTRACT OBJECTS AND UNIVERSALS: ARGUMENTS AGAINST THEM

**Abstract objects**

In one sense, its most traditional sense, nominalism implies the rejection of universals. In another, more modern sense, it implies the rejection of abstract objects. To say that these are distinct senses of the word presuppose that universal and abstract object do not mean the same thing. Although different philosophers mean different things by universal, and

likewise by abstract object, according to widespread usage a universal is something that can be instantiated by different entities and an abstract object is something that is neither spatial nor temporal.

Thus there are (at least) two kinds of nominalism, one that maintains that there are no universals and one that maintains that there are no abstract objects. Realism about universals is the doctrine that there are universals, and Platonism is the doctrine that there are abstract. Thus one kind of nominalism asserts that there are particular objects and that everything is particular, and the other asserts that there are concrete objects and that everything is concrete.

Nominalism, in both senses, is a kind of anti-realism. For one kind of nominalism denies the existence, and therefore the reality, of universals and the other denies the existence, and therefore the reality, of abstract objects. What nominalism finds uncongenial in entities like properties, numbers, possible worlds and propositions is that they are supposed to be universals or abstract objects. Thus the mere rejection of properties, numbers, possible worlds, propositions, etc., does not make one a nominalist - to be a nominalist one needs to reject them because they are supposed to be universals or abstract objects.

What is an abstract object? There is no standard definition of the phrase. Generally it is regarded that an abstract objects is non-spatiotemporal and causally inert objects non-spatiotemporal, causally inert objects is a reasonably clear characterization (at least as clear as the notions of spatiotemporal object, causation, causal power and related ones are).

**Universals:**

The nominalist about universals rejects universals - but what are they?

Realists about universals typically think that properties (e.g. whiteness), relations (e.g. betweenness), and kinds (e.g. gold) are universals. Where

do universals exist? Do they exist in the things that instantiate them? Or do they exist outside them? To maintain the second option is to maintain an ante rem realism about universals. If universals exist outside their instances then it is plausible to suppose that they exist outside space and time. If so, assuming their consequent causal inertness, universals are abstract objects. To maintain that universals exist in their instances is to maintain an in re realism about universals. If universals exist in their instances, and their instances exist in space or time, then it is plausible to think that universals exist in space or time, in which case they are concrete. In this case universals can be multiply located, i.e. they can occupy more than one place at the same time, for in re universals are wholly located at each place they occupy (thus if there is whiteness in re, then such a thing can be six meters apart from itself).

Thus, both on ante rem and in re realism about universals, universals enjoy a relation with space very different from that apparently enjoyed by ordinary objects of experience like houses, horses and men. For such particulars are located in space and time and cannot be located in more than one place at the same time. But universals are either not located in space or else they can occupy more than one place at the same time.

**Arguments against abstract objects and universals:**

The thinkers who deny the abstract objects have not always based their rejection on arguments. This is the case, for instance, of Goodman and Quine who, in their Steps toward a Constructive nominalism, base their rejection of mathematical abstract objects on a basic intuition (1947, 105). One of the arguments against postulating abstract objects is based on Ockham's razor. According to this principle one should not multiply entities or kinds of entities unnecessarily. Thus if one can show that certain concrete objects can perform the theoretical roles usually associated with abstract objects, one should refrain from postulating abstract objects.

Another common and widely discussed argument against abstract objects is an epistemological argument. The argument is grounded in the

thought that if the abstract objects are causally inert, it is difficult to understand how we can have knowledge or reliable belief about them.

Many of these arguments and motivations for the rejection of abstract objects are also arguments and motivations for rejecting non-spatiotemporal ante rem universals. But Ockham's razor can also be used against universals conceived of as spatiotemporal entities.

There are other, more specific arguments against universals. One is that postulating such things leads to a vicious infinite regress. For suppose there are universals, both monadic and relational, and that when an entity instantiates a universal, or a group of entities instantiate a relational universal, they are linked by an instantiation relation

Other arguments against universals are based on the principles that there cannot be necessary connections between wholly distinct existences and that no two things can be composed of exactly the same parts.

## 4.5 DIFFERENT FORMS OF NOMINALISM

Given that nominalists about universals believe only in particulars, there are two strategies that they might implement regarding the question of the alleged existence of allegedly universal entities like properties and relations. One strategy is to reject the existence of such entities. Another strategy is to accept that such entities exist but to deny that they are universals.

**Types of nominalism about universals:**

The question that realists and nominalists about universals try to answer is: what makes a square thing square? A popular nominalist theory of properties is so-called Trope Theory, which has been held by Donald Williams (1953), Keith Campbell (1990), and Douglas Ehring (2011) among others. Trope theory does not reject the existence of properties, but takes properties to be certain entities usually called 'tropes'. Tropes are particulars, in the same sense in which individual people and individual apples are

particulars. There are other forms of nominalism about universals, two of which are Predicate nominalism and Concept nominalism. The realist about universals admits that the predicate 'scarlet' applies to a scarlet thing. Scarletness is a trope.

For Predicate nominalism there is nothing like scarletness. According to this theory a thing is scarlet in virtue of the fact that the predicate 'scarlet' applies to it. Similarly, according to Concept nominalism (or Conceptualism), there is nothing like scarletness and a thing is scarlet in virtue of its falling under the concept scarlet. These two views entail that if there were no speakers or thinkers, things would not be scarlet.

Because of this many would feel inclined towards another view, called Ostrich nominalism. This view, held by Quine, among others, maintains that there is nothing in virtue of which our thing is scarlet: it just is scarlet (Devitt 1980, 97). But many think that being scarlet cannot be a metaphysically ultimate fact, but that there must be something in virtue of which scarlet things are scarlet.

Another theory is Mereological nominalism, according to which the property of being scarlet is the aggregate of scarlet things, and for which something is scarlet in virtue of being a part of the aggregate of scarlet things. An aggregate, or mereological sum, is a particular. But the theory faces a difficulty with so-called extensive properties like mass and shape. For example every part of the aggregate of square things is not square.

There is another theory called Class nominalism, a version of which was maintained by Lewis (1983). Whether abstract or not, classes are particular on this view. According to Class Nominalism properties are classes of things, and so the property of being scarlet is the class of all and only scarlet things.

One problem with this theory is that no two classes can have the same members, while it does not seem that properties with the same instances need be the same. So there is no guarantee that the identification

of properties with classes is correct.

Another version of Nominalism is Resemblance nominalism. According to this theory, it is not that scarlet things resemble one another because they are scarlet, but what makes them scarlet is that they resemble one another. But the resemblance nominalist does not reify resemblance. When a and b resemble each other does not require that there are three entities there: a, b and a third, relational entity that is their resemblance. The only entities involved in that situation are a and b. Russell (1912, 96-7) and others think that Resemblance Nominalism faces the resemblance regress. But this regress presupposes that resemblances are entities that can resemble one another. Since Resemblance nominalism does not reify resemblances, the regress does not arise.

**Nominalism about abstract objects:**

Nominalism of abstract object is generally is of two types. They are nominalism about propositions and nominalism about possible words.

Nominalisms of propositions -can be divided into those that take them to be structured entities and those that take them to be unstructured entities. Each conception comprises a family of theories.

The most popular conceptions of unstructured propositions are those that take them to be either sets of possible worlds or functions from possible worlds to truth values.

There are other theories of propositions that take them to be unstructured entities. George Bealer has a conception of unstructured propositions according to which they are sui generis irreducible intensional entities.

Among conceptions of propositions as structured entities one can distinguish, roughly, between Russellian and Fregean versions. Both the Russellian and the Fregean conceptions of propositions are families of theories. In general Fregean theories will take a proposition to be a complex

entity with a particular structure whose constituents are senses.

According to the Russellian conception of propositions, a proposition is a complex entity with a particular structure whose constituents are particulars and/or properties and/or relations. Complexes of particulars and properties and/or relations are abstract objects.

One nominalist option is to show that the roles associated with propositions are actually played by concrete objects. One common thought here is to propose that sentences play the roles associated by propositions. This strategy is exemplified by Quine.

Another nominalist option is to deny that there are propositions and any entities that play their theoretical roles. If so, apparently true sentences that entail the existence of propositions are false. Thus this kind of Nominalism about propositions is a sort of fictionalism, called semantic fictionalism (Balaguer 1998).Thus a sentence like 'Nestor believed that the gods do not give men all things at the same time' is not true on this account because (a) 'that'-clauses (like 'that the gods do not give men all things at the same time') are referential singular terms, (b) if anything is the referent of 'that the gods do not give men all things at the same time', this is a proposition, and (c) there are no propositions. Thus talk about propositions is a fiction.

Nominalism about possible worlds-since some philosophers take possible worlds to be abstract objects, a nominalist about possible worlds will be, for the purposes of this section, someone who thinks that possible worlds are not abstract objects, and this will include those who believe that there are no possible worlds.

The question about the nature of possible worlds is a hotly debated topic. Some, for instance Alvin Plantinga, think that possible worlds are states of affairs that are both possible and maximal. Stalnaker naturally takes these properties to be abstract objects.

Another option is to take possible worlds as maximally consistent sets of propositions. R. M. Adams (1974) sketched such a theory. If propositions are abstract objects, then on this theory possible worlds are abstract objects.

For Lewis 'actual' is an indexical predicate so that from the point of view of each world only that world is actual and none of the others are. Thus, unlike Plantinga, Adams, and Stalnaker, Lewis does not take every possible world to exist actually.

## 4.6 CRITICISM

According to Aristotle, the objects of scientific knowledge are necessary and universal. But the defenders of nominalism deny the existence of real universals outside the human mind. According to Aristotle the objects of scientific knowledge are necessary and universal.

Therefore, if universals had only a mental existence, then the sciences would not deal with reality but only with human thought, which would be absurd. For this reason, Heymeric concluded, nominalists can only do logic, which is indeed concerned with human concepts, but none of the sciences dealing with things outside the human mind. As the main representatives of nominalism, he mentioned Wiiliam of Ockham, John Burdian, and Marsilius of Inghen, and considered the first to be the inaugurator of nominalism, who out of jealousy had distorted Aristotelianism and invented an opposing school of his own.

As a rule, in the commentaries on Aristotle written by Albertists, nomonalist authors were not mentioned and their positions not discussed. The most important conversant in their debates were theThomists and to a lesser extent, the Scotists.

At Cologne, the nominalists were also ignored by the Thomists, who as this matter was concerned, shared the critical view of the Albertists.

Albertists and Thomists also made a common stand against nominalism. For example the disputation held at Theological Faculty at the University of Cologne in 1480. Not only in Cologne but also elsewhere was the relationship between Aristotelian philosophy and Christian faith a matter of debate. For many Albertists, nominalism posed a serious danger to the adequate understanding of Christian faith.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** What is the main problem of nominalism?

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**Q 2:** What is the 'realistic' view of universals?

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**Q 3:** What is Predicate nominalism?

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**Q 4:** What is abstract object?

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**Q 5:** What are the different forms of nominalism?

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## 4.6 LET US SUM UP:

- Nominalism is the theory that is related to the solution of one of the most important questions in philosophy, which is the problem of universals. It was a favorite subject for discussion in ancient times, and especially in the middle Ages, is still in modern and contemporary philosophy.

- Nominalism comes in at least two varieties. In one of them it is the rejection of abstract objects; in the other it is the rejection of universals.
- Nominalism arose in reaction to the problem of universals. There are at any rate, two groups of questions about universals and are frequently distinguished as 'ontological' and 'epistemological' respectively.
- In its most traditional sense, nominalism implies the rejection of universals. In another, more modern sense, it implies the rejection of abstract objects.
- There are (at least) two kinds of nominalism, one that maintains that there are no universals and one that maintains that there are no abstract objects.
- Nominalism, in both senses, is a kind of anti-realism. For one kind of nominalism denies the existence, and therefore the reality, of universals and the other denies the existence, and therefore the reality, of abstract objects.



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## 4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** Nominalism is a theory according to which reality is only made up of particular items. It denies the real existence of any general entities such as properties, species, or other categories.

**Ans. to the Q. No. 2:** According to the so-called "realistic" view, universals are "objectively real," in the sense that their "existence" does not depend on the presence of human minds.

**Ans. to the Q.No.3:** For Predicate nominalism there is nothing like scarletness. According to this theory a thing is scarlet in virtue of the fact that the predicate 'scarlet' applies to it.

**Ans. to the Q. No.4:** Although different philosophers mean different things by universal, and likewise by abstract object, according to widespread usage a universal is something that can be instantiated by different entities and an abstract object is something that is neither spatial nor temporal.

**Ans. to the Q. No. 5:** A popular nominalist theory of properties is so-called Trope Theory. There are other forms of nominalism about universals, two of which are Predicate nominalism and Concept nominalism. Another theory is called Ostrich nominalism. This view, held by Quine, among others, maintains that there is nothing in virtue of which our thing is scarlet: it just is scarlet. Nominalism of abstract object is generally is of two types. They are nominalism about propositions and nominalism about possible words.

## 4.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** In which period or age Nominalism was important as the theory of universals?

**Q2:** From which word "Nominalism" is derived?

**Q3:** According to Aristotle where do universals exist?

**Q4:** Is conceptualism a theory of universals?

**Q5:** 5. Is an abstract object spatio-temporal?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Write briefly about different forms of Nominalism.

**Q2:** Distinguish between "universals "and "abstract objects."

**Q3:** Distinguish between Nominalism about propositions and Nominalism about possible world.

**Q4:** What is Trope Theory?

**Q5:** What is the view of Extreme realism about universals?

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Discuss the problem of universal.

**Q2:** Critically explain about abstract object and universal.

**Q3:** What are the different forms of nominalism? Discuss.

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# UNIT 5: PERSONAL IDENTITY

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Bodily criterion

5.4 Memory criterion

5.5 Jean Paul Sartre's Viewpoint on Self-Identity

5.6 Critical Appreciation

5.7 Let Us Sum Up

5.8 Further Readings

5.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.10 Model Questions

## 5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to

- explain the Bodily criterion
- describe Memory criterion
- discuss Jean Paul Sartre's viewpoint on Self-identity
- write a critical appreciation on Self-identity

## 5.2 INTRODUCTION

The problem of personal identity is a philosophical enquiry of re-identifications of persons. Some philosophers have said that we are never concerned with this problem because sameness and changes are themselves incompatible, while some others opine that sameness and changes are compatible. In this regard philosophers accept two criteria of personal identity in order to explore the mystery of personal identity. They are : i) Bodily identity and ii) Memory identity. Now, we will discuss the above two criteria one by one in order to discuss the problem.

## 5.3 BODILY CRITERION

Bodily criterion holds that personal identity can be defined in terms of bodily identity. In an article on Spiritualism, F.H. Bradley argues that bodily identity is a necessary criterion for self-identity. The necessity of identifying self by their bodies has been urged by B.A.O Williums in Personal Identity and Individuation. Like Bradley Williums argues that "Bodily identity is always a necessary condition of personal identity". But A.J. Ayer holds that personal identity cannot be defined in terms of bodily identity. The self or person is not the same as the body even if the identity of the self rests on the identity of the body. The body is our means of identification, but is not the identity that is identified in case of personal identity.

There are some philosophers like Strawson and Ayer, who are directly or indirectly agreed with the criterion of bodily identity. According to Strawson, the concept of personal identity is "of relatively minor significance." He discusses this concept in the light of the thesis that the concept of person alone is primitive. He points out that we can identify a person by his corporeal characteristics as well as his other characteristics. He denies the primary existence of the particular consciousness and avoids the claim of body as the criterion of personal identity.

Like Strawson, Ayer also discusses the concept of personal identity in a different style. He does not accept the problem of personal identity. Ayer does not accept the view that there can be perceptions independent of any physical body. There is no principle by which independent perceptions can be identified or grouped together. Memory is related to the bundles of experiences. But this is open to the charge of circularity because memory implies the thinking of an event as well as an experience of one's own.

The view that personal identity depends upon the identity of the body is open to the subject of criticism because the bodily criterion seems to be non-functional in case of disembodied existence. Ayer thinks that Strawson was misled by the 'picture of a heap of experiences' which have to be assigned to their respective owners. But this picture is not correct

because the question - are experiences dependent upon a particular body?- cannot be raised in the context of personal identity. Experiences of a person cannot be counted unless by reference to the persons.

Ayer holds that persons are identified in terms of their bodies. An experience denotes one's own body which is a necessary condition of the occurrences of experiences. There is no question of the occurrence of experiences when one's body does not exist. That is why Ayer's view is that a person's body is immediately necessary for experience. But it cannot be stated that my experiences are dependent on the state or behaviour of another person. However, one's experiences can affect other perceptions. In order to be influenced by another's behaviour, one must observe other behaviour, which is considered necessary for my having experience. Ayer comes to the conclusion that his theory about the identity of the person in terms of the body is immediately necessitated by the states of the body of the person. Ayer does not want to hold the physicalistc thesis that persons are bodies. Nor does he hold that mental phenomena are physical phenomena. He recognizes a separate identity and existence of mental phenomena, but not independent of the body. Similarly, he recognizes that memory plays a part in the identity of a person but it is neither a necessary nor sufficient criterion or condition. It cannot independently be the criterion of personal identity without the identity of the body.

Bernard Williams', Terence Penelhumand and others also advocate the view that personal identity consists in the identity of the body. Ayer's thesis on the bodily identity rules out any possibility of disembodied existence or person. However, from the religious point of view disembodied existence or life after death is accepted. In this context, Anthony Flew maintains: "a disembodied person is no more a special sort of person than is an imaginary person and disembodiment is no more a possible state of a person than is non-existence." (Flew, A: Can a man witness His own funeral?" in Blackstone, W.T.(ed.) Meaning and Existence (p.614)

Sydney Shoemaker views that memory is a criterion, but this does

not mean that it is a logically necessary and logically sufficient criterion for personal identity. Memory criteria cannot be used independently without presuming a stable relation between bodily identity and links of memory. That is why, the bodily identity is fundamental.

Bernard Williams' in his Personal identity and Individuation deals with this view prior to Shoemaker in a different but convincing style. His example is that of a Charles who claims to remember the actions and experiences of Guy Fawkes. Williams in this regard opines that if it is possible then Charles should undergo the changes (described) like the actions and experiences of Guy Fawkes. Similarly, it is also conceivable that Charles' Brother, Robert should undergo exactly the similar changes. And both should claim to remember the actions and experiences of Guy Fawkes to be their own actions and experiences. But, the point is that they cannot be both Guy Fawkes. And if it is possible then Guy Fawkes would be in two places at once, which is absurd. Moreover, if they were both identical with Guy Fawkes, they would be identical with each other, which is also absurd." (Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1956-57)

Materialism is a term which refers to a philosophy in which value is ascribed to physical objects rather than to moral or aesthetic qualities. This theory of personal identity is used particularly in two areas. They are i) The philosophy of mind, ii) and Marxist philosophy. The first one holds that matter alone exists and mind and matter can be explained in terms of changes in matter. And the second one refers to the mechanism which generates social change. The strict sense of materialism holds that the mind is regulated completely by the physical activities or functions of the brain. In this context different viewpoints from different groups of philosophers are found in this regard. The first group, which is formed by materialists like David Armstrong, advocates that the mind is regulated fully by the physical functions of the brain. Besides they hold that all the human sciences can be reduced to physics.

The second group of philosophers, who follow the viewpoints of

Brentano, claim that there is a difference between two types of functions of the mind. The first one involves the processing of information, which is subject to the laws of nature, while the other involves the intentionality, which is free from some of the restrictions imposed by physical laws.

Some philosophers view that the body criterion is not the criterion at all because there are some occasions in which we find human bodies that are not persons. As for example a man in a state of comma is biologically alive but incapable any bodily or mental function.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** What are the two critera of personal identity?

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**Q 2:** Name the two philosophers who advocate the criterion of bodily identity.

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**Q 3:** What is the view of materialism in case of personal identity? (Answer in about 20 words)

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**Q 4:** State whether the following statements are True or False:

a) Bodily criterion is the only criterion for self identity. (True/ False)

b) Bernard Williums advocates the bodily criterion. (True/ False)

c) Aristotle advocates bodily criteria in personal identity.(True/False)

**Q 5:** What are two specific areas of materialism?

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**Q 6:** What do you mean by strict sense of materialism in case of personal identity?( Answer in about 20 words)

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**ACTIVITY: 3.1**

**Q1:** Do you agree to the view that bodily criterion is the sole criterion of personal identity? Discuss

Ans: .....

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## 5.4 MEMORY CRITERION

It is admitted that personal identity can be defined in terms of memory. It has been suggested that memory is a criterion of self-identity. One knows that he is the same person who has witnessed, endured, felt, so and so without knowing about his body. So, when someone does not apply the bodily criterion, he must apply some other criterion which could only be memory.

Locke says that it is the consciousness that constitutes personal identity. He argues that only by consciousness we can identify ourselves. It is this consciousness which indicates different senses and perceptions, and thoughts and desires at any time, that belongs to one self and accounts for the sameness of the self at different times.

Locke clearly states that the existence of a spiritual substance or soul does not determine the personal identity because if there were soul substances, then, presumably, the substance can be re-incarnated. As for instance, Let us presume that A may have the soul of Socrates but he has no consciousness of any of the Socrates' action or thought; then Locke argues that he is not the same person as Socrates.

There is circularity reasoning associated with Locke's view that memory is the sole criterion. The circularity reasoning has been pointed out by Butler for the first time. Butler rejected Locke's view that memory can be recognized as the sole criterion on the ground that consciousness of a personal identity presupposes personal identity. This is the circularity objection.

Descartes holds that the concept of person is both extended and thinking. As a thinking being he is unextended and from the bodily point of view he is extended. And therefore, to Descartes, mind and body are separable. Locke accepts Descartes' point of view in case of a thing, which is found itself in a body. According to him, a person is 'a thinking reasoning, and reflective being' to consider himself to be the same thing in different places and times. Like Descartes, he did not deduce the view that mind and body were inseparable. The main intention of Locke is to deduce the criteria for determining the continued identity of a person over time in case of personal identity.

Locke introduced the concept of criteria in order to identify a person. Unlike Descartes he distinguished between the person, what he was and the criteria which is needed to re-identify the person. Locke in this regard put forward two types of questions, what is a person? And how do we identify a person? Locke holds that a person stands for " a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places."(1690, II, Chap, 27, Section 9) Although this definition of a person refers to intrinsic property of the person without requirement of criteria to identify a person, yet he is concerned with

the second question that is how do we identify a person as the same person on different occasions? Locke addresses this question in his book An Essay Concerning Human Understanding with these words 'For, it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, personal identity depends on that only,……..' Through this saying Locke holds that the continuity of consciousness determines the continuing identity of a person. Locke completes the sentence by stating "whether it be annexed solely to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances." (1690- Chap.27, Sec 10)

Descartes, Hume and Kant uphold consciousness as the sole key to personal identity. Most modern philosophers and psychologists would argue that you cannot have a concept of 'who you are' unless you are also sometimes self-conscious. Conversely, you cannot even be self-conscious unless you have some sense of identity. The two concepts are so interrelated that one cannot be separated from the other. Many philosophers have argued that not only self-consciousness is crucial in order to know one's own individuality but it is also crucial for establishing that one is an enduring self that is the same person ever time. Descartes is an example who holds the criteria of self-consciousness in order to identify a self. Regarding the question of what am I? Descartes replies that I am a thing with desires, who perceives light and noise and feels heat. Descartes concept of self is of thought or consciousness which is considered a human essence. Generally each person possesses it and by which each person identifies himself or herself. Descartes, by his concept of doubt, wants to show that the concept of body is not important in case of personal identity. Therefore, he concludes that it is not my body that provides me with an identity; rather he claims that the concept of self provides me with an identity. It follows from this that the particular aspects of my self- whether I am male or female, black or white, tall or short, handsome or ugly, strong or weak are associated with my body only and in fact these cannot be essential to my identity. "My self-identity is in my mind, thinking, doubting, feeling, perceiving, imagining, and describing. I am, essentially a "thing that thinks." (Descartes')

Descartes in Mediations VI mentions that self identity depends on consciousness. Our identity does not depend on our body, which remains the same, and so human identity is different from the identity of anything else in the world.

Like Descartes, John Locke also holds that self- consciousness is the sole key to self-identity. Unlike Descartes, he views that self-identity does not depend on our remaining the same thinking substance that is the soul. Because, to Locke, in course of our life our soul might be replaced with new souls just as in the course of a tree's growth its cells are replaced with new cells. The tree remains the same tree because the same life is present in spite of changes in its physical structure. And what makes a person the same person is that the same consciousness and memories are present. Therefore, Locke differs from Descartes' in distinguishing between the soul and consciousness. It is our consciousness that we call our 'self'.

Although Locke's theory has some advantage over Descartes' personal identity in terms of consciousness without requirement of a persisting immaterial soul, still it has some difficulties. Although we can remember our past experiences, still there is every possibility of forgetting our own experiences. So, the question is, can we remember everything that has ever happened to us? It is not possible for a human being to remember everything that had happened in life. Even a person who has a very good memory does not remember being born, learning to walk or what he had for breakfast on June 3, 2001. Can anybody claim that he remembers everything that had happened in life earlier? That is why, the memory criterion is not a satisfactory criterion in case of personal identity.

Our memories are not always accurate. Sometimes we remember things that have never happened. As for instance, we do remember that this book was in the hand of my friend, but unfortunately this book was in my almirah when I opened it. So, in this case the memory criterion sometimes deceives us. Again, we can speak of deluded and deranged memories. Here, these types of memories fail to play a key role as a criterion of personal

identity. They are not considered genuine memories; rather they are considered apparent memories which guarantee self-identity. In this case we must find a way to distinguish between cases in which a memory is genuine and those in which it is not. If we were able to do it, then the memory criterion is to be circular. Again, in case of distinguishing the genuine from apparent memories, we search for the existence of a persisting, self-identical person. It raises the question: whether the self-identity can be explained through memory criterion. ( It raises the question: was it not for the fact that the concept of self-identity is probably what we trying to explain?) So, we cannot use the concept of memory to explain self-identity. Here, it seems that in stead of explaining the concept of self identity through memory criterion, we use the concept of self identity to explain memory. That is why if we reflect on the nature of genuine memory, we can say that Locke was putting the cart before the horse, that is, he was explaining the memory criterion through the personal identity.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q.7:** State the names of two philosophers who advocate the memory criterion for self-identity.

Ans:.....

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**Q.8:** Write Locke's view on memory criterion. (Answer in about 40 words)

Ans: .....

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**Q.9:** What is the circularity objection raised by Butler against Locke? (Answer in about 40 words)

Ans:.....

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**Q.10:** What is the difference between Locke and Descartes in case of personal identity? (Answer in about 85 words)

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**Q. 11:** State whether the following statements are True or False

a) To Hume, Personal identity is nothing but fictitious identity. (True/ False)

b) Hume defines man as nothing but the bundle of perception or experiences. (True/ False)

c) Descartes in his book Meditations VI holds that self identity depends upon consciousness. (True/False)

**Q 12:** Explain one of the difficulties of memory criterion. (Answer in about 100 words)

Ans:.....

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**Q 13:** State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Aristotle did not believe in memory criterion. (True/False)

b) According to Hume, "I never can catch myself at any time without a perception and never can observe anything but the perception." (True/False)

c) Memory criterion holds that personal identity can be defined in terms of memory. (True/False)

d) The circularity objection is associated with Locke in case of Personal identity. (True/False)



**ACTIVITY: 5.2**

**Q1:** Do you support that memory is the sole criterion? If it is so, discuss.

Ans: .....

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## 5.5 JEAN PAUL SARTRE'S VIEWPOINT ON PERSONAL IDENTITY

One of the most powerful schools of contemporary thought is existentialism. It views that self-identity is a matter of individual choice. Jean Paul Sartre, a French Philosopher, is one of the serious advocates of existentialism. According to Sartre, there are no set standards for self-identity, either for individual or for people in general. Existence is prior to essence. Man is responsible for what he is. And when we say that man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his own individuality, but that is he is also responsible for all men. The question that can be asked regarding the self identity is- is self identity a matter of choice? According to the existentialist, a person chooses as to which facts are to be considered as existential. Are the facts alone ever sufficient to determine our identity? According to Sartre, it is not possible, which he adapted from the German existentialist Martin Heidegger. The facts that are true of a person are always only indicative of what a person has been and has done so far. In case of judging personal identity or self identity we must always consider more than the facts that are true of him or her. It indicates that we must also consider their projections into the future, their ambitions, planes, intentions, hopes and fantasies. Sartre calls these considerations a person's transcendence. This way of viewing the person makes the question of self-

identity complex and irresolvable. For example, we can consider Sartre's example of bad faith in his important work Being and Nothingness.

Bad faith implies the denial of oneself. This can happen in two different ways- either you can refuse to accept the facts and actions as relevant to your self identity or you can go too far in the opposite direction believing that your actions conclusively and unalterably establish your identity as a coward. In case of Bad faith, he points out an example: a homosexual frequently has an intolerable feeling of guilt, and his whole existence is determined in relation to this feeling. One will readily see that he is in bad faith. Sartre tells us, "One is what one is not, and one is not what one is." The homosexual in Sartre's example is a homosexual to the extent that all his past actions and desires are those of a homosexual. He falls into bad faith by refusing to accept his past actions as a homosexual. However, at the same time, there is a genuine sense in which he is not homosexual. Because, in the future he may radically alter his life style which totally denies that he was a homosexual in the past. As long as a person is alive, he or she is identified by intentions, plans, dreams, and hopes. Therefore, the problem of deciding "who I am" makes the issue of personal identity dramatic and more complicated.

## 5.6 CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Sydney Shoemaker has argued that it is a logical truth that memory claims are usually true, not an inductive one.

A) If someone frequently said that he remembered the events which did not occur then we would conclude that he did not know how to use the word 'remember.'

B) A child learns language only through the word 'remember.'

C) Memory is not criterion. The criterion is qualitative similarity between the body I now see and the body I now remember

Memory merely supplies one half of the material in terms of re-identifying of persons.

According to Hume, personal identity is nothing but fictitious identity. It is fictitious because the memory criterion and the bodily identity are irrelevant. Hume realized that certain basic notions are contained in Locke's view of personal identity. But against the view of Locke, he opines that there is nothing immaterial substance as claimed by Locke. Hume defines man as nothing but a bundle of perceptions or experiences.

It can be viewed that both are ineluctable components of our concept of a person. The bodily criterion is fundamental but the memory criterion is indispensible because of the basic epistemological status of memory itself. But the important result is that it is absurd to consider memory as the sole criterion of identity. Again, it is absurd to regard that bodily criterion fares better than memory criterion. In this context Shoemaker's view is important: "Just as the memory criterion is dependent upon the bodily criterion, so also the bodily criterion is dependent upon the mental criterion." The bodily criterion is more extensive than memory criterion. The bodily criterion is more varied. There are more ways in which we can determine whether a person is physically same or not. As for instance, blood tests, finger points, photographs, the testimony of witness are the ways of re-identifying of persons.

It is the empirical self that identifies individual persons. The transcendental self makes human consciousness possible. What is it that makes one "the same person from moment to moment and year to year? The sptio-temporal continuity of the body would seem to be a part of the answer. But philosophers since Descartes have seen quite clear that this is never enough, so, he puts the view that self-consciousness provides the key to self identity. But this has not solved the problem. As for instance, Jones has an emergency brain operation. His own brain is removed and replaced by the brain of Brown. "Jones" still looks like Jones, still carries the same driver's license and lives in the same house, but all of his memories and personality traits are those of Brown. Is he still Jones? Or is he Brown in Jones' body? Suppose you had been Brown, could you claim to be still alive in Jones' Body? This example beautifully shows that neither bodily

identity nor memory identity can be the sole criteria for personal identity. It indicates that both are equally important in case of identification of a person. As we enquire after a person involving the issue of personal identity, so, re-identification of a person directs that both memory and bodily identity are equally important. That is why, the discussion of this issue by taking the criteria of one without the other would be incomplete or mere discussion only.

Modern theories of personal identity advocate the notion of memory, self consciousness or psychological continuity. But, it is worth mentioning that Aristotle did not believe this criterion like Descartes and Locke did. According to Aristotle, self-identity was essentially bodily identity without any particular reference to self-awareness.

Hume does not accept Locke's and Descartes' view of self-identity. He holds that any idea must be derived from an impression. Hume argues that when we are self-conscious it means that we are only aware of feeling, thoughts, and perceptions. But, we do not have an impression of the self or a thinking substance. According to Hume, "I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and can never observe anything but the perception." He concludes that the idea of self is simply only a fiction. We are never aware of any enduring self. Again, we are never justified in claiming that we are the same person we were a year or a minute ago. According to Hume, the concept of identity to things and persons arises due to spatio-temporal continuity of things. As for instance, the tree is in the same place at different times. People, however, have the troublesome habit of moving around, going to Europe for the summar or college for the semester. We can still see the continuity of his or her movement. The same person receives postcards from appropriate places at the appropriate times. Therefore, we conclude that it is the same person. In addition to spatio-temporal continuity we ordinarily rely on resemblance as a criterion of identity. We tolerate small changes, a hair cut or a new scar, perhaps even a lost leg or a bit of plastic surgery. As long as there is a strong resemblance between two individuals, we think of them as the same. Hume, however, argues that spatio-temporal

continuity and resemblance do not in fact guarantee identity.

Kant holds the view that the self is not the bundle of our experiences. It is rather the transcendental thread that holds them together and is as real as any experience. Kant agrees with Hume in the sense that the enduring self is not an object of experience. Kant agrees with Descartes in some respects. Descartes thought that we had to be self conscious all the time, but Kant points out that it is only necessary for the " the 'I think' to be able to accompany all experiences." It is not necessary to be always conscious of ourselves but only to be, at any point in our experience, capable of becoming self conscious. According to Descartes, this is not possible because to exist as a human being is to exist self-consciously. But in this regard Kant holds that to exist as a human being is 'to be able" to be self- conscious. Kant objects to Descartes' view that the thinking self is a thinking thing. Kant disregards this view that the self is not in our experience but rather behind it and responsible for it. He says that the self must be thought of as an activity. This is the modified view of Kant which was earlier found in Plato, in Christianity, and also in modern thought. The soul is simply self-conceived of as a thing, an enduring thing that can survive after the death of the body. By saying that the self is an activity Kant undermines the traditional concept of soul.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 14:** What is bad faith, according to Sartre?(Answer in about 90 words)

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**Q15:** What is Sartre's view on Personal identity? (Answer in about 70 words)

Ans: .....

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**ACTIVITY: 5.3**

Are memory and bodily criterion equally important in the discussion of personal identity? What do you think? Discuss

Ans: .....

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## 5.7 LET US SUM UP

- Generally philosophers accept two criteria in case of re-identification of a person. They are: Bodily criterion and memory criterion.
- Bernard Williams, Terence Penelhumand and others advocate the view that personal identity consists in the identity of the body.
- Shoemaker opines that memory is a criterion, but this does not mean that it is a logically necessary and logically sufficient criterion for personal identity. Memory criteria cannot be used independently without presuming a stable relation between bodily identity and links of memory. That is why, the bodily identity is fundamental.
- Locke introduced the concept of criteria in order to identify a person. Unlike Descartes he distinguished between the person, what he was, and the criteria which is needed to re-identify the person.
- Descartes in Meditations VI mentions that self identity depends on consciousness. Our identity does not depend on our body, which remains the same, and so human identity is different from the identity of anything else in the world.

- Like Descartes, John Locke holds that self-consciousness is the sole key to self-identity. Unlike Descartes he views that self-identity does not depend on our remaining the same thinking substance that is the soul. According to Locke, our soul might be replaced with new souls in course of our life just as in the course of a tree's growth its cells are replaced with new cells. The tree remains the same tree because the same life is present in spite of changes in its physical strucrure.

- Bodily criterion asserts that self-identity can be defined in terms of bodily identity. In an article on Spiritualism, F.H. Bradley argues that bodily identity is a necessary criterion for self-identity. The necessity of identifying self by their bodies has ben urged by B.A.O Williams in Personal identity and Individuation. Like Bradley, Williams argues that bodily identity is a necessary condition of personal identity.

- A.J. Ayer holds that personal identity cannot be defined in terms of bodily identity. The self or person is not the same as the body even if the identity of the self rests on the identity of the body. The body is our means of identification, but is not that, that is identified in case of personal identity.

- Memory criterion holds that personal identity can be defined in terms of memory. One knows that he is the same person who witnessed, endured, felt so and so without knowing about his body. So, when the body criterion does not function, he must apply the memory criterion.

- The circularity reasoning is associated with Locke's view that memory is the sole criterion. It has been pointed out by Butler for the first time. He rejected Locke's view that memory can be recognized as the sole criterion on the ground that consciousness of a personal identity presupposes personal identity. This is the circularity objection.

- Both body and memory criterions are ineluctable components of our concept of a person. It is absurd to consider memory as the sole criterion of identity. Again, it is absurd to regard that bodily criterion fares better

than memory criterion. In this sense Shoemaker's view is important: "Just as the memory criterion is dependent upon the bodily identity, so also the bodily criterion dependent upon the mental criterion."

- Existentialism views that self-identity is a matter of individual choice. One of the serious advocates of existentialism is Jean Paul Sartre, who views that there are no specific standards for self identity either for individual or for people in general. In case of judging personal identity, he holds that we must consider people's projections into the future, ambitions, planes, intentions, hopes and fantasies.

- Bad faith implies the denial of one's own identity in the context of past behaviour of a man in comparison to the present status of the person.



## 5.8 FURTHER READING

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2. Roberts, Francis. (2003). The Philosophy Workbook. Edinburgh. Edinburgh University Press
3. Hospers, John. (1971). An introduction to Philosophical Analysis. New Delhi: Allied Publishers Private limited
4. Goswami, Sauravpran. The Strawsonian Concept of Person. Guwahti. Anwesha Book House



## 5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** Bodily and memory criterion

**Ans to Q No 2:** Bernard Williums, Terence Penelhumand

**Ans to Q No 3:** It holds that matter alone exists and mind and matter can be explained in terms of changes in matter.

**Ans to Q No 4:** a) True b)True c) True

**Ans to Q No 5:** a)The philosophy of mind and the Marxist philosophy

**Ans to Q No 6:** The strict sense of materialism holds that the mind is regulated fully by the physical activities or functions of the brain.

**Ans to Q No 7:** Locke, Descartes

**Ans to Q No 8:** Locke holds that we can identify ourselves by consciousness. Our consciousness indicates different senses and perceptions and thoughts and desires which belong to a person and which shows the sameness of the self at different times.

**Ans to Q No 9:** The circularity objection has been raised by Butler against the memory criterion of Locke in self-identity, who holds that memory is the sole criterion to re-identify the self. Butler relies on this view on the ground that consciousness pre-supposes the self-identity.

**Ans to Q No 10:** Like Descartes John Locke holds that self-consciousness is the sole key to self-identity. Unlike Descartes, he views that self-identity does not depend on our thinking Substance, that is the soul. Locke in this regard views that in course of our life our soul might be replaced with new souls just as in the course of a tree's growth its cells are replaced with new cells. Therefore, Locke differs from Descartes in distinguishing between soul and consciousness. It is our consciousness that we call our 'self'.

**And to Q No 11:** a) True b) True c) True
d) True e) True

**Ans to Q No 12:** Locke's theory is not free from difficulties. Although we can remember our past experiences, still there is every possibility of forgetting our own experiences. Therefore, the question is, can we remember everything that has ever happened to us? It is not possible for a human being to remember everything that has ever happened in life. Even a person who has a good memory does not remember being born, learning to walk or what he had breakfast on June 3, 2001. That is why, the memory criterion is not a satisfactory criterion in case of personal identity.

**Ans to Q No 13:** a) True b) True c) True
d) True e) True

**Ans to Q No 14:** Bad faith implies the denial of one's own identity by refusing to accept the past occurrences in life. Sartre says "One is what one is not, and one is not what one is." Sartre takes the example of a

homosexual to explain the concept of bad faith. A person is homosexual to the extent that all his past actions and desires are those of a homosexual. He falls into bad faith by refusing to see that his past actions point to his having a self-identity as a homosexual.

**Ans to Q No 15:** Sartre views that there are no set standards for self-identity either for individual or for people in general. Sartre holds that it is not possible to derive our identity from the facts alone. This view was adapted by him from Martin-Heidegger. Apart from the facts in judging a person's identity we must also consider a person's projections into the future, his ambitions, plans, intentions, hopes and fantasies.



## 5.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** What are the criteria of personal identity?

**Q2:** Who are the advocates of bodily criterion?

**Q3:** What do you mean by bodily criterion?

**Q4:** State three philosophers' names who advocate memory criterion.

**Q5:** What is memory criterion?

**Q6:** What is bad faith?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Briefly comment on memory criterion.

**Q2:** What is bodily criterion? Discuss briefly.

**Q3:** Discuss briefly Sartre's concept of bad faith.

**Q4:** Briefly comment on Locke's personal identity.

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Descartes' view of memory criterion

**Q2:** Bodily criterion

**Q3:** Bad faith

**Q4:** Sartre's exposition on personal identity

**Q5:** Locke's view on personal identity

**D. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** What is memory criterion? Discuss

**Q2:** Explain the bodily criterion.

**Q3:** Do you find any defects of memory criterion. Explain

**Q4:** Do you accept the view that bodily criterion is more satisfactory than the memory criterion? Explain

**Q5:** What are the defects involved in memory criterion? Discuss.

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# UNIT: 6: CAUSE: NECESSARY CONNECTION AND CONSTANT CONJUNCTION

**UNIT STRUCTURE**


6.1. Learning objectives

6.2. Introduction

6.3. Definition and meaning of cause

- 6.3.1. Aristotle view about cause
- 6.3.2. David Hume's view about cause
- 6.3.3 John Stuart's Mill's analysis of cause
- 6.3.4. Francis Bacon's views on causal relation

6.4. Cause and necessary connection

6.5. Constant conjunction

6.6. Let us sum up

6.7. Further readings

6.8. Answers to check your progress

6.9. Model questions


## 6.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Define the meaning of cause
- Differentiate different philosophical views on causal relations
- Explain the concepts of necessary connection and constant conjunction
- Analyze cause in terms of necessary connection
- Explain the view of Causality in Terms of Constant Conjunction

## 6.2. INTRODUCTION:

Common people believe that a cause is a power or force which produces the effect. Physical science improves upon this popular view and interprets causality in the light of the doctrine of conservation of energy. By conservation of energy we mean that the total amount of energy in the universe is constant, that it is neither increased nor decreased but that it

undergoes modification in different forms.

The word 'cause' has been used in different senses. Popularly speaking cause is the agent which actively produces the effect. It exerts a power and makes the event occur. Locke takes cause in the sense of a "power". We displace things in the environment. We have direct experience of being active when in volition we exert effort to do something.

'Cause' is a relative term the co-relative of which is 'effect'. The concept of 'cause' has occupied a significant place in the empirical sciences. Here inductive reasoning is known as applied causality where the law of causation plays a significant role as a fundamental concept and a principle of their method. Through the law of causation we can relate some processes to some other processes in our ordinary experience. This type of law of causation cannot be applied to those events or cases that are unrelated and independent to each other. To ascribe causal relation is a basic ability of a person to perceive, understand and differentiate between the various kinds of relations between events and processes and make judgments about them. By making such kinds of judgements one can make one's actions adaptive to the surroundings. The concept of causality is analyzed, clarified and defined only in the context of logic, epistemology, metaphysics and philosophy of science. However, to analyze the meaning of the term 'causality' is somewhat problematic which is mixed up with some serious and controversial philosophical issues.

## 6.3. DEFINITION AND MEANING OF CAUSE:

Ordinarily, the term 'cause' is used in the sense of reasons why something happens. Speaking about the cause of some happenings involves some explanation which relates itself to some other occurrences that makes it intelligible why it happens. The cause of an effect is the totality of those things or circumstances the presence of which has made the effect happen and also the absence of which makes the effect would not have happened. Again, the term 'cause' implies different characters or qualities depending

upon its different context. In some cases, it signifies necessary condition of an effect, which in some others it signifies sufficient condition. But, in spite of these, there are some cases where the cause is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition of the effect. In such cases, it may be a contributory condition of the effect. Hence, logicians as well as the philosophers are trying to analyze and define the concept of causality from their own viewpoints and have tried to offer a sufficient explanation of the concept of cause.



**LET US KNOW**

'Cause' is a relative term the co-relative of which is 'effect'.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** How does causal relations guide our actions in everyday life?

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**Q 2:** State three different uses of the word "cause".

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### 6.3.1. Aristotle's View About Cause:

Aristotle's account of causality is one of his best known theories. It is central to his whole philosophy and has been hugely influential in the history of Western thought. In essence, Aristotle holds that a complete account of anything will answer four kinds of question. Or, to put it another way, when we ask a "why?" question about something, there are four kinds of answer. For this reason, Aristotle's "four causes" have sometimes has

been called the "four becauses".

The four causes have traditionally been labeled.

- Material
- Formal
- Efficient
- Final

**Material cause**

Why is a book flammable? Because it is made of paper. Why does a bullet sink? Because it is made of lead. Often, the reason something has a certain property is simply that it is composed of a certain material. In such cases we explain the property in question by referring to its "material cause".

**Formal cause**

Why is something a chair rather than a stool? Because it has a back as a well as a seat. Why is an animal a fish rather than a bird? Because of its bodily configuration, with scales, fins, and gills rather than wings, legs, and a beak. In these cases we refer to the form of the things to explain why they are one sort of thing rather than another.

**Efficient cause**

Why or how did this chair come to exist? A carpenter made it. Why does this oak tree exist? It grew from an acorn. Here we answer the question by identifying the person, thing, event, or force that brings something about or causes something to exist.

**Final cause**

Why do we have eyes? The answer is in order to see. Why does my watch exist or in other words, why was it made? The answer is for the

purpose of telling the time. A thing's "final cause" is the purpose or function it serves- its reason for being.

The examples given above are of simple material things. But Aristotle's analysis can be extended to all sorts of things. Here are two other examples:

A poem

Material cause-words

Formal cause-sonnet (or limerick, haiku, etc.)

Efficient cause-the poet

Final cause-to give pleasure (expresses feelings, impress a lover, etc.)

A river

Material cause-water

Formal cause-winding and flowing (as opposed, for instance, to a lake)

Efficient cause-rain and weathering processes

Final cause-to provide a habitat for fish, and water for animals

Identifying a final cause for a river raises an interesting and important issue. Today, when we talk about the "cause" of something, we invariably mean its "efficient cause." And while we are happy to talk about the purpose or "final cause" of artifacts like watches or shoes, things that people have deliberately designed and manufactured, we are skeptical about the ides that there are purposes in nature. Darwin's theory of evolution shows how it can happen that the appearance of purpose in nature can be brought about by a blind process, without there being any designer.

Aristotle's philosophy, however, is "teleological" through and through. (The term "teleological" is derived from the Greek word "telos" which means "end," "function," or "purpose.") He was firmly convinced that there are purposes in nature. In his view, it makes sense to ask about the final cause of anything, whether it is natural or artificial. And that includes human beings.



**LET US KNOW**

According to Aristotle, there are four kinds of causes i.e.; material, formal, efficient and final.



**ACTIVITY: 6.1**

**Q1:** How is Aristotle's four kinds of causes related to each other? Discuss.

Ans: .....

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## 6.3.2. David Hume's View about Cause

According to David Hume, inductive reasoning from observed instances to the unobserved is based on causal relation. The idea or notion of causation is a complex notion about the relation between events. Hume maintained that causation itself is a matter of constant conjunction. He was of the view that whenever one event causes another, there is a causal law which relates different types of events in a causal connection where the two particular events are instances. This has led to a theory of causal explanation, according to which one causally explains some event if one shows how the sentence asserting its occurrences is a deductive consequence of a general causal law and a statement of the occurrence of its cause. According to Hume, there are three components in the notion of causation-priority, contiguity and necessary connection. Priority means the cause has to occur prior and not after the effect. Contiguity means the cause and effect have to

be adjacent to each other. Necessary connection means that the cause and effect must be necessarily connected in such a way that the cause actually produces the effect or makes the effect happen. In other words, cause necessitates the effect in this sense. Hence, Hume summarizes that there is a necessary connection between cause and effect.

However, Hume himself has maintained that though the relation between priority and contiguity could be justified yet the relation between production and necessary connection cannot be justified by any evidence. He said that this necessary connection cannot be found in actual cases. For example, when a person flips the light switch, the light goes on and if he flips it again it goes off. Here, though it is thought that there is a causal connection between flipping the switch A and the light going on B, the fact is that in this case A is followed by B. Here, no necessary connection between the cause and its effects can be seen. Any attempt to observe this necessary connection would lead only to the fact that one event is followed by another. Nor any empirical method can establish any necessary connection between the concepts of cause and effect. Any such attempt to establish such necessary connection between cause and effect with the help of some empirical methods again presupposes the two underlying principles of cause and effect i.e.; the principles of causation according to which every event has a cause and the principle of causality according to which like causes have like effects.

So, when anyone is looking around for necessary connection, he does not find anything in addition to priority and contiguity. Along with priority and contiguity there is another relation i.e.; the constant conjunction of resembling instances. People discover that the thing known as cause is always followed by the thing effect. This constant repetition or the constant conjunction of resembling instances in human experience gives rise to a certain expectation in human mind whereby anyone perceive any cause, he automatically expect to perceive the effect. It is this 'felt determination of mind' to pass from the perception of the causes to the lively expectations of the effect and from the idea of the cause to the idea of the effect which

gives the illusion that there is something in nature in addition to priority, contiguity and constant conjunction. This something is nothing but the conviction that there is necessary connection in nature which is none other than an illusion. The only reality is the reality of priority, contiguity and constant conjunction. So, from these points of view, there can be no necessary causal connection between causes and its effects.



**LET US KNOW**

According to David Hume causation itself is a matter of constant conjunction.

### 6.3.3 John Stuart's Mill's Analysis of Cause

John Stuart Mill is one of the inductive logicians of modern age. John Stuart Mill tried to analyze the concept of cause in order to formulate the canons for the methods to discover causal relations amongst events. In his book 'A System of Logic' Mill elaborates the Law of Causation and the concept of Causality. He explains causality with special reference to the relations between physical phenomena. He keeps aside any metaphysical notion of causality from considerations. For him, the relation of succession among events is most important and there is one law which sustains the uniformity of succession indefeasibly. This law is known as the law of causation which in view of Mill holds in the entire sphere of human experience of successive events.

Mill has mentioned certain characteristics about the concept of cause. In fact, Mill's characterization of cause is derived from the analysis of causality provided by David Hume. Also, Mill's method of discovery of causal relation or proof of any causal relation is developed from tabular methods of scientific discovery of Francis Bacon. Mill agrees with Hume's contention that cause is the invariable antecedent of the effect. Mill disagrees with Hume's rejection of necessary connection between cause and effect.

According to Mill's characterization of cause, causal relation holds between successive events. Cause is the earlier or antecedent event in time while the effect is the later or consequent event. If C is the cause of E, then E cannot be prior to or simultaneous with C. This order is irreversible provided that cause changes into effect at a speed slower than that of light. Otherwise an observer may perceive effect earlier than the cause. Modern theories in physics about the structure of the universe permit cause from the future producing effect in the past. From our ordinary way of thinking it appears to be strange and paradoxical.

The succession of events may be either variable or invariable. The cause of any event is the invariable antecedent of the effect. Whatever earlier event is variable is not related to the latter by causal relation. For example, if C is the cause of E, then for every X, if this X is an instance of E, X is preceded by any Y; Y is an instance of C.

Again, cause is the unconditional antecedent of the effect. If D is followed by F depending on some condition K, then D is not invariable antecedent because in absence of the condition K being fulfilled it will not be followed by D. In this way, if C is the cause of E, then for every X, if X is an instance of E; X is preceded by any Y, Y is an instance of C and it is not the case that for all Z, X is preceded by Z and Z is not part of Y and there is an Y which is not accompanied by Z and is not followed by an X. So, it can be maintained that C is cause of $E \equiv (X)(Y)(Z)\{X \in E \equiv$ (X is preceded by Y and $Y \equiv C$)and (X is not preceded by Z, Z is not part of Y and, Y being not accompanied by Z is not followed by X)}. To ascertain the unconditional character of the invariable antecedent i.e.; the cause is the most significant exercise for the scientists in their investigation. The cause is the unconditional prior happening because it is inclusive of all the conditions that have to be invariably present in order that effect comes into existence. Apart from the cause there is no other condition to be fulfilled in order that the effect occurs. Cause is also the immediate antecedent of the effect. Immediacy is implied by unconditionality. If some invariable antecedents fail to bring about the effect immediately but after some duration of time bring in the effect, then

obviously during the time of interval some other required conditions have been fulfilled, i.e.; some changes in the circumstances have taken place which had made the situation adequate to bring in the effect.

Cause and effect can be characterized quantitatively. The law of conservation and energy implies that the quantity of matter and energy in the cause is equivalent to the quantity of matter and energy in the effect. The quantity of matter and energy in the universe is always the same but they change from one form to another. Matter and energy are never created nor destroyed. Therefore, Carveth Read stated: "The cause of any event, then, when exactly ascertainable, has five marks: it is (quantitatively) equal to the effect, and is (qualitatively) its immediate, unconditional, invariable antecedent."



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 3:** According to Hume, the complex notions of causality can be analyzed into simpler notions. Now what are those simpler notions?

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**Q 4:** Is empirical justification of necessary connection possible?

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**Q 5:** What is the quantitative relation between cause and effect?

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**ACTIVITY: 6.2**

**Q2:** How does Hume elaborate the notion of causality?

Ans: .....

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## 6.3.4. Francis Bacon's Viees on Causal Relation

Francis Bacon is the earliest philosopher of the modern age to develop theories on scientific method and inductive logic in the book Novum Organum. According to Bacon in scientific investigation the laws that we are going to discover are the laws of connection between generating and generated nature. Here, 'nature' means the 'events that recur' or 'phenomenon that has many instances'. In Bacon's terminology, 'generating nature' is the cause while the 'generated nature' is the effect. A generating nature or cause of an event is co-present, co-absent and co-variant in degree with its corresponding generated nature or effect. Bacon assumed that all the complicated happenings or events in this world are because of the co-ordination of limited nature or causes. This point can be discovered after analyzing the co-presence, co-absence and co-variation of the generating and generated nature. For doing this Bacon developed a tabular method. Bacon also uses the term 'form' to denote cause, but it is not to be identified Aristotle's formal cause. Bacon form is observable and could be found by careful examination of tables of presence, absence and co-variation.

The tabular method of Bacon consists of procedures for isolating and further investigating the form nature, or cause, of phenomenon, including the method of agreement, method of difference, and method of concomitant variation. Bacon suggests that we should draw up a list of all things in which

the phenomenon we are trying to explain occurs, as well as a list of things in which it does not occur. Then we rank our lists according to the degree in which the phenomenon occurs in each one. Then we should be able to deduce what factors match the occurrence of the phenomenon in one list and don't occur in the other list, and also what factors change in accordance with the way the data had been ranked. Thus, if an army is successful when commanded by Essex and not successful when not commanded by Essex, and when it is more or less successful according to the degree of involvement of Essex as its commander, then it is scientifically reasonable to say that being commanded by Essex is causally related to the army's success. From this Bacon suggests that the underlying cause of the phenomenon, what he calls the "form," can be approximated by interpreting the results of one's observations. This approximation Bacon calls the "First Vintage." It is not a final conclusion about the formal cause of the phenomenon but merely a hypothesis. It is only the first stage in the attempt to find the form and it must be scrutinized and compared to other hypotheses. In this manner, the truth of natural philosophy is approached "by gradual degrees," as stated in his Novum Organum.

## 6.4. CAUSE AND NECESSARY CONNECTION

A cause is typically defined as 'a person or thing that produces an effect', whereas an effect is defined as 'a change which is a result of an action or other cause.' Also a necessary connection is defined as that which needs to be present between two or more things necessarily. The necessary connection of an effect is that condition in absence of which effect doesn't occur. A necessary connection must be present in order that the effect comes into existence. Its precedence is absolutely required for the effect. If the effect is present then its necessary conditions must have been present earlier. It can never be the case that the effect has occurred but any of its necessary condition was not fulfilled before. But the presence of any necessary condition does not guarantee that effect must follow. If some necessary conditions are present while some others are absent, then effect will not

emerge. However if all the necessary connections are fulfilled then effect is bound to take shape.

The connection between cause and effect is often cited as being necessary by laymen, philosophers and scientists. To say that there is no necessary connection between cause and effect seems to be opposite of our experiences of reality. For example, the Greek philosopher Plato argued in his Timaeus thatthe world is built with order and regularity. There is a necessity here because of what has to be, thus causality could be explained via necessity and mathematics. While Aristotle in his Physics and Metaphysicssays that no events are causeless, while admitting that not all events can have their causes found, because not every event has the sort of regularity which science requires in finding causes. Corresponding with Plato's and Aristotle's view of causality and its necessary connection, the philosopher Bertrand Russell put forward his views in his essay On the notion of cause, with applications to the free-will problem. In this essay he says that causality is a relic of bygone ages and Science leads the way forward out of this philosophical minefield. But how it does this is not exactly made clear, other than induction and experience.

However, neither Plato, nor Aristotle or Russell was concerned with the question whether there is any kind of necessary connection between cause and effect. Instead they assumed this kind of connection between the two by assumed necessity or empirical suggestion. But in contrast to them after long time back it David Hume believed that when one experiences a cause and an effect there is no necessary connection which is observable, we merely form the idea by experience. So if one wants to experience the same effect after the same cause, and then we would assume that cause and effect have a necessary connection. The problem with this, as Hume points out: is that this doesn't prove anything. When we form the concept of necessary connection between cause and effect we are assuming the universe works in a regular way and that our experiences are reliable.

If we follow Hume then we can see the necessary connection between cause and effect in a new light. According to Hume if A causes B, therefore B has always been seen to follow A. Thus, B will always follow. This implies that nature is uniform, and there is never enough evidence for that conclusion because it is a matter of fact. It cannot be justified by logic, since there is no contradiction in saying that A does not cause B and so on. Also it cannot be proved from experience, but merely suggested, because we cannot witness every event to ever say that logically there is a connection between cause and effect. They seem to be conjoined, but never connected. Regularity fails to reveal any necessity in causation, and also fails to reveal any necessity between cause and effect. Our inductive method is flawed, and we form a notion of causality by induction. The inductive method is flawed as it relies on itself to prove itself practically, but cannot logically.

For Kant the necessary connection between cause and effect was a human intuition given to us by experience of reality. In this sense causality is objective, while our experience of it is synthetic. Thus, causality is an a priori notion, but is only known a posteriori (experience) which means that causality is a synthetic fact which stems from an a priori fact combined with the experience of cause and effect. So, for Kant cause and effect does have an objective necessary connection.

If causality is a human intuition placed on reality to make sense of it, and thus translates reality into a human experience: could the causal laws and laws of nature commonly known as physics which could merely be reduced to a human intuition and translation of reality so one can understand it? If this is possible then this would reduce causality and the necessary connection between cause and effect to a human matter of fact; an improvable concept, which is only ever suggested by experience, but never proved. It again leaves it open for the future to disprove it by failing to proceed in a regular pattern which fits our idea of causality. Or would this merely reflect our ignorance of this universe and how it works? Such types of problems were present in Kant's formulation and so Kant's attempt to examine necessary connection between cause and effect also meets failure.

Hence, we have no logical foundation for thinking that cause and effect have a necessary connection. Theoretically cause and effect have no proved necessary connection. However, practically it does have a connection, although not necessary i.e.; via induction from experience. This is theoretically flawed and contains no certainties. In this sense Hume was correct in his criticisms of cause and effect, and its necessary connection. While Kant made a respectable effort to try and find a practical proof to further legitimize the necessary connection. Although this failed, it was a respectable attempt and pursuit: one that was also an endeavor to legitimize Science not by theoretical foundations in logic, but by practical application of experience and the assumption of regularity which Kant believed stemmed from an a priori knowledge of concepts. Which were then proved via experience resulting in synthetic knowledge based on the objective and necessary. Thus if successful would give Science a metaphysical foundation making it a legitimate system both theoretically and practically. However, Kant is unable to make its theoretical foundation solid, but does leave us with a practical application of cause and effect and its concept although, this still leaves the necessary connection of cause and effect as a redundant feature of the concept of causality. This is to say that may be there is a necessary connection between a cause and its effects, but this necessary connection can be practically applied at this time for it lacks the logical proof to become a legitimate feature of cause and effect. As Hume mhimself had made clear that to try to prove cause and effect's necessary connection with a methodology which again requires as well as relies on cause and effect to function is somewhat absurd.



**LET US KNOW**

A necessary connection is that where the effect follows the cause necessarily



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 6:** What do you mean by a necessary connection?

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**Q 7:** What was Plato and Aristotle's view about cause and necessary connection?

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**Q 8:** What was Kant's view about necessary connection?

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**Q 9:** How did Hume analyzed the concept of necessary connection?

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## ACTIVITY: 6.3

**Q3:** What is the relation between the notion of cause and necessary connection?

Ans: .....

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## 6.5. CONSTANT CONJUNCTION

According to David Hume the relation between cause and effect has only the characteristics of succession and contiguity. The third characteristic of necessary connection and production is ordinarily supposed to be another essential aspect of causality. However, according to Hume, this supposition when examined proves to be incapable of any rational justification. If we analyze two similar classes of events one designed to be the cause of the other what do we find in their relation? According to Hume we search our experience, i.e.; sense impressions relating events which are called cause and events we find three things in them:

(a) Relation of succession: The class of events called Cause is experienced to be followed by the class of the events called effect. For instance, fire causes heat and smoke. All cases of fire are followed by cases of heat and smoke. Thus, causes are antecedent events and effects are consequent events. This is supported by evidence as we have impressions of fire followed by impressions of heat and smoke. But of any two classes of events the instance of one of which are followed by instances of the other is not regarded to be the cause.

(b) Relation of contiguity: Instances of two kinds of events related by causal relation are experienced to be contiguous. Cause is prior to effect while effect is posterior in temporal relation as experience shows us. A prior event in the remote past is not regarded to be the cause of some other event happening now. Cause and effect are experienced as antecedent to be immediately followed by the consequent. If fire is experienced the moment before, smoke and heat are to be experienced in the next moment. It is not the case that fire is experienced now and heat and smoke will be experienced tomorrow.

(c) Constant conjunction: It is ordinarily believed that cause and effect are not a simple relation of a sort where events of one kind are followed by events of another. If one instance of a definite kind is experienced to be

followed by another instance of some other definite kind and even if it is experienced to be so on many occasions, the relation between two kinds of events may be co-incidence but not of causation. Therefore, it is believed that what is peculiar to causal connection is a necessary connection. Cause must produce the effect. What does this characterization of production or production or effectuation and searched for the ground of such sort of relation.

Hume considers whether this necessary causal connection could be a logical relation known as a priori. He does not accept any a priori demonstration to the effect that causality is a necessary connection. We can think of the antecedent event being followed by the consequent event without having any relation between the two. We experience that the two are distinct one being followed by the other and we don't perceive any other element called connection. It involves no contradiction to think that instances of fire being followed by instances of smoke without there being any connection between the two.

If the necessity of causal relation is a logical relation then it will involve contradiction to think of any two classes of events supposed to be having a causal relation that the antecedent event occurs but the consequent does not follow. But it does not involve any contradiction to think in this manner in any case of causal relation. For example, we may imagine without any contradiction that fire occurs but no heat generated from it. Thus, the necessary connection which is supposed to be required in addition to succession and contiguity for a causal relation ultimately turns out to be a relation of constant conjunction. Thus, in our experience, if a large number of instances of events of one and same kind are immediately followed by events of another kind, we expect the consequent events whenever we experience the antecedent event. For example, all our past experiences of fire are followed by instances of smoke. Therefore, we believe that any future instances of fire will be followed by smokes or fire or smokes are necessarily connected.

How does constant conjunction lead to causal relation? Constant conjunction leads to causal relation by virtue of psychological laws of association. We are determined by our natural propensity to attribute causal relation to events that are constantly conjoined in our experience. The justification of an inductive reasoning that establishes causal relation between premises and conclusion does not depend on the relation between premises and conclusion but it depends on the psychological laws of association which connect constantly conjoined experiences with a causal link. We read causality in natural happening because of our nature; apart from these laws of association causality is not in the things and events themselves.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 10:** What are the three types of characteristics that the relation between cause and effect has?

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**Q 11:** What do you mean by the relation of succession between cause and effect?

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**Q 12:** What is constant conjunction? Describe

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**ACTIVITY: 6.4**

**Q4:** Can any necessary connection between cause and effect be rationally justified? Discuss.

Ans: .....

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**Q5:** What is the role of psychological laws of human nature in producing beliefs in causal relation? Explain after Hume.

Ans: .....

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## 6.6. LET US SUM UP

- 'Cause' is a relative term the co-relative of which is 'effect'. In the empirical sciences where inductive reasoning is applied causality and the law of causation play a significant role as fundamental concept and principle of their method.

- The cause of any effect is totality of those things or circumstances the presence of which has made the effect happen and in absence of which it would not have had happened. In different context the term 'cause' is used to signify different qualities or characteristics. Sometimes it signifies necessary condition of effect. In some other situation it means sufficient condition. There is usage of the term to signify both necessary and sufficient conditions. On some occasion it may be neither sufficient nor necessary but a contributory condition of the effect.

- Cause in Aristotle's term means explanation of object or event. Cause explains in terms of what matter constitutes something or of what parts, constituents element it is made up with; what is the form that matter is moulded into what it is: the efficiency, agency, skill or energy that brings in the changes in matter to give it form and the purpose and aim that ultimately realized by such changes. Thus there are four kinds of causes to explain everything--- material, formal, efficient and final.

- According to David Hume, inductive reasoning from observed instances to the unobserved is based on causal relation. The idea or notion of causation is a complex notion about the relation between events. Hume analyzed this notion into precedence, contiguity and production or necessity. The relation of precedence and contiguity could be justified. However, the relation called production and necessary connection cannot be justified by any evidence.

- According to J.S. Mill cause is the invariable unconditional immediate antecedent of the effect. Quantitatively matter and energy in the cause is equivalent to matter and energy in the effect.

- According to Bacon a generating nature or cause of an event is co-present, co-absent and co-variant in degree with its corresponding generated nature or effect. Bacon assumed that all the complicated events or happening in the world are due to co-ordination of limited number of generating nature or causes. This can be discovered by analyzing their co-presence, co-absence and co-variation. He developed tabular method for this.

- An indispensable factor of the cause is regarded to be a condition. Conditions are either positive or negative. Positive conditions are the presence of the events or state of affairs required for the effect to occur. A negative condition is the absence of those antecedent states of affair the presence of which prevents the effect's coming into existence.

- The necessary condition of an effect is that condition in absence of which effect doesn't occur. A necessary condition must be present in order that the effect comes into existence.

- Sufficient condition means that condition (or a set of conditions) the presence of which is bound to produce the effect. It suffices to produce the effect.

- According to Hume the justification of an inductive reasoning that establishes causal relation between premises and conclusion does not depend on the relation between premises and conclusion but it depends on the psychological laws of association which connect constantly conjoined experiences with a causal link. We read causality in natural happening because of our nature; apart from these laws of association, causality is not in the things and events themselves.



## 6.7. FURTHER READING

1. Mill, John Stuart, (1843) System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive: Being a Connected View of the Principles and methods of Scientific Investigation, Volume I, John W Parker, London, UK
2. Hume, David, (1988), A Treatise of Human Nature, edited by L A Selby Bigge, Oxford University Press, UK
3. Read, C. (1914), Logic: Deductive and Inductive, Kent & Co. LTD. London, UK



## 6.8. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** We guide our actions by expectations and predictions of what has already been experienced to follow an antecedent event.

**Ansto Q.2:** Different senses of cause are- reason why something happens, necessary conditions and sufficient conditions.

**Ans to Q.3.**Contiguity, succession and constant conjunction.

**Ans to Q.4.** No

**Ans to Q.5.** Equivalence

**Ans to Q.6.** The necessary connection of an effect is that condition in absence of which effect doesn't occur.

**Ans to Q.7.** According to Plato the world is built with order and regularity and so there is a necessity here because of what has to be, thus causality could be explained via necessity and mathematics. While Aristotle viewed that no events are causeless, while admitting that not all events can have their causes found, because not every event has the sort of regularity which science requires in finding causes.

**Ans to Q.8.** For Kant the necessary connection between cause and effect was a human intuition given to us by experience of reality.

**Ansto Q.9.** According to Hume there is no necessary connection between cause and effect. There is only a constant conjunction between the two.

**Ans to Q.10.** Relation of succession, relation of contiguity and constant conjunction.

**Ans to Q.11.** The class of events called Cause is experienced to be followed by the class of the events called effect and this type of relation is called relation of succession.

**Ans to Q.12.** If one instance of a definite kind is experienced to be followed by another instance of some other definite kind and even if it is experienced to be so on many occasions, the relation between two kinds of events is called constant conjunction.



## 6.9. MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Are all regularly successive pairs of events linked by causation?

**Q2:** What is the co-relative term of cause?

**Q3:** Is Aristotle's causal theory teleological?

**Q4:** What does the term generating nature signify in Bacon's writings?

**Q5:** According to Hume, can necessary connection be justified by empirical evidence?

**Q6:** Who talked about constant conjunction between cause and effect?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** What does causality mean?

**Q2:** What is material cause?

**Q3:** What is final cause?

**Q4:** How does Hume analyze causality?

**Q5:** How does Bacon explain causal relation?

**Q6:** What is J.S.Mill's view about causality?

**Q7:** What is necessary connection?

**Q8:** Does constant conjunction imply necessity?

**Q9: Short notes (Answer in about 100-150 words)**

a) Cause and necessary connection

b) Aristotle's theory of cause

c) David Hume's theory of cause

d) Cause and necessary connection

e) Constant conjunction

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Explain J.S. Mill's definition of causality.

**Q2:** What does Aristotle's mean by causation? Explain the four kinds of causes.

**Q3:** How does Hume analyze the notion of causality?

**Q4:** What is his psychological explanation of causal relation?

**Q5:** Explain the concepts of cause and necessary connection with special reference to Plato, Aristotle and Bertrand Russell.

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# UNIT: 7 CONTEMPORARY ANALYSIS OF CAUSAL LANGUAGE

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

7.1: Learning objectives

7.2: Introduction

7.3: Concept of causality

7.4: Analysis of causal language

7.5: Causality in Indian philosophy

7.6: Let us sum up

7.7: Answers to check your progress

7.8: Further readings

7.9: Model questions

## 7.1: LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Know about causality.
- Understand the nature of causality.
- Describe various views on causal relation.
- Analyse Indian concept of causality.
- Compare both Indian and western views regarding causality.

## 7.2: INTRODUCTION:

This unit deals with the notion of causality. Generally, the relation between cause and effect is known as causality. A very definition of causality can be expressed as if 'C' then 'E'. It is a formula of 'constant conjunction' that advocated by David Hume. According to theformula, 'C' causes 'E' means the same as 'C' is constantly conjoined with 'E' or 'C' is regularly followed by 'E'. Hume appears to be describing causal relationship, and in this description, psychology and philosophical analysis are interwoven. Hume gives two definitions of cause on the same page 170 of his Treatise. (a) We may define cause to be 'an object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are placed in like relations

of precedenceand contiguity to those objects that resemble the latter.' (b) 'a cause is an object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other. The definition of cause given in (a) is based on philosophical analysis and (b) is based on psychological analysis.

This unit also discusses various contemporary philosophers view regarding causality. Again, it attempts to explain Indian notion of causal relation too.

## 7.3: CONCEPT OF CAUSALITY:

Causation is the most important category for Hume. According to him, our knowledge of the matters of fact depends on causation. Again, on its strength we pass from the immediate impressions to something not immediately presented in senses. On the basis of the causal principle we bind together the passing impressions into universal laws. If this principle is valid then there is rationaljustification for the science. Otherwise, Hume points out that we have no reason to accept their claim to certain knowledge.

According to Hume, all reasoning concerning matters of fact are founded on the relation of cause and effect. Whenever we want to go beyond our perception and memory, beyond the testimony of our senses and reports of memory- we base our knowledge on cause and effect. A man finding a watch or any other machine in a desert island would conclude that there had once been men in the island. In such cases, we always suppose that there is a connection between the present fact and the past fact which we are inferring. Hence our knowledge of causal relation helps us to pass from known facts to the unknown.

Hume claims that our knowledge of cause and effect is derived entirely from experience and cannot be derived from 'a priori' reasoning. Because, for Hume, all judgments of pure reason like '2+2=4' or 'three times five is equal to half of thirty'-are analytic. Causal judgments are synthetic.

Being analytic an a priori proposition is necessary, but a causal proposition like 'bread affords nourishment' is possible only, not certain. Here, the predicate adds some new character to the subject that may not always be true. Such a proposition is obtained by experience only. Moreover, Hume also argues that cause and effect are two different things. No amount of analysis of cause gives us any knowledge of the effect. They are entirely independent of each other. If an absolutely new object is given to a man, he will not be able to discover its cause nor its effect. Hume says, every effect is a distinct event from its cause. Therefore, it could not be discovered in the cause. There is nothing in any object, considered in it, which can afford us a reason for drawing a connection beyond it. He says, we argue that fire will warm us and bread affords nourishment because we have often perceived these causal pairs closely connected in space and time.

Hume had divested causality of all such notions as power or efficacy. The bond which connects cause and effect, the force that puts forth the second from the first, the power that produces the effect from the cause is not perceived but is added to perception by thought, is constructed into it. Any and every pair of successive events is not looked upon as related by way of causality. It is only when we find in our experience that a certain event follows a certain prior or antecedent event several times that we come to believe that these two events are necessarily connected with each other. E.g. taking poison is the cause of death. Several times we have seen these two events happening one after another which helps us to conclude that poison and death are causally connected, that poison has the power of producingdeath. Therefore, necessary connection or power is a product of our imagination. Hence, for Hume causality is a custom-born habit of expectation and nothing more. Objects are not connected, but we imagine them to be connected, because they often go together in our experience. Thus, Hume's final definition of cause is this 'a cause is an object, precedent and contiguous to another and so united with it in the imagination, that the appearance of one determines the mind to form the idea of the other and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other. It means,

not necessary connection, but regularity of sequence is the essence of the relation of cause and effect.



**LET US KNOW**

Cartesian philosophers and the scholastics believed that casual relation is a relation of necessary connection, like logical connections. But Hume denies it by his two fold arguments- (a) Hume showed that causal propositions are not a priori, (b) Hume pointed out that there is no 'power' or 'force' in cause, that is usually believed not only by the philosophers but also by the ordinary people.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** Define cause.

.....

.....

**Q 2:** State true or false-

(i) Hume gives two definitions of cause in his book 'Treatise'.

(ii) His definition of cause is based on philosophical analysis only.

(iii) For Hume, cause and effect are the two different things

## 7.4: ANALYSIS OF CASUAL LANGUAGE:

Contemporary western philosophers have interpreted the relation between cause and effect or causality in their own way. That is why this analysis occupies an important position in contemporary philosophy.Hume was the pioneer of this analysis. According to him, the causal connection is not one of logical entailment, for there is no object which implies the existence of any other. The denial of such a connection does not result in any self -

contradiction. If the connection is not logical, it must be empirical. But as Hume insists, there is nothing observable in any one instance except the mere regular sequence of events. This is constant conjunction. It is not a real external necessary connection between events, but it provides the key to the psychological explanation of why we think of some events as necessary connected. The idea of necessary connection has its source in this felt passage of the mind. It is merely a psychological necessity. For Hume, necessity is a feeling of expectation or of habitual transition, what Price calls the feeling of 'of course-ness'.Far from denying the existence of necessary connection Hume has offered only a definition of it as of course-full transition.

True to the Hume an tradition, Hans Reichenbach says, since repetition is all that distinguishes the causal law from a mere coincidence, the meaning of causal relation consists in the statement of an exception less repetition- it is unnecessary to assume that it means more. Hence, the cause is anthropomorphic in its origin and is dispensable. Moritz Schlick observes, " the word 'cause' as used in everyday life, implies nothing but regularity of sequence because nothing else is used to verify the proposition in which it occurs."

Hume maintains that there is no nexus in experience between cause and effect and hence discards the causal notion as lacking objective validity. He says that so far as our experience goes, the category of causality can be justified but beyond experience it has no validity. Hume concludes that causal connection is to be replaced by invariable succession. Hume's treatment of causation has provoked Kant's critical philosophy. According to Kant, succession to be apprehended as succession must be apprehended as connected. But Hume would reply that he admits the very same thing; his only point is that beyond the apprehension of the causal notion there is no ontological connection. At this point Kant asks Hume whether the question of objective validity which Hume has raised can be identified with that of ontological validity. The object as with Kant, so also with Hume, is that which is known or experienced. His question is whether the field of knowledge

or experience there can be anything answering to this category. Hume, therefore, to be consistent, cannot raise question of the objective validity of causality. Whitehead points out that 'at bottom' Kant's answer is the same as Hume's, because like Hume, he too restricts the category of causality to experience. Mackie remarks, "Causation in the (phenomenal) objects is, for Kant no less than for Hume, just regularity. All that is a priori should be some regularity covering in every case.

F.P. Ramsey holds that belief in causal laws isnot capable of logical justification, but it is still reasonable because it is a useful habit leading to beliefs which are generally true. F.H Bradley criticizes causality from the standpoint of metaphysical idealism. He says it is a relation that does not relate. Cause can never be continuous with the effect, for in that case the marking out of the cause from the effect becomes impossible. Nor can the cause be discontinuous with the effect, for the cause has to depend on something else to enable it to produce the effect. But if this third something is sought to make the cause causative, this will also necessitate a fourth something and so on ad infinitum. So cause can neither be continuous nor discontinuous. Alexander says that every movement is continuous with every other within the system. The movement, which in order of timeprecedes another movement and passes on to it, is the cause and the other is the effect. But the cause thereby does not disappear in the effect, but it is only added to other movements present there.

Bosanquet, from the standpoint of his logical idealism reacts on the validity of the notion of causality. He says, the notion of causality does not sustain logical analysis, for the essential element of time involved in the causal relation is found to be contradictory. Hence, if time is not real, the temporal relation of causality also thereby becomes an appearance. While this is the negative part of Bosanquet's contention, the positive part of his contention lies in substituting the logical relation of ground and consequent for the temporal relation of cause and effect. Hence according to him, time cannot be regarded as real, and the temporal relation of cause and effect must be replaced by the logical relation of ground and consequent, since

the latter is intelligible or logically sustainable. Alexander criticizes Bosanquet because the logical relation of ground and consequent is conceived after the pattern of geometry. Moreover, the relation of ground and consequent is intelligible only in the background of the temporal antecedent and temporal consequent.

Bertrand Russell thinks that the word 'cause' is bound up with misleading associations. So he recommends its complete extrusion from the philosophical vocabulary. Modern science does not use the 'primitive' concept of cause. Thus Russell maintains that the notion of causality is replaced by the purely factual notion of functional correlation. Alexander finds in Russell's logical atomism an attempt to rehabilitate Humean psychological atomism under a logical garb. Stebbing speaks of an advance from qualitative laws of causal relation to quantitative laws of functional dependence. She holds that both are appropriate to different regions of facts but she also admits that both are subjects to logical difficulties. Mill says that the cause is the 'sum total of the conditions, positive and negative taken together'. Inspired by Mill's account one may maintain that cause is both the sufficient and the necessary condition for the occurrence of the effect. According to Mackie, the cause is 'an insufficient but necessary part of a condition which is itself unnecessary but sufficient for result'.

A.C. Ewing holds that causation involve entailments. If implication is to be of use in the analysis of causality, it must be a relation between facts. But implication is regarded as a relation between propositions. As R.E. Hobart says, Hume's main point is that-'a proposition may implies another proposition but a thing cannot implies another thing. A.J.D. Porteous asserts some kind of ontological necessity but denies that it can be assimilated to logical necessity. The regularity analysis fails to explain the supposed validity of inductive arguments. This makes philosophers inclined to the entailment view. But it is not very plausible to identify causal entailment with any kind of logical necessity. Richard Taylor holds the thesis that cause and effect neither precede nor succeed each other but are contemporaneous.

For him, the conditions under which the cause is sufficient and necessary for the effect are precisely those conditions under which the effect is also sufficient and necessary for the cause. Since relations of sufficiency and necessity are 'identical both ways'. G.H. Von Wright seeks to explain causal asymmetry in terms of 'human action'. In certain locutions 'when I bring about q by doing p, p is the cause and not q, and in case when I bring about p by doing q, q is the cause and not p'.The cause is the one by which we can manipulate the effect. We can control the effect only through a control over the cause. Thus the asymmetrical nature of causation between two physical events can be determined by the direction of human action.

Ayer says that our action is directed towards future. According to him, "it is part of the meaning of causative verbs, like the verb 'to bring about', that they are forward-looking. To talk of bringing about an event which had already happened would be not merely silly but self- contradictory". For Ayer, cause cannot succeed effect, is necessarily true. The use of the word cause is such that if one event is said to be the cause of another, it is implied that it precedes or at any rate does not succeed, the event which is said to be the effect. Dummett says that when we say that effect can precede the cause, we are talking of quasi-cause only and not full cause. If the cause is regarded as contemporaneous with, or even posterior to the effect, then the very distinction between them would disappear and any one of the two events may be described as cause or effect at pleasure. So we must maintain temporal priority of the cause over the effect in order to explain dependable regularity of sequence.

In this way, the contemporary philosophers have explained their view about causal relation in a broad way.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 3:** "The necessity is a feeling of expectation is the feeling of 'of course-ness'."-who said this?

.....

.....

**Q 4:** What type of observation is made by Mortiz Schlick regarding causal relation?

.....

.....

**Q 5:** State the notion of causality from the standpoint of logical idealism of Bosanquet

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.....

**Q 6:** Richard Taylor said that cause and effect neither precede nor succeed each other but are contemporaneous. (true/false)

.....

.....

## 7.5: WAS HUME A SKEPTIC?

In the last chapter of his book "Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding", Hume declares himself as a skeptic. A skeptic denies the very possibility of knowledge. It is an enquiry into the conditions of knowledge. Hume says that causal relation is only a product of imagination, a habit of expectation due to custom. There is no objective basis of this relation. It may be that, in the past, two events occurred repeatedly one after the other, and we expected one with the appearance of the other. Yet there is no guarantee that in future also such correlation between two events will be observed. Therefore, all our inferences regarding future events are uncertain, probable and doubtful. All our knowledge regarding matters of fact is based

on the relation of cause and effect. So, according to Hume, all our knowledge of matters of fact is uncertain and probable.

But though Hume is a skeptic regarding our knowledge of matters of fact, he admits our natural instinct towards the reality of external objects, even knowledge of matters of fact, as true. As B. Russell puts it "If we believe that fire warms or water quenches, it is because it costs us too much pain to think otherwise. We cannot help believing, but no belief can be grounded in reason." Hume says that he enjoys everything of this world as a common man does, yet when he philosophizes- he does not believe in everything but doubts in many well- accepted views. That is why Morris observed that Hume 'was less a skeptic than he thought himself to be. He was a skeptic in his views regarding 'false metaphysics' -which are discussions on super -natural, super-sensible objects like theology.

Hume was a skeptic no doubt. But "his skepticism was," as Copestone observes, "a healthy antidote to dogmatism and fanaticism. Kant, the greatest philosopher of modern times, observed that it is Hume who woke him from his dogmatic slumber. Hume's skepticism is inescapable for an empiricist.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 3:** In which book Hume himself declares as a skeptic?

.....

.....

**Q 4:** Was Hume a skeptic?

.....

.....

## 7.6: INDIAN CONCEPT OF CAUSAL RELATION:

Causality implies a host of philosophic problems which are pertinent to different branches of philosophical studies. While explaining the notion of cause as it was understood by different philosophical schools of classical India, it shows that (a) concern for the notion of causation was taken more seriously in some Indian philosophical schools than it had been in some of their Western counterparts, and (b) that the meaning of 'cause' or 'karana' is much wider in Indian philosophy than it is in the West. Theories of causation are a part of the theory of creation. Indian philosophers have tried to find out where the mere matrix of creation actually converts into the world or the world is a mere reflection of it. This has given birth to Satkaryavada and asatkaryavada. Whether creation is real or unreal has been discussed in Parinamavada and vivartavada of Ramanuja and Sankaracarya respectively. Concern for a causal notion was fundamental in almost all schools of Indian Philosophy. We should remember that philosophic activity in India arose out of the cosmogonic speculations of the Vedas and the Upanisads. Various alternative theories were propounded from the very early period, as is well evidenced in the passage of the SvetasvataraUpanisad, and in the Nyayasutra, chapter 4. Some of the main views about the original cause of the universe were: (a) time, (b) nature or 'own-nature', (c) pradhana 'the unmanifest' matter, (d) god, (e) atoms, and (f) cyclical dependent origination. Theory of dependent origination or the doctrine of Pratityasamutpada or the chain of twelve links is the basic foundation of all teachings of Buddha. In the theory of dependent or conditional Existence of things, there is a spontaneous and universal law of causation which conditions the appearance of event, mental and physical. According to it 'everything depends upon some condition'. It is a cause and effect relationship which originates from a particular relationship. The existence of everything is conditional, because without a cause no effect arises.

The earliest critique of the notion of cause is to be found in India in the 'satkaryavada' doctrine of the Samkhya School,which was historically the earliest of Indian philosophical systems. The doctrine means that the

so-called effect pre exists in its cause, causation being merely a change of transformation from one state to another while the original 'thing' remains constant and unchanging. An effect means a change in only the attributes or characteristics of the thing, a new state of affairs means manifestation of what was potentially present in the early state of affairs, that is, in its so-called cause. According to samkhya philosophy, cause and effect are different states and that is why they are distinct from each other.

The Nyaya-Vaisesika school opposed the Samkhya by its doctrine of asatkaryavada, according to which an effect is a new creation, and hence numerically different, from its cause. The description of causation in this school is closer to the commonsense view of cause. True to the spirit of empiricism, causal relation is described here also as one of invariable sequence. Udayana asserted, in answer to the skepticism about causality, that a causal explanation of an event is needed unless we want to settle for a total accidentality or 'whimsicality' of everything. A particular effect happens at a particular moment, not always. Hence, the Nyaya-Vaisesika gives an empirical definition of cause. The nyaya- vaisesika philosopher Udayana defines it as its unconditional antecedent or necessary antecedent. If a necessary or unconditional antecedent which is always present when an effect is present and which is always absent when an effect is absent, where not recognized as its cause, then the effect would be uncaused. Thus it is clear that the cause is defined as unconditional and invariable antecedent of an effect and an effect is an unconditional and invariable consequent of a cause. Satkaryavadins believe that the effect is not a new creation, but only an explicitly contained in its material cause. Here, another important question arises-is the effect a real transformation or an unreal appearance of its cause? Those who believe that the effect is not a new creation, but only an explicit manifestation of that which was implicitly contained in its material cause. Again, anotherimportant question arises here: is the effect a real transformation or an unreal appearance of its cause? Those who believe that effect is real transformation of its cause are called Parinamavadins; while those who believe that it is an unreal appearance

are called Vivartavadins. Samkhya, yoga and Ramanuja believe in Parinamavada. The view of Samkhya-Yoga is called Prakriti-Parinamavada, while the view of Ramanuja is called Brahma-Parinama-vada. According to Parinamavada, the cause is really changing into effect, while according to Vivartavada, this changing of the cause into the effect is not real but illusory. In rejecting the notion of 'efficacy' or 'power' Nyaya resembled the position of David Hume; the doctrine of invariable sequence was not propounded here exactly in Humean spirit. For Hume, it is only the mind that spreads itself on external objects and conjoins them as cause and effect while nothing really exists between them to be so conjoined. This is more like the Buddhist view than the Nyaya. For Nyaya, invariable sequence is discovered by the mind but it exists between extra mental realities like universals or class characters. Thus, it was felt in Navyanyaya that the criterion of invariable sequence was not enough for distinguishing causal conditions of a particular effect. Suppose there is a unique tribe, each adult member of which has produced, after going through the usual tribal training period, a particular craft. This craft is unique to this tribe, and let us assume that no one else on earth has succeeded in producing that craft. Now suppose that each such adult member, after his training period and before producing the craft, has gotten up from bed at 6 A.M. on two successive Sundays. If invariable sequence is enough to establish causal connection, then not only the tribal training period but also their getting up at 6 A.M. on two successive Sundays should be causally relevant. In fact, to be true to the Humean spirit of empiricism, one has to accept such an apparently absurd consequence. The question of what is relevant, namely, the training period, and what is not relevant to the production of the craft cannot be decided unless some notion like the Navyanyaya idea of ananyathasiddhatva is introduced. In other words, when an event is caused, almost everything through its noninterference can be causally responsible for it. Thus, the question of excluding irrelevant items from the domain of causation does not arise.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 7: Fill in the blanks:**

(i) Sankhya theory of causation is known as ……..

(ii) Ramanuja and Sankara accepts …….. and …….. respectively.

(iii) …….. is the basic foundation of all teachings of Buddha.

(iv) The Nyaya-Vaisesika school is the follower of ……..

**Q 8:** What is the meaning of Pratitya-samutpada?

.....

.....



## 7.7: FURTHER READINGS:

- From the above discussion it is clear that the notion of causation has a big impact in both the philosophies of Western and Indian.
- In western philosophy, basically the contemporary thinkers have explained causal relation in their own ways. Similarly the Indian systems also contributed their views about it.
- Hence from these explanations we come to know that causation is not mere succession of cause and effect. Mere antecedent is insufficient to explain the production of effects. It should be a necessary antecedence.
- The necessary antecedence would be merely positive but both positive and negative. Two things cannot be said to be causally connected unless there is the positive negative relation between them such that the presence of the cause means the presence of the effect. Each effect has only one cause.
- With the help of the doctrine of causal relation, Indian philosophers proceeded on to account for the two fold experience of the form of the

generic and the specific and in this connection depending on their cherished viewpoint; they ultimately posited some basic cause of some type.

- Then endeavoring to explain as to how this basic cause stands related to the multiplicity of gross and subtle phenomenal effects visible in the world they finally arrive at the diverse doctrines such as Pratityasamutpada, satkaryavada, asatkaryavada, and vivartavada etc.



## 7.8. FURTHER READING


1. Sengupta, Ira; A short history of western philosophy, new central book agency, London.2012
2. Hobert, R.E ; Hume without skepticism, Mind, July 1930
3. Chakravarty,D.K. Fundamental questions of Epistemology an Metaphysics. Manthanprakash , Guwahati 1993
4. Masih, Y ; A critical history of western philosophy; Motilalbanarsidass publishers , Deihi 1994




## 7.9: ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

**Ans to Q 1:** 1.Ans: Hume gives two definitions of cause in his 'Treatise'. They are- (a) a cause is an object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are placed in like relations of precedence and contiguity to those objects that resemble the latter. It is based on philosophical analysis. (b) a cause is an object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other. This definition is based on psychological analysis.

2. Ans: (i) true, (ii) false, (iii) true.
3. Ans: Price.
4. Ans: Moritz Schlick observes, the word 'cause' as used in everyday life, implies nothing but regularity of sequence because nothing else is used to verify the proposition in which it occurs.

5. Ans: From the standpoint of logical idealism, Bosanquet says that the notion of causality does not sustain logical analysis, for the essential element of time involved in the causal relation is found to be self-contradictory. Hence, if time is not real, the temporal relation of causality also thereby becomes an appearance.
6. Ans: true.
7. (i) Satkaryavada.
   (ii) Parinamavada, Vivartavada.
   (iii)Pratitya-samutpada.
   (iv)Asatkaryavada.
8. Ans: Pratitya-samutpada means the existence of everything is conditional, because without a cause no effect arises.

## 7.10: MODEL QUESTIONS:

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** What are the bases of Hume's twofold definitions of cause?

**Q2:** What is the nature of cause and effect according to Hume?

**Q3:** In which book, Hume declares himself as a skeptic?

**Q4:** What is the name of Nyaya-Vaisesika theory of causation?

**Q5:** Vivartavada is accepted by which branches of Indian philosophy?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** What is the relation between a cause and an effect?

**Q2:** How many theories are there in Indian philosophy regarding causality? What are they?

**Q3:** State the view of F.H Bradley regarding causality?

**Q4:** Write short notes

(i) Satkaryavada,

(ii) theory of dependent origination.

**Q5:** Is there any relation between Indian and Western view of causality?

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Explain Western views of causality.

**Q2:** Was Hume a skeptic in the true sense?

**Q3:** What is the foundation of all teachings of Buddha? Explain

**Q4:** What are the theories of causality in Indian philosophy? Discuss

**Q5:** State the nature of causal language as observed by different thinkers of contemporary western philosophy.

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# UNIT-8: SPACE AND TIME

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

8.1 Learning Objectives

8.2 Introduction

8.3 Concept of Space

8.4 Perceptual and Conceptual Space

8.5 Origin of idea of Space

8.6 Concept of Time

8.7 Perceptual and Conceptual Time

8.8 Origin of idea of Time

8.9 Subjectivity and Objectivity of Space and Time

8.10 Let us Sum up

8.11 Further Readings

8.12 Answer to Check Your Progress

8.13 Model Questions

## 8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Explain Categories of knowledge
- Discuss the concept of Space
- Discuss the concept of Time
- Explain the origin of Space and Time
- Distinguish the subjectivity and objectivity of Space and Time

## 8.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you the concept of Space and time which are categories of knowledge. The simplest form of knowledge is judgment. A judgment consists of subject and predicate. Different judgments have different predicates .There are certain predicates which are universally present in all judgments. These universal notions involved in all judgments are called categories of knowledge. The word "category" means what predicated or affirmed of something in thinking of it. Now, in thinking of a

thing, we think of it as a substance having somewhere in space at certain point of time. These concepts of substance, space, time etc. are categories of knowledge. Different philosophers have given different lists of categories. Aristotle mentions ten categories, E.g., substance, quantity, relation, where (space), when (time), position, possession, action and passion. Kant gives list of twelve categories under quantity, quality, relation and modality. Hegel mentions seventy categories. Schopenhauer reduces all categories to causality. But most are agreed in regarding space, time substance and causality as the fundamental categories of knowledge. Among these four categories space and time are discussed in this unit.



**LET US KNOW**

The universal notions involved in all judgments are called categories of knowledge. The word "category" means what predicated or affirmed of something. Aristotle mentions ten categories, Kant gives twelve categories, Hegel mentions seventy categories and Schopenhauer reduces to only one category of knowledge. But most are agreed in regarding space, time substance and causality as the fundamental categories of knowledge.

## 8.3 CONCEPT OF SPACE

The idea of space is a fundamental element in our conception of the world. Space is characterized by such relations as above, below, inside outside, nearness, distance etc. When we look towards the world outside us, we perceived it as a system of physical things each of which has some extension. A thing may move from where it was placed to another point, but wherever it move, it must move in space or it must exist in a certain place. Each and every material body occupies some place. Thus, space is conceived by us a condition which makes possible the simultaneous existence of finite or physical things; finite things, to be finite must be distinct

from one another. Again, space is understood by us as the condition which makes the movement of things possible. It is also viewed as the underlying 'continuum' which holds all finite things and indicates their mutual relations. The material objects bear to each other the relations of above, below, to the right, to the left etc. These relations would not be possible if there is no space. The relations between objects are spatial relations. Thus the concept or category of space is indispensable in the realm of physical or finite things. Further, space is conceived by us as either filled or empty, occupied or unoccupied, plenum or vacuum.

Generally, we regard space as a container or receptacle in which all things are contained. The relation between space and material things is that of a container and contained. Space is a great void in which things exist and through which they move. It is generally regarded as infinite. The limit of space cannot be conceived. There is either something or nothing but void beyond the limit. If there is something, it must be in space, and if there is no object, it must be empty space. So, space cannot be conceived as limited, it is infinite.

## 8.4 PERCEPTUAL AND CONCEPTUAL SPACE

Space which is perceived is perceptual space. Portions of space are perceived by us by vision or touch, or movement. They are many and different from one another. What we perceive is only limited space, parts of space. Our sensibility reveals that the objects visualized are extended or exist in space. The space we actually perceive through sense is perceptual or empirical space. The different patches of space perceived by us either through vision or touch, or movement are perceptual spaces that have individual characteristics by which they are distinguishable from one another. These perceptual spaces vary in dimension according to the dimension of the objects contained by them. For example desk occupies particular space and a bench occupies another. Thus, different objects occupy different spaces.

From these many perceptual spaces a concept of space gradually framed by generalization. It is idealized extension. It is an abstract idea from which particular things of perception are eliminated. It is a ground of co- existence of things. Things are perceived as mutually external to one another and co- existing together in space. Conceptual space has following characteristics:-

1. Space is one; particular spaces are all parts of one space.
2. Space is infinite; for if it were not so, it would have a limit.
3. Space is also infinitely divisible. If it were not so, it would have no parts and no particular figure would be drawn on it. However space is not a mere sum total of finite parts. I t is a single whole, out of which particular spaces are drawn by limitation.
4. Space is continuous; the parts of space are continuous with one another. If there were gap between two spaces, we would think of its being filled by space.
5. Space is three dimensional - length, breadth and depth or distance. For example linear space has only length; superficial space has both length and breadth; and solid space has length, breadth and depth.
6. Things exist in space. Co- existence is the most essential and differentiating attribute of space.

Thus conceptual space is infinite, boundless and one whole containing limited spaces of perception. It is an abstract idea from which things of perception are eliminated. The Geometrical concept of point, line etc are concept about space. There is no real difference between perceptual and conceptual space.

## 8.5 ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF SPACE

There are different views with regards to the idea of origin of space.Two extreme views have been held with regard to this: -

1. Empirical, experimental, genetic or a posteriori theory.
2. Intuitional, rational, naturalistic or a priori theory.

**1. The empirical view**

(i) Non- evolutional: The supporters of this are empiricist philosophers like Hume, Mill, Bain, Berkley, Locke and other empiricist. They hold that the idea of space is derived from motor experience or experience connected with the movement of our limbs. They maintained that the complete idea of space either occupied or unoccupied is gained from muscular feeling. We experience muscle - feelings of different kinds and degrees through the movements of our limbs, and from these experiences we abstract a general idea of possibility of movement. Empty space is nothing more than the possibility of free movement or unimpeded muscular activity. Occupied space implies resisted movement or impeded muscular activity. Hume says, "The idea of space is conveyed to the mind by two senses, the sight and touch." Thus according to this view, Spatial attribute is an abstraction from muscular experience.

(ii) Evolutional: The theory of Spencer and his followers is essentially empirical; however it is modified by their doctrine of evolution. They hold that the idea of space originally derived by our ancestors from motor experience. The accumulated experience of our ancestors has been transmitted to posterior generation by heredity. Consequently the idea becomes innate and a priori in us. Thus the idea of space though inborn to us, is actually the result of collective experience of our ancestors transmitted to us according to the law of heredity.

(iii) James, Ward and their followers have tried to derive the idea of space from the quality of extensity, massiveness or voluminousness that is found explicitly in all sensation. According to James, the extensity, discernible in each and every, is the original sensation of space out of which all the exact knowledge about space that we afterwards come to have is woven by process of discrimination, association and selection.

**Criticism:** According to empirical theory of Mill and Bain, the idea of space is derived from the experience of movement. But we can have no understanding of movement as such without an antecedent idea of space.

Movement means change of position and is thus intelligible only in relation to space. Motion always presupposes space. Thus the empirical theory involves "vicious circle".

Again, the evolutionary theory is also not acceptable for the same reason. Moreover, the particular quality of extensity spoken by James is no doubt generally due to the extension in space of external causes of the sensations in which the quality is found. However, to understand this as such we must have already some idea of space and extension.

The truth is that the idea of space is a necessary condition of our thinking the material world. The material world can never be understood except by reference to the idea of space. The finite things can be conceived existing external to one another and limiting one another in space. Thus the empirical explanations are not satisfactory. Therefore we should consider the rational theory.

**2. The A priory or Rational theory**

(i) Phenomenalistic Rationalism: Kant and his followers hold that the notion of space is not derived from experience, since experience presupposes it. According to these thinkers, the idea of space is a priori, evolved by thinking mind from within and applied to the sense- materials presented to it from within. Space is a priori form perception. Movement does not explain space; space explains movement. Kant proves the apriority of space by following arguments.

First, Space is not an abstract idea derived from experience by generalization. Kant contends that the perception of the outwardness of things already involves the idea of space. Space is the presuppositions of all experiences. We may imagine space containing no objects, but we can never imagine object without space.

Secondly, the notion of space is a priori. Space is a priori forms of perception according to which we arrange the manifold of impressions

produced by things- in-themselves in our mind into spatial and temporal world. The world of things-in-themselves is neither spatial nor temporal. Thirdly, space is infinite; and what is infinite cannot be experienced. Hence we know it a priori.

Fourthly, the proof of apriority of the idea of space is furnished by geometry. As geometry is deal with figure, it is the science of space. Geometrical truths are universal and necessary in character. So, if the of space is derived from experience, the truth of geometry would not be universal and necessary. Hence the notion of space must be regarded as an a priori from perception.

Thus, according to Kant, space is an a priori form of perception which can be applied phenomena or appearance only. Only in this sense, space has empirical reality. It does not apply to noumena. Space is empirically real and transcendentally ideal.

(ii) Realistic Rationalism or Intuitionalism: The thinkers of Common sense school e.g. Reid, Martineau etc. hold this view. According to these thinkers, there is space outside of us and we intuitively discern its experience. They maintain that, corresponding to the idea of space within, there is real space without.

Popular Dogmatic Realism holds that our idea of space is an exact copy of real space outside of us. This real space will exist all the same whether there is any mind to perceive it or not and whether there are things to feel it or not. They even thought that if all the objects in space be annihilated, space itself will remain wholly unaffected.

Criticism: After what has been said above, it is clear that empirical theories are not at all satisfactory. Now a little refection to a priori theory shows that it is to same extent satisfactory. Kant is right in holding space as form of perception in human minds. The notion of space is essentially inherent in the nature of the thinking principle and 'read into' the sense-materials instead of being taken out of them. Thus the notion of space is essentially a priori.

Now the question arises: Has experience nothing to do with our notion of space. In reply to this question it is said that experience does not create the idea, but unfold it. But if space is empirically real, as Kant holds, how do we then perceive things in space? Why the impressions produced by things-in-themselves submit to the forms of our perception? This problem was left unsolved by Kant. But it was Hegel who solved the problem in his theory of objective idealism. Hegel holds that space and time are not only a priori forms of finite minds, but also forms of Devine Mind of which nature is an objective expression. The Devine Mind or Absolute evolves the world according to the forms of space and time. The world and finite minds are expressions of the Absolute, so space is form of our mind as well as forms of outer world. This makes it possible for us to perceive things of the world in space. Space is ideal in the sense that we have the idea in our minds a priori, but it has also a real spatio-temporal order in the objective world. Thus space is both mental in origin and objectively real.



**LET US KNOW**

Generally, we regard space as a container or receptacle in which all things are contained. Space is a great void in which things exist and through which they move .Thus, space is conceived by us as either filled or empty, occupied or unoccupied, plenum or vacuum. Space which is perceived is perceptual space. Conceptual space is one, infinite, infinitely divisible, continuous and three dimensional. There are different views with regards to the idea of origin of space. .Two extreme views have been held with regard to this: Empirical and Rational. According to empirical view, concept of space is derived from experience. Rationalistic view hold that the idea of space is a priori, evolved by thinking mind from within and applied to the sense-materials presented to it from within.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** What does the word "Category" means?

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**Q 2:** How many categories are there according to Kant?

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**Q 3:** What is conceptual space?

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**Q 4:** "The idea of space is conveyed to the mind by two senses, the sight and touch."- Who said this?

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**Q 5:** According to who space is an a priori form of perception which can be applied phenomena or appearance only?

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## ACTIVITY8.1

**Q 1:** Whether space is perceptual or conceptual?

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## 8.6 CONCEPT OF TIME

Time is generally conceived as the underlying 'continuum' which holds events and indicates their mutual relations .In our everyday life we experience changes in the external world as well as in the mind. The fact of time makes it possible for us to take note of changes and movement in objects. Time is condition of events in the order of succession. Time is the ground of order of succession among events. Therefore the category of time is basic to all things and beings. We conceive time as duration, interval and succession. Thus we speak of an event as enduring for a certain length of time, i.e., as occupying a certain portion of time; and we also speak of an interval i.e., the length of time elapsing between one event and another. We also understand that one event is succeeded or followed by another event in time. The relation of such precedence, duration and succession and the like obtaining between events is known as temporal relation. Commonly we think of time as infinite or unlimited.

## 8.7 PERCEPTUAL AND CONCEPTUAL TIME

Perceptual time is the specious present which is grasped by perception. In the external world one object changes and makes for the appearance of another object. In the mental region also thoughts are constantly changing. From the experience of these changes we become conscious of the relation of succession obtaining among the events and consequently, experience finite bits of time. Time is the meeting point of immediate future; it emerges from the immediate past and grows into immediate future. It is not a mathematical instant but a duration of time filled with an event that is grasped by a single act perception. The past is known by memory and future is known expectation.

Conceptual time is constructed out of the data of perceptual times. It is an abstract general idea generalized from the perceived succession of impressions and ideas. It is the ground of sequence of events. Conceptual time has following characteristics:

1. Time is one. Particular times are all parts of one time.
2. Time is infinite in both directions. If it were not so, it would have a beginning and end. Both would be points of time, and would consequently be within time and out of it. It is not made up of its parts or moments added together; for mere addition of finite parts, however indefinitely carried out, cannot give what is infinite. Therefore, time is a single whole out of which particular times are derived by limitation.
3. Time is also infinitely divisible; otherwise there would have been no parts or moments of time. Moments are the indivisible units of time, which co-exist with one another.
4. Time is continuous; if there were a gap between one part of time and another part of it, it would be filled with time.
5. Time has only one dimension. Time is continuous from the past to the present and from present to future. It is irreversible.
6. Time is filled with events. They occur in time. We cannot think of time apart from succession of events, outer or inner.

Hence from the standpoint of knowledge, perceptual time precedes the conceptual time, though the two are at bottom identical.

## 8.8 ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF TIME

There are different views with regard to the origin of the idea of time.

### 1. Empirical or a posteriori view

According to the upholders of Pure Empiricism, such as Hume, Mill, Bain, the notion of time is an abstract idea generalized from the experience of successive events through memory and anticipation. We experience events occurring successively. We remember events that are no longer anticipate those that are not yet. Thus on the basis of that, we get the distinction between no longer, now, and not yet- between past, present and future.

The evolutionists like Spacer and his followers hold empirical view but it is modified by their theory of evolution. According to them, the idea of time is undoubtedly an abstraction from the experiences of successive events; but it is not the experiences of the individual mind from which the idea is abstracted. The idea is derived from the accumulated experience of innumerable generalizations of our ancestors and has been transmitted to posterior generation by heredity.

Criticism: The empiricist's view is not acceptable as the idea of time cannot be general idea derived from particular experience of succession among events. Succession is on the contrary, explained on the supposition of time. Again, the evolutionist's view though modified yet, the inherent difficulty of empiricism is not removed by an appeal to ancestral experience. The arguments that were advanced against the empirical view can equally be applied against the evolutionist's view.

**2. The Rational or A Priori Theory**

The advocate of Phenomenalistic Rationalism such as Kant and his followers hold that the notion of time is inherent in the nature of the thinking principle and applied to successive experiences presented to it. It is a necessary one, supplied by mind from within. Kant proves that priority of the notion of time by the following arguments.

First, the idea of time cannot be derived experience, for all experience presupposes the notion of time Experience comes either successively or simultaneously and the ideas of succession and simultaneity imply the idea of time. Therefore, it must come from within the mind itself.

Secondly, we can think away one event after another in time, but we cannot annihilate time in thought. So the notion of time is a priori.

Thirdly, time is infinite in both direction and as such cannot be perceived or experienced. Therefore, time is a priori.

Fourthly, Kant prove a priority of time though Arithmetic. Arithmetic is the science of duration, the successive moments of which constitute the number. Arithmetical truths are universal and necessary in character. But they would not be so unless the notion of time is a priori.

The advocates of Realistic Intuitionism maintain that, corresponding to our idea of time, there is a real time outside of us. This real tie can be known intuitively. Popular Dogmatic Realism supposes that our notion of time is an exact copy of the real objective time which exists without any concrete events occurring in it.

**Criticism:** Rationalistic theory of the origin of time is not totally acceptable. The temporal scheme in which we view events is imposed upon by us. Again, time cannot be conceived as existing apart from concrete events occurring in it. Moreover, the occurrence of events in time implies a permanent unity of consciousness which compares and distinguishes them, and gives them temporal relations. Now this consciousness cannot be the consciousness of finite minds, for finite minds have their origin in time. It must therefore, be a higher unity of intelligence which is not in time, but makes time; which is unchangeable but makes change possible. In other words, the world of related things and events in space and time implies the existence of an all- embracing Absolute self- consciousness. Thus like space, time is also mental in origin and absolutely real.

However, it should be remembered that, though experience is not the source of the idea of time, yet it helps the elaboration, explication or development of the idea.

## 8.9 SUBJECTIVITY AND OBJECTIVITY OF SPACE AND TIME

Regarding the question whether space and time are subjective and objective opinions are different among different philosophers. According to some thinkers space and time are subjective forms of perception and according to some others they are not dependent on subjective mind, but

they have external independent existence. Again according to some others space and time are both subjective and objective.

**Objective View:** Common people regard space and time has an objective existence outside and independent of our mind. Greek Atomist Leucippus and Democritus admitted the independent existence of space and time. According to them, they are like two infinite substances which like receptacles contain all things and events. This view is also supported by Galileo and Newton. They conceive of space and time as frame works of physical order in which material objects move and change from one state to another. In Indian Philosophical system, The Nyaya and Vaisesika philosophers regard space and time i.e. dik and kala, to be two eternal and all- pervading substances.

Descartes, the father of modern philosophers identifies space with extension, and regard it as attribute of matter. It is not regarded as real substances. To be material is to be extended, matter without extension is impossible and extension without matter is impossible. There is no empty space. Space is filled or plenum. Hence space or extension is objective and independent of mind. Spinoza also supports this view.

In recent times Prof. Alexander regards space and time as the ultimate cosmic reality. They are fundamental dynamic principle of the world. Space and time is matrix from which motion, matter, and even life and mind have emerged. Space and time are not two different realities; they have no existence apart from each other. If by space we mean the co- existence of several points, the points then must be arranged in successive order. Therefore, the idea of space includes that of succession or time. Similarly conception of time means succession of events. If one event succeeds another event, both of them must be existent in space. Therefore the idea of time includes the idea of space.

But the view that space and time are independent of knowing mind is untenable. A thing outside and independent of the thinking mind is unthinkable.

**Subjective view:** Leibnitz regards space and time as an objective entity, but as confused perception, on our part, of the co- existence of monads. According to Leibnitz, monads are the ultimate constituents of universe. They are non- extended spiritual atoms. If monads are non-extended, then space cannot be objectively real. Again, time is also a confused perception on our part. In our attempt at explaining the changes happening in nature, we imagine the monads influencing one another. Exerting influence on one another is possible only in time. Hence space and time are purely relative, space being an order of co-existence and time being an order of succession.

The empiricist philosophers Berkley, Lock, Hume, Mill and others regard space as purely an abstract idea or a concept generalized from the idea co-existence derived from tactuo-muscular sensations. Similarly time is also an abstract concept of mind generalized from the ideas of succession of events. Therefore space and time are only subjective ideas of the mind. Subjective and Objective: According to Kant, Space and time are neither an objective entity, independent of mind, nor an abstract concept generalized from motor experience. Space and time cannot be derived from experience since experience presupposes them. Space and time are a priori form of mind, a form of perception. They are our way of representing things in their mutual externality to each other. The very idea of movement and co-existence involves presupposes the notion of space. Again, the apprehension of events in order of 'before' and 'after' presupposes the notion of time. Human mind is so constituted that it provides the impressions produced by thing-in-themselves in space and time. Space and time, as forms of the mind, apply to phenomena or appearances. They have thus empirical reality. But they do not apply to noumena or thing-in-themselves.

According to Hegel, space is not only an a priori from of the finite mind, but also a form of the Divine Mind of which nature is an objective expression. God has evolved the world according to the form of space. The human minds are finite reproductions of the God; so the finite minds also interpret the world according to the form of space. Hence space has not

only a subjective existence in the finite minds, but also an objective existence in nature.

In recent times another theory of space and time has been advocated by Einstein. This theory has come to be known as Space-Time Relativity. According to this view, space and time are not two distinct and separate realities; they are two sides of same reality viz., motion. A thing in motion must be both in space and time. According to this theory, space and time are wholly relative to the motion of the observer. But though space and time are relative to the motion of the observer, they are objective or real characteristics of the objects. Thus they are both subjective and objective.



**LET US KNOW**

Time is generally conceived as the underlying 'continuum' which holds events and indicates their mutual relations. Perceptual time is the specious present which is grasped by perception. Conceptual time is one, infinite, infinitely divisible, continuous and one dimensional. Two extreme views have been held with regard to this: Empirical and Rational.

Some thinkers hold that space and time are subjective, according to some they are objective and some conceived them as both subjective and objective. Common people regard space and time has an objective existence outside and independent of our mind. In Indian Philosophical system, The Nyaya and Vaisesika philosophers regard space and time i.e. dik and kala, to be two eternal and all- pervading substances. According to empiricist philosopher space time are subject ideas of mind. Kant and Hegel maintain space time as both subjective and objective. In recent times another theory of space and time has been advocated by Einstein. This theory has come to be known as Space-Time Relativity.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 6:** What is the only dimension of time?

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**Q 7:** Is space and time objective according to common people?

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**Q 8:** Which philosophical system hold space and time i.e. dik and kala as eternal and all-pervading?

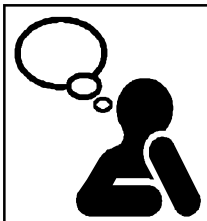
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**Q 9:** Who advocates space time relativity theory of space and time?

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## ACTIVITY8.2

**Q 1:** Whether space and time subjective or objective?

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## 8.10 LET US SUMS UP

In this unit we have discussed space and time as categories of knowledge. The most important points are:

- The word "category" means what predicated or affirmed of something.
- Space, time substance and causality are regarded as the fundamental categories of knowledge.
- Generally, we regard space as a container or receptacle in which all things are contained.
- Space is one, infinite, infinitely divisible, continuous and three dimensional
- Time is generally conceived as the underlying 'continuum' which holds events and indicates their mutual relations.
- Time is one, infinite, infinitely divisible, continuous and one dimensional.
- There are different theories regarding the origin of space and time.
- Opinions differ regarding the subjectivity and objectivity of space and time.
- In recent times space and time is regarded as both subjective and objective.



## 8.11 FURTHER READING

1) Sinha. J.N.:(1985) Introduction to Philosophy, New Central Book Agency, Calcutta -9
2) Chatterji P.B. (1962) Outlines of General Philosophy, Beadon Street, Calcutta -6
3) Chaterjee. S.C. (1964) The Problems of Philosophy, University of Calcutta

## 8.12 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** The word "category" means what predicated or affirmed of something in thinking of it.

**Ans. to Q.2:** Kant gives list of twelve categories under quantity, quality, relation and modality.

**Ans. to Q. 3:** Conceptual space is one, infinite, infinitely divisible, continuous and three dimensional. Conceptual space is infinite, boundless and one whole containing limited spaces of perception. It is an abstract idea from which things of perception are eliminated. The Geometrical concept of point, line etc are concept about space.

**Ans. to Q.4:** David Hume.

**Ans. to Q.5:** Kant holds that space is an a priori form of perception which can be applied phenomena or appearance only.

**Ans. to Q.6:** The only dimension of time is continuous. Time is continuous from the past to the present and from present to future. It is irreversible.

**Ans. to Q.7:** Yes, space and time are objective according to common people.

**Ans. to Q.8:** In Indian Philosophical system, The Nyaya and Vaisesika philosophers regard space and time i.e. dik and kala, to be two eternal and all- pervading substances.

**Ans. to Q.9:** The Space-Time Relativity advocated by Einstein.

## 8.13 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** What are three dimension of space?

**Q2:** Is space infinitely divisible?

**Q3:** Is time the ground of order of succession among events?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Write notes on:

(a) Perceptual space

(b) Conceptual space

(g) Perceptual time

(d) Conceptual time

**Q2:** What is Space- Time Relativistic theory

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Explain the concept of space?

**Q2:** Explain the concept of time?

**Q3:** Explain briefly the empirical theory of the origin of space?

**Q4:** Discuss briefly the rationalistic theory of the origin of space?

**Q5:** Discuss briefly the theories of the origin of time?

**Q6:** Is time subjective or objective? Explain.

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# UNIT 9: MIND-BODY RELATION

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

9.1 Learning Objectives

9.2 Introduction

9.3 Descartes view on Mind- Body relation

9.3.1 Interactionism

9.4 Spinoza's View on Mind-Body relation

9.4.1 Parallelism

9.5 Leibnitz's view on Mind-Body relation

9.5.1 Russell's view on Leibnitz's Concept of Mind and Body Relation

9.6 Strawson's view on Mind and Body Relation

9.7 Let Us Sum Up

9.8 Further Readings

9.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.10 Model Questions

## 9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- explain Descartes' view on mind-body relation
- describe Spinoza's view on mind and body
- discuss critically Leibnitz's exposition on mind-body problem
- analyze Russell's on Leibnitz's concept of mind-body relation
- discuss Strawson's view on mind-body relation

## 9.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you different theories forwarded by different philosophers regarding the problem of Mind- Body relation. We will discuss here the theories like Interactionism given by Descartes, Parallelism by Spinoza, Pre-established harmony by Leibnitz, Russell's view on Leibnitz's concept of Mind- Body relation, and Strawson's view on Mind-Body relation etc.

## 9.3 DESCARTES VIEW ON MIND-BODY RELATION

Descartes concept of mind and body necessarily follows from his self-imposed doubt, which is the stepping stone of his philosophy. As a rationalist philosopher, Descartes opines that Mind and Body are two independent substances. Regarding the concept of Mind-Body relation we find the different theories like Occasionalism, Parallelism of Spinoza, Pre-established Harmony of Leibnitz and Subjective Idealism of Berkeley. This problem still persists in the philosophical viewpoints of modern philosophy in a different style.

Now, we will discuss Descartes philosophical viewpoints in the problem of Mind- Body relation. Descartes was a dualist because he divides knowledge into ideas and ideas of things. Locke was the first philosopher to have introduced this epistemological dualism in philosophy which to be followed by Descartes and was to be criticized by Berkeley. Apart from this Locke as a dualist also divides ideas into primary and secondary ideas and was criticized by Berkeley. Now let us turn our attention to Descartes concept of interactionism.

### 9.3.1 Interactionism

As a staunch dualist Descartes holds that the mind which possesses the quality of consciousness need not refer to extension. In the same way, the body which implies the quality of extension need not refer to consciousness. So, mind and body are the two independent substances. Human beings have both body and mind. Human body is compared to a machine. Just as a machine moves with the help of energy, so also the body moves with the energy produced in the heart. The death is due to the destruction of some valuable parts of the body machine. Apart from body and mind, God in his Creation additionally puts soul in case of human beings. That is why it can be said that there can be no real relation between body and soul. Body and soul are diametrically opposed to each other. However, the relation between body and mind can be compared to the nature of relation between the pilot and his machine.

Descartes, in this context, introduces the concept of Interactionism where he speaks of the interaction between the mind and the body. In case of Interactionism the bodily activities are sometimes influenced by the mind. Similarly, mental activities are sometimes influenced by the body. As for instance, although sense perception, imagination, memory, and act of remembering are all considered as mental activities, yet these acts also refer to material objects which we observe in human beings. Similarly, we observe that the bodily acts like eating, playing, working etc. also refer to mental acts which we cannot ignore. As for instance, when we write something it is not only our body that is associated with this particular action, but also our mind or reasoning power, having an equal participation in this action. Therefore, it can be said that the mind and the body interact with each other. Just as we cannot simply talk of mental activities apart from the bodily activities so also we cannot talk of the bodily activities apart from mental activities. We perceive the intimate connection between the two but Descartes is not absolutely clear about the relationship between the two within the framework of dualism. Rather, he warns us against the confusing or mixing of mind and body with one another. In contrast to the opinion supposing the intimate relation of mind and body Descartes opines that the mind (thought) and the body (extension) are combined only in unity of composition and not in unity of nature. So, the union of mind and body should not be compared with a mixture of two bodies. Descartes shows that although thought (mind) is affected by sense organs still it cannot be said to be the product of sense-organs; however, sensations, feelings, and appetites are the products that originate in the soul because of their union with the body. Descartes holds that in spite of the union of soul with the body the two remain distinct and therefore, he brings the concept of God to put them together. He holds the position that the mind and the body are not such that one becomes the cause of the other or vice-versa. But Descartes sometimes also accepts the theory of causal connection in the context of mind and body. Although the soul is united with the body, still it has its principal seat in the pineal gland of the brain. Descartes considers the pineal gland to be the only undivided portion of the brain. The bodily affection

moves the animal spirits in the nerves, so the movements in the animal spirits are the results or causes of sensible objects and which are finally transferred to the pineal gland. And in this way sensations are produced in the brain. In the same way, the soul also can move the gland and this movement is transferred to the animal spirits and in this way the movement is conducted by them (animal spirits) over the nerves into the muscles. Here, the relation between the mind and the body is considered as causal, but this causal relationship takes place through an interaction between the mind and the body of the pineal gland. But Descartes is not successful in showing how this interaction is compatible with his metaphysical dualism of mind and body. Pineal gland: A small gland at the back of the skull within the brain, producing a hormone like substance. n some mammals.

While discussing Descartes interactionism it will be useful to discuss epiphenomenalism which is also a dualistic theory.

- Epiphenomenalism is a dualistic theory which states that the mind is separate and distinct from the body. This theory allows that the mind is utterly dependent causally upon the body. So, everything which occurs in the mind is a result of events in the body and the mind in this regard is utterly powerless to affect the body. That is why it can be stated that the epiphenomenalist accepts one half of the interactionist contention, which holds that bodily events cause mental events. But, this theory denies the possibility of the other half, that is, the mental events can ever cause the bodily events. It allows that whatever happens in the mind is merely a by-product of bodily activity. This view is known as epiphenomenalism.

Although we observe an interaction between mind and body in cases like appetites of hunger and thirst, emotions and passions of the mind etc. still Descartes seems to conceal the relationship by putting an analogy of the rider and the horse. Just as the rider pushes on the horse to speed up the movement with his energy, so the mind affects the bodily movement without giving its own energy into the material bodies. However, this

relationship of mind and body is not free from difficulties. It is observed that like the metaphorical relation of the rider and the horse, the relation of mind and matter also cannot not be discussed in concrete terms. The relation between mind and body is not mechanical like the relation between the rider and the horse. Mind and body are different in nature; but the rider and the horse are essentially of the same nature. Although we fail to establish a direct interaction between mind and body still it can be said that there is a watertight relation between body and mind. As the discussion of mind and body deals with human being, so a partial interaction of mind and body cannot be ruled out. Mind and body influence each other through animal spirits. Interaction of mind and body occurs when we admit that the soul is excited to activity by the animal spirits or the soul moves the animal spirits. If the animal spirit is material that influences the soul, there is no problem in thinking of interaction of mind and body and vice versa. However, Descartes position in this regard is not clear because he takes help of mechanical and spiritual principles in order to explain the corporeal world. (Gilbert Ryle: (19 August 1900- 6 October 1976) A British Philosopher)

The difficulty involves regarding the division of the mind and the body. The concept of an analysis of a person into mind and body in Descartes philosophy fails to provide inclusive information about a person. Generally, we never discuss a human being by analysing into two parts, one is mental and the other is physical. By this division we invite the problem that the mind and the body are two different parts in nature because the mind which has the attribute of consciousness is not extended and the body which has the quality of extension is not conscious. Therefore, it will be difficult to make a bridge between the two diametrically opposed entities. So, Descartes seems to fail in this context to render a satisfactory answer regarding the concept of mind-body relation.

Gilbert Ryle holds that Descartes concept of dualism (mind and body) leads to a categorical mistake with the sense that while mind stands for consciousness and body for extension, the both belong to two categories. The Mind which possesses the attribute of consciousness is mental and

the body which possesses the attribute of extension is corporeal or physical. Therefore, the concept of direct or indirect interaction of the body and the mind by which we try to explain the mind through the body and the body through the mind leads to a fallacy which Gilbert Ryle calls categorical mistake.

But the important question is, do the mental acts refer to material bodies? Descartes holds that mental ideas do not refer to material bodies. It simply represents the material objects. According to Descartes, there are real material objects or bodies which are based on the veracity of God. But to know a material body we at first know only the primary qualities of the particular material body. But the secondary qualities, which are so called confused ideas, are caused by the material bodies. That is why, Descartes holds the view that material bodies affect the mental states through human body.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** State whether the following statements are True or False

a) According to Descartes, Mind and Body are two independent substances. (True/False)

b) Locke introduced the concept of epistemological dualism. (True/ False)

c) Locke advocates the theory of Interactionism. (True/False)

d) Descartes holds that the locus of Soul is the pineal gland of the brain. (True/false)

e) Ryle views that Descartes concept of dualism leads to categorical mistake. (True/False)

**Q 2:** What do you mean by Interactionism? (Answer in about 109 words)

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**Q 3:** Write a critical view on Descartes interactionism. (Answer in about 73 words)

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**ACTIVITY 9.1**

**Q 1:** Do you support interactionism? If yes, give your reasons in support of your answer. Discuss

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## 9.4 SPINOZA'S VIEW ON MIND-BODY RELATION

Spinoza also participated in the discussion of mind-body relation. His view on mind-body relation is to be deduced from his concept of Substance. According to him, Substance is one and an irreducible whole out of which everything is deduced or explained. So, it can be viewed that Spinoza tried to solve the mind-body problem through his concept of Substance. Instead of regarding the two entities or substances as separate Spinoza holds that mind and body are the two attributes of Substance or God.

### 9.4.1 Parallelism

Spinoza's theory of mind-body relation is known as Parallelism. He thought that matter and mind, also known as thought and extension, are the two attributes or aspects of the same spiritual reality viz. God. In contrast to this Descartes, in his theory of interactionism, had held that mind and body are the two relative substances which were quite independent of each

other. Spinoza views that Descartes theory of interactionism is not satisfactory, because he thought that Substance is one all-inclusive whole. Therefore, there cannot be more than one Substance. If there were more than one Substance, they would limit each other and would ultimately destroy their very nature by which we are familiar with the word 'Substance'.

Panpsychism: In philosophy, panpsychism is the view that all matter has a mental aspect.

Fechner:(1801-1887)A German experimental psychologist

Again, Spinoza holds that Descartes position is not clear in the context of interactionism. His interactionism of mind and matter goes against his dualistic tendency in his theory. His position further deteriorated when the later Cartesians propounded the theory of Occasionalism. This theory of Occasionalism holds that matter is not the cause of thought and similarly the mind is not the cause of matter and vice-versa. Rather it is thought that God uses the occasions for His thinking and will. As for instance, when we say that someone performs the work successfully, it is not that he performs the work, because it is God who uses His will as an occasion for His producing change in the world. That is why, it can be said that both the mind and the body are the occasions for God's act and thought. Therefore, this theory propounded by the later Cartesians has been known in the history of philosophy as the theory of Occasionalism. But Spinoza did not accept God's intervention in case of the relation between mind and body. That is why he rejected Cartesian dualism and upheld the theory of Parallelism.

According to this theory, mind and matter or body are considered the two aspects or attributes of a single, all inclusive reality. As the attributes or aspects of one single substance, mind and body or extension and thought cannot interact upon each other. Fechner as another representative of parallelism did not give equal status to mind and body and also did not show any distinction between them. But Spinoza distinguishes between mind and body and gives equal status to mind and body. Fechner wanted to show that every material object is endowed with consciousness or soul.

This view of Fechner indicates that each and every object in the universe has a soul. This position of the supremacy of mind and its control over body makes a distinction between Fechner's and Spinoza's view on Substance. Fechner's view is out and out panpsychistic; but Spinoza's view is parallelstic in the sense that both mind and body run parallel without showing any over-power to one another. This doctrine shows that neither the body can be explained from the mind nor the mind can be explained from the body. Therefore, both mind and matter are the two different manifestations of one and the same universal reality. Again, it can be viewed that neither the mind can be the cause of the body nor the body can be the cause of the mind, as the two are considered to be the two different aspects of one and the same reality. Rather, they are considered the effects of the same cause which is the one indivisible and all inclusive whole that is Substance. That is why mind and matter are the two different aspects of one single indivisible whole. On this ground, Spinoza's theory is also known as psycho-physical parallelism.

If mind and matter do not interact upon each other, then the question is, how are they related? Spinoza answers the question by saying that both Substance and Mind run parallel. They are independent and infinite in their own nature and can express God infinitely by their own nature without taking help of one another. It indicates that the mind or thinking can express God independently by its own nature and God is in its own unique nature possesses both extension (body) and thinking (mind). That is why they are two inseparable aspects of the same thing like the two lenses, convex and concave, of the same spectacles. Similarly, from one point of view God is extended and from another God is thinking. So, they are two inseparable aspects of the same thing. Although the two aspects namely matter and mind or extension and thinking, can run parallel without interfering each other, still none can exist independently without the other. So, Spinoza's theory of Parallelism excludes both materialism and idealism without giving due importance to mind over matter and matter over mind.

Spinoza's concept of parallelism is not satisfactory. According to Spinoza, Substance is both extended and thinking. So, human being can know only two aspects or attributes of substance. That is why the question is, why it is that human being can know only two aspects, namely matter and mind and why not the other aspects? Spinoza, in this context, answers that human beings can know only two attributes because human beings are embodied spirits. Again, if the attributes of Substance are infinite in its own nature, then human beings cannot confine the attribute of mind to thinking alone; because the attribute of mind or thinking can go beyond its boundary. Therefore, the question of strict parallelism cannot be accepted in case of Spinoza's theory of mind and body relation.

Spinoza's Double Aspect Theory offers some difficulty. In case of the relation between the mind and the body he never put importance to one in order to explain the other. Still his theory cannot be said to be free from idealistic bias, because Spinoza categorically announces that Substance is one and an all inclusive whole. Matter and mind, extension and consciousness, are only the two aspects of Substance. Substance is indeterminate, infinite and an all inclusive whole and everything is deduced only from Substance. Therefore, it can be said that Spinoza's theory of parallelism is not satisfactory from this point of view.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 4: Fill in the blanks**

a) According to Spinoza, ……..and ……..are the two attributes of substance.

b) Spinoza's concept of mind and body relation is known as……

c) ……..is one and all inclusive whole, to Spinoza.

d) According to…… mind and body are the two aspects of one single all inclusive whole.

**Q 5:** Who advocates the theory of Occasionalism?

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**Q 6:** What is Parallelism? (Answer in about 104 words)

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**Q 7:** On what Ground is Spinoza's theory known as psycho physical parallelism? (Answer in about 46 words)

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**Q 8:** Why is Spinoza's theory not satisfactory? (Answer in about 67 words)

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**ACTIVITY 9.2**

**Q 1:** Do you support parallelism? If yes, give reasons in support of your answer. Discuss

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## 9.5 LEIBNITZ'S MIND-BODY RELATION

Monad: a single unit: Leibnitz was another philosopher to have introduced the concept of mind-body relation. He goes beyond Spinoza's concept of mind-body relation, because he not only discusses the relationship of mind-and body relation, but also discusses the other things which are related to mind and body. So, it can be said that Spinoza limits his discussion

only to his mind and body, but Leibnitz points to the variety which includes other things apart from mind and body.

Macrocosom: The whole of complex structure like the world contrasted with a small part.

Leibnitz introduces the concept of monads in order to discuss the ultimate unity of all things. He holds that there are infinite monads and every monad is real, eternal and indivisible. Monads are real like the eternal substance of Spinoza. Each monad contains the whole infinity of existence. And every monad is potentially a world. It can be called a macrocosm in microcosom. Every monad as an all inclusive whole mirrors the world. So, each and every monad being a self-contained unit excludes all other monads. Every monad by itself mirrors a world or is potentially a world. Therefore, it can be said that monads are windowless but through them nothing can come in or go out. No monads are alike. But they are found in a hierarchical order of existence. There may be bare or lowest monads and highest monads. The lowest monads are those in which perception, the very characteristic of monad, is obscure. They make the inorganic bodies. Apart from this there are conscious monads. These are called souls which make the plant and the animal world. Over and above, the highest monads are called spirits endowed with reason and universal, necessary knowledge. That is why it can be said that in the hierarchical order of monad the higher monad or the spirit includes the lower. It implies that self-consciousness emerges out of consciousness and excludes certain perceptions which remain obscure. In case of bare monads the force emerges only in the form of mechanical movement. As for instance, the appetite in case of animals is expressed in the form of instincts, where as in case of higher monads the force is found in the form of self consciousness, desire and will.

Microcosom: A thing seen as miniature representation of something much layer.

Therefore, it can be said that Spinoza explained the unity between mind and body and Leibnitz showed the variety of monads. But a very

important question is, how can we explain the unity among different kinds of monads? From the very nature of the windowlessness monad it can be seen that monads cannot be related. Although it is said that monads are independent or not related, still there is an inner desire of each monad which indicates a harmonious relationship among different kinds of monads. According to Leibnitz, the harmonious relationship among different kinds of monads has been pre established by God who has beautifully arranged the series of monads in a hierarchical order in order to maintain harmonious relationship among various kinds of monads. The change in one monad is the cause of another monad, symbolically or logically the change in A is the cause of the change in B. Leibnitz, in this context, wants to show that monads cannot interact upon one another, because they are considered as windowless. He points out that although monads cannot interact upon each other, still there is a concomitant relation between monads. As for instance, as soon as we press the button the bulb shines. In this context, Leibnitz shows that the change in button or switch is the cause of shining by a bulb. Here, it cannot be said that concomitant relation between the switch (button) and the bulb cannot be showed through an interaction of switch (button) upon the bulb.

So, Leibnitz has brought in the concept of God who has arranged the monads in order to maintain a harmonious relation in the hierarchical order or series of monads to fulfill a grand plan in His mind. It is true that each monad works independently according to its inner urge or wish, but this inner plan coincides with the realization of one master plan in the mind of the Creator. It can be opined that each monad tries to realize the same final end in the mind of the creator; therefore, a harmony is involved among monads.

Leibnitz through his concept of pre-established harmony wanted to show that like Spinoza's parallelism, his concept is not confined to mind-body relation. Apart from this he insisted on harmonious relationship among different kinds of monads through the concept of pre-established harmony. Although Leibnitz seemed to be correct in case of reconciliation between

mind and matter, still there are some inconsistencies prevailing in his concept of Pre-established harmony. This is explained as follows:

Leibnitz wants to show the supremacy of God by showing that God is the creator of all monads. If God is the creator of all monads, the view of Leibnitz that monads are independent and self-contained will be self-contradictory. That is why, it can be said that Leibnitz's concept of God seemed to be inconsistent by taking God as the creator of the Pre-established harmony.

Leibnitz by the concept of Pre-established harmony aimed at introducing unity in variety which was lacking in Spinoza's concept of parallelism. Besides, through this concept he wished to reconcile the mind-body problem. Leibnitz views that the body is nothing but an aggregate of bare monads. In other words, the body is nothing but a living organism which indicates a living force. Among the various monads there is a Queen Monad which focuses on the activities of the surrounding monads and also mirrors the changes of all other monads in a clear form of the universe. The Queen Monad is also known as soul which is superior in nature to the other monads. The supreme monad or soul can apprehend the activities of all other monads of the universe. The activities of lower monads are regulated by the Queen Monad or God. That is why lower monads perform the duties as a means and conditions for the realization of the end of the higher monad. When we have a desire for the movement of our hand to take place then there are involved the muscular changes concomitantly in our body. This occurrence shows that the desire is the cause of the muscular changes in the body. It is due to concomitant variation.

This indicates that the relation between mind and body may be illustrated with the help of the simile of two clocks ringing harmoniously. The possibility of the harmonious relationship between the two clocks can be explained in three different ways.

a) The two clocks may be so connected with one another by a joint mechanism in such a way that the motion in one may be communicated to the other for the corresponding movement. Like this relation of the two clocks, Descartes holds that mind and body interact on each other. But Leibnitz goes against this view and holds that mind and body as the windowless monad cannot interact.

b) The two clocks may work harmoniously if a technician or mechanic regulates the two in a proper interval. In this context the occasionalists bring the concept of the interference of God in order to keep harmony in the mind-body relation. But Leibnitz denies the constant interference of God in the context of two windowless monads that is mind and body.

c) The two clocks may be designed with such skill and perfection that they may always work harmoniously. Leibnitz accepts this viewpoint and opines that God is considered the creator of the two windowless monads.

To be brief, the doctrine of pre established harmony informs that the bodies act as if there were no souls, and souls act as if there were no bodies, and both act as if one influences the other.

Although monads are independent by their nature or exist by themselves, still every monad imperceptibly leads to others. So, this imperceptible or unseen connection of one monad to another can show the possibility of explaining every variety of experience. Over and above it can also be a helping hand to fill up the gap between mind and matter, men and animals, conscious and unconscious states. Here, the question involved is, if monads are windowless, then how are they related? The answer to the question is that monads cannot be so related because they are windowless.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 9:** Fill in the blanks

a) To Leibnitz, monads are……

b) ……advocates the theory of pre-established harmony.

**Q10:** Who propounds the concept of monads?

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**Q11:** What is pre-established harmony? (Answer in about 69 words)

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**Q12:** Briefly explain the nature of Queen Monad? (Answer in about 74 words)

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## ACTIVITY 9.3

**Q 2:** Do you support Leibnitz's Pre-established harmony in case of the relation of mind and body? Discuss

**Ans:** .....

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### 9.5.1 Russell's View on Leibnitz's Concept of Mind and Body Relation

Russell in case of the theory of mind and body relation holds that the essence of matter is not extension, but matter is essentially plural. Russell held the view that Leibniz required a new theory of soul and body, and this new theory was undoubtedly a main motive to the doctrine of pre-established harmony. To Russell, this doctrine in case of the relation of mind and body is an innovative idea. He discusses Leibnitz's concept elaborately and offers his own comment on it.

According to Russell, Leibnitz views that there is nothing real but monads. The body (matter) is the appearance of an infinite collection of monads. Monads differ from one another in the clearness of other perceptions, and the monads which have clearer perceptions are more active. When a change in one monad explains a change in another, the first is said to be active, while the second is passive. Similarly, in the body the monad (in my body) which is myself has clearer perceptions than any of the others and may be said to be dominant in the body in relation to the other monads. The monads which have clearer perceptions are said to be active and others are passive. Here, it can be said that there is no real interaction between monads. It is because of the fact that the soul is one, but the body is many; so, there is no interaction between them. But the relation between soul and body is due to the pre-established harmony. From this it can said that the soul has clear perceptions and the occurrences in the body are said to be found in the soul. Therefore, the view is that the soul acts on the body and dominates it.

He further discusses the three great classes in the hierarchy of monads as propounded by Leibnitz who says that these classes are merged into each other. These are, mainly, bare monads, souls and spirits. Bare monads have the minimum of perception and desire. Although these are similar to souls, still they cannot be called a soul. Souls are distinguished from the first class by memory, feelings, and attention. Animals have souls,

but men have spirits or rational souls. Spirits are differing from angels which are superior to man in degree. They are defined by self-consciousness, the knowledge of God and eternal truths, and also by reason. Spirits, like souls and God, do not mirror only the universe of creatures. Spirits compose the city of God and god possesses goodness in relation to spirits. Spirits are said to be immortal and preserve moral identity, but they depend on members or self. Monads are identical with one another without knowing each other.

Further Russell points out that monads are said to be active or passive in relation to clearness of perception. Monad consists only in the degree of their perfections. To Leibnitz, as the soul is perfect, that is why it has clear perceptions. So far as the body is concerned, it is imperfect. To Leibnitz, again, one creature is more perfect than another. The influence of one on another is purely ideal. God takes notice of the superior monad in regulating others. Russell also explains Leibnitz's views as to how every substance which passes to a lesser degree of perfection acts and also suffers. In any substance which has perception dealing with action brings joy while passion brings pain. The activity is opposed to passivity which differs from essential substance. To Leibnitz, whatever is properly a substance only acts. All substances are capable of pleasure and pain. There is action involved in true substance. And when perception is developed, then substance becomes more distinct. Again, substance becomes more confused when there is passion present in case of a substance. All actions regarding a substance are a step to a pleasure and all passion regarding a substance is a step to pain.

Russell mentions that Leibnitz's theory that reminds us of Spinoza that there are two elements involved in a substance what is active. These are perfection and clearness of perception. But he also says that Leibnitz does not confuse these two elements but rather explains them as necessarily connected. He further explains that only spirits are good or bad as ends of themselves and bare monads and souls are simply means to them. In Spirits volition is always determined by the reason of the good. It means that we act rightly if we always judge rightly. As right judgment depends upon clear

perception, we are more or less perfect according to our ability to have more or less clear perception.

Moreover, the connection of soul and body is only explicable by means of material prima. Materia prima (as an element in each monad) is that whose repetition produces the material prima of dynamics. It is also identified with the passivity or passive force of each monad with confused perception and finite nature. God could deprive a monad of material secunda, i.e., of the assemblage of monads which constitutes its body. But he could not deprive a monad of materialprima without which it would be actus purus, i.e., God himself. Monads are distinguished from God by materiaprima which denotes that monads are finite, limited etc. Confused perceptions can involve matter or the infinite in number.

According to Russell, Leibnitz says that God alone is above matter. To Leibnitz, spirits would be without required connection, without the order of times and places. Spirits are out of universal connections and order of the world, which is made by relations to time and place. Monads which deal with time and place have confused perceptions or material prima. This is again intimately connected with unconscious perception. The doctrine of monads makes if possible to mirror the whole universe. Monads which consists of perception are composed of an infinite number of insensible perceptions.

Russell thought that the two inconsistent theories (idealism and realism) regarding soul and body are contained in Leibnitz philosophy. And this leads to division among philosophers regarding the viewpoints of the two theories. So, Russell views that there is no way of reconciling all Leibnitz's statements on the matter.

An organic body has a dominant monad by relation to which it requires a certain unity. On the other hand, an inorganic body has no such single dominant monad. Every monad belongs to some organic body either as dominant or as sub-ordinant monad. Every organic body is composed of an infinite number of smaller organic bodies. The smallest organic bodies

occupy only a physical point. Leibnitz says that a natural organism is a machine in its smallest perceptible parts.

In the first theory, the dominant monad dominates in the sense that it represents more clearly while the other monads represent very confusedly. The dominant monad represents the things outside itself as a centre. Every monad perceives more clearly what happens in its neighbourhood than what happens at a distance.

But, it cannot be held that the monads composing the organic body are always the same; however, the bodies are in perpetual flux. Leibnitz holds that body and soul do not together form one substance. He in this context views that bodies act as if there were no souls, and souls act as if there were nobodies, and both act as if one influences the other. The soul is ready to act itself when the soul wills it. This produces the so called union of soul and body. Soul and body do not interact but only agree. One is acting out of the two freely according to the rules of final laws of efficient cause. Every agent who acts according to the final cause is free.

To be brief, Russell through his critical remark on Leibnitz's concept of mind and body holds that there are two contradicting views present in his philosophy. They are -idealism and realism. Leibnitz seems to accept the idealistic thesis or view in case of pre-established harmony through the concept of God. But if we study his philosophy or the statements in case of the theory of pre-established harmony then we see that he seems to surpass his earlier view which he accepted through the idealistic view and in place of the earlier view he seems to advocate the realistic view which indicates that the mind and body do not require any extra force to discuss the inherent relationship between the two. So, he mentions that soul and body together are veritably one, though the body is real and many in our perception. Besides, he mentions- "corporeal substance has a soul and an organic body, that is, a mass made up of other substances. It is true that the same substance thinks, and has an extended mass joined to it, but it does not consist of this mass, since all this can be taken away from it without altering

the substance." The body by itself, Leibnitz says, 'apart from the soul, has only a unity of aggregation"; and this seems to imply that with the soul the body has a real unity. Again he says that the body, apart from the soul, is not properly a substance, but an aggregate, like a heap of stones.

## 5.6 STRAWSON'S VIEW ON MIND AND BODY RELATION

P.F.Strawson: (1919-2006) An Oxford-based philosopher

Strawson also discussed the mind-body problem through the concept of person. Strawson in his book Individuals shows that the concept of person is a type of entity. It admits two qualities namely physical and mental. He tries to solve the mind-body problem by taking help of the concept of person. He is against the dualistic account of both the physical and mental in the context of a person. But it does not mean that Strawson advocated the neutral structure in the dualistic account. In contrast to the neutral structure Strawson speaks of the person as a primitive concept which is ontologically prior to the concept of mind-body problem.

Strawson forwarded the concept of person as a solution to the mind-body problem. He does not identify the person either with the mind or with the body, rather he raised the concept of person as an entity with both mental and physical properties. His concept of person is against the two theories- one that tries to explain the concept of person with the help of mind or ego and the other that tries to explain the concept of person with the body. Therefore, Strawson's concept of person is a midway between idealism and gross materialism. Again, the concept of person works as a synthesis of the opposite theories, namely idealism and realism.

Strawson is not in favour of analyzing the concept of person into a body and a mind. He is also against the any attempt to discuss the two elements as the sole element or basic reality in the context of the concept of person. Rather, he accepts the concept of person as a primitive concept to which both physical and corporeal and mental predicates can be applied.



## ACTIVITY 9.4

**Q 3:** Is Russell's view satisfactory in case of Leibnitz's concept of mind-body relation? What do you think? Discuss

**Ans:** .....

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**Q 4:** Do you support Strawson's view in case of mind-body relation? Discuss

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## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 13:** What are the two theories present in Leibnitz's concept of mind-body relation?

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**Q14:** State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Russell is an idealist. (True/False)

b) To Strawson, the concept of person is a type of entity. (True/ False)

c) Strawson views that the concept of person is a primitive concept. (True/False)

d) The concept of person is a midway between idealism and realism. (True/False)

**Q15:** Strawson's concept of person is a critique of two theories? What are they?

.....

.....



## 5.7 LET US SUM UP

- Descartes introduces the concept of interactionism in case of mind-body problem. He holds that bodily activities are influenced by the mind. Similarly, the mental activities are also influenced by the body. So, mind and body are interacted to each other.

- Instead of being regarded as the two entities or substances Spinoza holds that mind and body are the two attributes of Substance or God. Therefore, Spinoza's theory of mind-body relation is known as parallelism.

- Descartes propounded the theory of Occasionalism. It holds that matter is not the cause of thought and similarly mind is not the cause of matter and vice-versa. Rather, it is thought that God uses the occasions for his thinking and will.

- Leibnitz introduced the concept of pre-established harmony in order to show a unity among various kinds of monads by bringing the concept of God. He shows that God has beautifully arranged the series of monads in a hierarchical order in order to maintain harmony among monads.

- As a critique of Leibnitz's concept of mind and body Russell holds that there are two contradicting views present in Leibnitz's concept of philosophy. At first Leibnitz seems to accept the realistic attitude through his view that the mind and body do not require any extra force to discuss the internal relationship between the two. Again, Leibnitz seems to advocate the idealistic attitude through pre-established harmony and in this context he brings the concept of God in order to maintain the harmonious relationship among different kinds of monads.

- Strawson is a critic of idealism and realism. He holds the view that the concept of person as a primitive concept is ontologically prior to the concept of mind-body problem.



## 5.8 FURTHER READING

1) Russell, Bertrand (1900). A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibnitz. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
2) Goswami, S.P(2006). Persons A Strawsonian Study: Guwahati Anwesha
3) Thrilly, Mark( 1998). A History of Western Philosophy.
4) Shaffer A. Jerome(1968). Philosophy of Mind. U.S.A:Prentice-Hall, Inc., Eaglewood Cliffs, N.J.



## 5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** a)True, b)True, c)False, d)True e)True

**Ans to Q No 2:** Interactionism holds that bodily activities are sometimes influenced by the mind; similarly, mental activities are also influenced by the body. As for instance, the act of sensing, imagination, memory, remembering are mental activities that refer to material objects.

Similarly, the bodily activities like eating, playing, working etc. refer to mental acts which we cannot ignore. It can be shown that when we play a particular game (football, cricket, tennis ball etc.) not only our body is actively associated with this particular action, but our mind or reasoning power equally participates in this action. That is why it can be stated that mind and body are interacted to each other.

**Ans to Q No 3:** Gilbert Ryle is a critic of Descartes concept of Interactionism. To Ryle, Mind and body belong to two categories. The Mind which ascribes the attribute of consciousness is mental and body which denotes the attribute of extension is corporeal or physical. That is why the process of explaining the mind through the body and the body through the mind alone is erroneous. So, to Ryle, Descartes commits a fallacy that is categorical mistake.

**Ans to Q No 4:** a) Mind, Body b) Interactionism c) Substance

**Ans to Q No 5:** a) Spinoza b) Leibnitz

**Ans to Q No 6:** According to this theory, mind and matter or the body is considered the two aspects or attributes of a single, all inclusive whole. He thought that as the attributes or aspects of one single Substance, mind and body or extension and thought cannot interact upon each other. Rather, he holds that both mind and body go on parallel without showing any over power to one another.

Neither body can be explained from the mind nor can mind be explained from the body. That is why mind and body are the two different aspects of one single indivisible whole. Therefore, Spinoza's theory is known as parallelism.

**Ans to Q No 7:** Spinoza holds that neither mind can be the cause of body nor can the body be the cause of mind. In this regard mind and body are the two different aspects of one single indivisible whole. That is why Spinoza's theory is known as psycho-physical realism.

**Ans to Q No 8:** Spinoza's theory of parallelism cannot be said to be free from idealistic bias, because he announces that Substance is an all inclusive whole and mind and body are the two aspects of one single all inclusive whole that is Substance. It is indeterminate, infinite and all inclusive and everything is derived from Substance. Therefore, Spinoza's strict sense of parallelism cannot be accepted from this point of view.

**Ans to Q No 9:** a) Winodowless b) Leibnitz

**Ans to Q No 10:** Leibnitz

**Ans to Q No 11:** Leibnitz shows that although monads are independent, still there is an inner desire of each monad which indicates a harmonious relationship among different kinds of monads. Leibnitz in this context shows that the harmonious relationship has been pre-established by God who has beautifully arranged the different kinds of monads in order to maintain a harmony among them. That is why Leibnitz's concept of monad is known as Pre-established harmony.

**Ans to Q No 12:** The Queen monad focuses on the activities of the surrounding monads and mirrors the changes of all other monads in a clear form of the Substance. It is also known as Soul which is

superior in nature to the other monads. The supreme monad can apprehend the activities of all other monads of the universe. The activities of all lower monads are regulated by the Queen Monad or God. That is why lower monads perform the duties as a means and conditions for the realization of the end of the higher monad.

**Ans to Q No 13:** Idealism and Realism

**Ans to Q No 14:** a)True b)True c)True

**Ans to Q No 15:** Idealism and realism



## 5.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Who propounds the theory of Interactionism?

**Q2:** What is Interactionism?

**Q3:** Define Parallelism

**Q4:** What is Pre-established harmony?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Briefly explain the theory of Interactionism?

**Q2:** Briefly comment on Spinoza's theory Parallelism.

**Q3:** What is psycho-physical realism? Discuss briefly.

**Q4:** What do you mean by Strawson's concept of person? Explain briefly.

**Q5:** What is pre-established harmony? Briefly explain

**Q6:** What do you mean by Queen Monad? Discuss briefly

**C. Write short note on (Write in about 150 words)**

**Q1:** Occasionalism

**Q2:** Interactionism

**Q3:** Parallelism

**Q4:** Theory of monads

**D. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** What is interactionism? Explain

**Q2:** Discuss Spinoza's theory of parallelism.

**Q3:** What is Pre-established harmony? Is it a satisfactory theory in case of the relation of mind - body problem?

**Q4:** Is Russell a critic of the theory of monads? Discuss it with reference to Leibnitz's theory of pre-established harmony.

**Q5:** What according to you are the limitations of Interactionism? Discuss

**Q6:** Which one of the three theories like Parallelism, Interactionism, and Pre established harmony would you prefer most in case of the mind-body relation? Explain

**Q7:** Do you find any distinction between Interactionism and Parallelism? Discuss

*** ***** ***

# UNIT 10: SUBSTANCE

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

10.1. Learning Objectives
10.2. Introduction
10.3. What is Substance?
10.4. Aristotle's view
10.5. Rationalists' View
10.6. Empiricists' View
10.7. Contemporary View
10.8. Let Us Sum Up
10.9. Further Readings
10.10. Answers to Check Your Progress
10.11. Model Questions

## 10.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Define substance
- Explain Aristotle's position as a pioneer in analysing the concept of substance
- Discuss Rationalist philosophers view on substance
- Explain how the Empiricists' treat the issue in the context of the empirical world.
- Critically analyse the strength of these views in presenting the concept.
- Conceptualise the contemporary debate on defining substance.

## 10.2. INTRODUCTION

Substance is one of the central metaphysical concepts attracting the interest of philosophers over time. The problem is as old as philosophy itself. It is discussed with equal significance both in Indian and Western philosophy. A number of philosophical problems have centred round the concept of substance.

The concept finds its root in the Greek philosophy prior to Aristotle. In our daily living we come across different things which keep changing over time and still get recognised as the same thing. Here, some query may occur regarding what ascertains that it is the same object even after all changes. Here comes the reference of substance-the basic essence of everything having changes.

## 10.3. WHAT IS SUBSTANCE?

Roughly substance can be defined as that which remains unchanged or which is durable. There are various definitions offered to define the concept of substance. If we look for the etymological meaning of the term substance then we find primarily two definitions-- one from the Greek explanation and the other is from Latin. In Greek philosophy Aristotle defines substance through the term Ousia, meaning "being". Again in Latin the original term for substance is Substantia, which refers to "something that stands under or grounds things". These terms, thus, refer to the basic essence underlying the different things or objects.

With the development of philosophical debates over the concept there appear different definitions defining substance. Briefly, substance can be said to be that being which is durable, fundamental and independent from other objects for its existence; it is the thing from which other things emerge. The detail definitions are discussed below according to different philosophers offering them.

In Western philosophy serious contemplation on the concept of substance is said to have initiated from the philosophy of Aristotle. But prior to Aristotle any reference to the subject cannot be overruled. Though not clearly referred, Plato's concept of the Ideas or Form as the ultimate reality may be regarded as substances. Further, even before Plato, reference may be made to the pre-Socratic philosophers who talk about the basic stuff of the universe out of which the world is constituted. Thales considers 'water' as the primary stuff, for Anaximander it is "Formless Mass", for Anaximenes

it is 'Air'; 'Change' or 'Flux' for Heraclitus, for Pythagoras it is 'Number', and for Democritus and Leucippus 'Atom' is the ultimate stuff of the universe. However, in Western philosophy the earliest and most influential analysis of the concept of substance is considered to be that of Aristotle, detailed in his books Categories and Metaphysics Z.



**LET US KNOW**

A comprehensive discussion of the concept of substance is also found in Indian philosophical system. In the Vaisesika school of Indian philosophy substance is called Dravya and is recognised as one of the six positive categories. Vaisesika system talks about nine substances. They are earth, water, fire, air, ether, space, time, mind and soul.

## 10.4. ARISTOTLE'S VIEW

Aristotle, in his book Categories defines substance in the following way:

"Substance in its truest and primary and most definite sense of the word is that which is neither predictable of a subject not present in a subject; for instance, the individual man or horse."

With different broad definitions Aristotle introduces the concepts of primary substance and secondary substance in his book Categories. This difference points towards the difference between the particular individual objects and the species or kind they belong to. Aristotle says that substance in the most basic sense of the word is the concrete individual. This sense refers to the primary substance. An individual man or a horse represents the concept of primary substance. Such substances are neither predicable of nor attributable to anything. Again secondary substance indicates those concepts in which the primary substance is included. For example, "Albert

is a man". In this statement 'Albert' is primary substance and 'man' is secondary substance. In this sense Aristotle considers essences or natures as substances. The more qualities a thing comprises the more substantial it is. Here substance reveals to be a matter of degree. Aristotle's analysis lacks a comprehensive single definition of the concept and in the entire discussion he seems to put forward six different senses of it. Thus, a substance is:

1. A concrete individual.
2. A core of essential properties.
3. That which is capable of independent existence
4. A centre of change.
5. A substratum. It is that to which qualities and attributes belong.
6. A logical subject.

These definitions are never further reconciled into a single sense in Aristotle's work. Without clarifying these definitions he, further, in the Metaphysics Z offers another definition of substance in terms of Form and Matter, about which he did not mention anything in the Categories. Form is the shape or essence of a thing to which it is made into and Matter refers to that from which it is made of. However, neither Form nor Matter stands for a particular kind of stuff. Matter differs according to the object it refers to or constituted into. In case of a human being it is flesh and blood, in case of a gold ring it is gold, thread in cloth etc. These two types of substances resemble to the formal cause and material cause of the Nyaya-Vaisesika system of Indian Philosophy.

With broad interpretations Aristotle's account, thus, remains influential even being unclear. The philosophers after Aristotle present their account of substance remaining close to the definitions offered by him.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** What is the etymological meaning of the term substance according to Latin origin?

**Ans:** .....

.....

**Q2:** Name the books in which Aristotle presents his definition of substance.

**Ans:** .....

.....

**Q3:** Give an example of primary substance according to Aristotle.

**Ans:** .....

.....

## 10. 5. RATIONALISTS' VIEW

Refuting the authenticity of sense experience, the rationalists begin with absolute faith in reason as the source of knowledge. Among the post Aristotelian rationalist philosophers the most prominent name is René Descartes, the father of modern philosophy. Descartes' view is one of the most discussed views in the rationalist tradition. Defining substance, he says, "Really the notion of substance is just this-that which can exist by itself, without the aid of any other existence." In other words substance cannot depend on anything for its existence. It must exist on its own. If something is dependent on some other thing for its existence then it cannot be said to be a substance. As per this definition Descartes identifies three substances-God, Mind and Body. God, according to him, is that who exists in Himself and through himself and does not involve the existence of anything else. God necessarily exists and His existence sufficiently guarantees our knowledge against doubt. However, Descartes does not stop there. Besides God, he ascertains two more substances, i. e., mind and body. Mind and

body are presented as two relative substances, partly dependent on God. Though the application of methodical doubt Descartes reaches at Cogito ergo sum and affirms the existence of mind and material bodies. While the essential property or attribute of mind is consciousness, the attribute of body is extension. According to Descartes, in order to reach at conscious substance one need not refer to the extended substance and again for knowing the extended substance one need not refer to consciousness. Hence, consciousness and extension, mind and body stand as two independent substances. But, what about the interaction between mind and body? What makes this influence possible between two independent substances? When it comes to the matter of interaction between mind and body, Descartes takes resort to the interference of God which in a mysterious way adds soul to the human body. Thus, mind and body depend on God for interaction and God remains the independent substance. If we go as per Cartesian definition then mind and body cannot be regarded as substances as they are dependent on the mercy of God. Hence, if logically considered Descartes should have recognised just one substance that is God.

The inconsistencies of Cartesian view got countered by Spinoza through his monistic view. While contemplating over the definition of substance he looks for something from which everything follows necessarily. Even defining substance as independent entity Descartes talks about mind and body as two relative substances dependent on God. Spinoza criticises it and holds that it is not possible to affirm of more than one substance. A substance cannot depend on anything else or be countered by anything else. If there were more than one substance they would limit each other and thus, will cease to be self-sufficient. Descartes' doctrine of substance suffers from these limitations. So, for Spinoza there is just one substance that is God. The substance in Spinoza's view is self-contained, self-determined and immune to any external affect. A substance is that "which is in itself and conceived through itself." It is causa sui.

Spinoza rejects Cartesian dualism and the substantiality of mind and body as well. Mind and body, according to him are nothing but two co-

existent attributes of the single substance God. They do not interact with each other but run parallelly in their own way. Thus, against dualism and interactionism of substances, Spinoza offers monism (only one substance from which everything follows) and parallelism. Further, conceiving God as all-inclusive whole outside which nothing lies, Spinoza identifies God with Nature. He calls God natura naturata, the total aggregate of all the finite things. Thus, he also advocates pantheism (the reality of a single God permeates and dwells in all things).

In the rationalist tradition, following Spinoza, the concept of substance is discussed by Leibnitz. Against the monism of Spinoza, Leibnitz tries to preserve the individual variety of things without letting them get merged under a single reality. His problem is, "what must be the nature of parts which in some way contain or express the whole within itself?" in search of such a substance Leibnitz moved towards something spiritual. Going against the Cartesian view he firmly rejects the reality of material bodies as substance. The attribute of matter is extension and extension, according to Leibnitz, cannot be in-itself and through itself. Extension presupposes force and it is again divisible into further elements. Hence, it is not substantial. Refuting matter, he approves of the Cartesian concept of self or mind, but with further reinterpretations. Leibnitz claims the necessity of incorporating the unconscious and subconscious mental processes into the essence of mind along with its attribute of consciousness, as these stages also occupy equally significant mental processes. Thus, for Leibnitz reality must be immaterial. He defines substance as indivisible, active and spiritual units called monads.

Emphasising on the principle of individuality Leibnitz insists that reality must be many in number, each being real and eternal. He claims the necessity of the constituent parts in explaining the whole. Refuting the reality of the material atoms proposed by Democritus, Leibnitz clarifies that such constituent parts of the living universe cannot be dead particles of matter like atoms, but conscious agents like our self. Hence, the real particles of the universe must be indivisible, self-active, and spiritual units called monads.

Being active and self-contained each monad stands as a substance and carries the potentiality of the whole universe. Leibnitz calls these monads as windowless units as each monad is self-sufficient and a miniature world in itself. Even being qualitatively different, and windowless, the monads act in a harmonious hierarchical order maintaining harmony in the nature of the universe. What guarantees such harmony? Here, Leibnitz introduces the concept of pre-established harmony introduced by God. According to Leibnitz, God has arranged the monads in such an order that any change in one monad is harmoniously followed by other monads and the universe runs without chaos.

Thus, looking for the necessary truth, the rationalist system ends with the doctrine of substance presented by Leibnitz. We see that even beginning either with matter or with spirit, all the three philosophers end up surrendering to the supremacy of God. Though there is emphasis on the individual facts as well, yet the rationalists have remained away from the ordinary empirical experiences in contemplating over the concept of the fundamental reality of the universe. Here we may look towards the empiricists for their analysis of our ordinary experiences presenting the concept of substance.

## 10.6. EMPIRICISTS' VIEW

Contrary to the rationalist views the empiricists consider sense experience as the only valid source of knowledge. Their account of substance is also based on the knowledge acquired by sense experience. In the empiricist tradition the concept of substance starts with John Locke. Locke considers the idea of substance as a derivative idea. A substance is the substratum which supports the qualities. According to Locke, what we get from our experience is nothing but the experience of some qualities which he divides as primary and secondary qualities. While the primary qualities like size, shape, weight etc. belong to the object or the material bodies, secondary qualities like colour, taste, smell etc. are said to be belonging to the person experiencing them. But, whenever we come in contact with an

object we experience these simple qualities together. The essential characteristic of the qualities is that they are not self-subsistent. They need a substratum for their existence and that substratum is substance according to Locke. The substratum holds the qualities together.

While defining the nature of substance Locke cannot provide with any specific feature of the substratum. As already stated, the substratum supporting the qualities cannot be experienced directly. Hence, Locke defines it as the unknown substratum, "a supposed I-Know-Not-What". Pertaining to this indefinability Berkeley criticises Locke's substance as a mere abstraction.

The theory of substance in the form of the unknown substratum of qualities leads to David Hume's interpretation of substance. Hume remains sceptical about the existence of any substance. According to him, there is only one thing directly knowable that is impression of certain idea. Real knowledge of something necessarily demands some elements corresponding to some impression of it. Since there is no impression corresponding to the substratum offered by Locke, it is not real. Hume further denies the reality of any material or spiritual substance on the same ground. There is neither any impression of matter nor of self available to our experience. Hence, they stand rejected. According to Hume, there is nothing called substance. Our belief in substance is the result of a mistake or illusion. The concepts called matter, self etc, are nothing but collections of simple ideas, united by imagination, which have a common name assigned to it. Substance and causality are some concepts that are derived from our experience and formed by the law of association and constant conjunction. Kant differs from Hume in regard to the concept of substance and causality. According to Kant substance is not an empirical, but an a priori concept. These a priori concepts make empirical knowledge possible. In his Transcendental Analytic Kant enlists twelve a priori concepts or categories that help in synthesising objective judgements. Kant maintains that an objective empirical judgment is a synthesis of ideas through some pure concepts. Substance, along with other categories serves as such a pure a

priori concept. Substance and causality are considered as the most important categories by Kant as they form the basis of scientific judgement.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 4: Tick the correct one**

a) Descartes identifies two/ three substances.

b) Spinoza offers monistic/ pluralistic view of substance.

c) Leibnitz presents the concept of substance in the form of matter/ conscious self.

**Q5: State whether the following statements are True or False**

a) Monads are passive atoms. (T/F)

b) Mind and body are relative substances according to Descartes. (T/F)

c) Substance is an empirical concept according to Kant. (T/F)

**Q6:** Mention two differences of Descartes' account of substance from that of Spinoza.

**Ans:** .....

.....

## 10.7. CONTEMPORARY VIEW

Contemporary debate on substance concentrates on the problem of any specific definition of it. Throughout the debate over substance we see that while substance is sometimes defined as an independent entity, sometimes it is defined in terms of its properties. In the contemporary philosophy the problem is about how to specifically define substance against other categories and particular properties. Does substance have any identity independent of properties or is it sufficient to define substance as a mere "bundle of properties? Contemporary philosophers argue around these issues while contemplating over a specific definition of substance.

With different illustrations philosophers like Lowe, Hoffman and Mackie show that substance differs from properties on the basis that while the properties depend on substance for its existence, substance can exist independent of properties. Again a problem arises regarding the nature of this difference. Is it real or superficial? While it is generally said that the difference is real and the concepts like man, horse, cat etc. stand as substances against different properties of man and so on, yet some claim that substances are mere bundles of properties. Following the durability criterion of substance Hoffman claims that compared to any other category or properties substance is more durable. Hence, substance is different from properties. Again maintaining a difference between "thin particulars" and "thick particulars", Armstrong loosely identifies the concept of substance with "thin particulars" and other properties with "thick particulars". "Thin particulars" in his theory share similarity with Lockean substratum or Aristotle's prime matter and do not depend on properties.

Thus, the concept of substance has remained debated till the contemporary analysis. It has not been possible to point out a clear solution to the problem of perceived interdependence between substance and properties. Whether substance is sufficient without properties or is it dependent on them is an issue between the substance theorists and the bundle theorists without any acclaimed solution. Whatever be the arguments, from the history of the debate over substance, one point may be emphasised that the concept demands serious observation as it often clashes with the definitions of identity, essence etc. The Rationalists try to find solution to these issues resting their faith in the supremacy of God in one or the other way. On the other hand the Empiricists argue within the periphery of the perceptible world and offer definition of substance within the modes of the worldly experiences. Thus, even having sceptical lens of Hume, indefinable notions of Locke or the contemporary debate without any reconciliation, substance has remained a serious issue in the philosophical debate and it demands similar in-depth observation in future as well for making sense of the worldly events.



## 10.8. LET US SUM UP:

In this unit we have discussed the concept of substance as defined by different trends in western philosophy. The following points may help us to make a quick review of the unit.

- In western philosophy Aristotle offers the most influential account of substance.
- Aristotle defined substance as "that which is neither predictable of a subject not present in a subject; for instance, the individual man or horse."
- In Categories, Aristotle provides six senses of substance. Philosophers discussing the concept after Aristotle are influenced by these definitions to a considerable extent.
- In the rationalist trend Descartes defines substance as "that which can exist by itself, without the aid of any other existence." Substance must exist on its own.
- Recognising God, mind and body as substances Descartes advocates dualism and interactionism
- Spinoza recognises God as the only substance and mind and body as two attributes of it. His account results in monism and parallelism.
- Leibnitz considers active conscious monads as substances and preserves the strength of particular constituents of the universe. Each monad is independent and acts in a harmonious order maintain the order of the universe.
- The order is pre-designed by God and it is called pre-established harmony.
- Contrary to the rationalists, the empiricists attempt to bring down the concept to the realm of sense experience.

- Locke defines substance as the substratum supporting the primary and secondary qualities and holding them together.
- Hume denies the reality of any substance and considers the concept like self, matter etc. as collection of simple ideas combined by imagination.
- Kant recognises substance as an a priori concept that helps in synthesising ideas and forming objective judgement.
- In contemporary analysis there is conflict between the views debating over the perceived interdependence between substance and properties.



## 10.9. FURTHER READINGS

1. Masih, Y. (1994). A Critical History of Western Philosophy. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass
2. Edwards, Paul.(Ed.) (1967). The Encyclopedia of Philosophy.vol. 8. New York: The Macmillan Company & The Free Press.



## 10. 10. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** "Something that stands under or ground things"

**Ans.to Q. No. 2:** Categories and Metaphysics Z

**Ans.to Q. No. 3:** Any individual man, for example "Socrates".

**Ans. to Q. No. 4.**

a) three

b) monistic

c) conscious self

**Ans. to Q. No 5:** a) False b) True c) False

**Ans. to Q. No. 6.** The difference between the Cartesian concept of substance and Spinoza's substance may be stated as the following-

Descartes approves of three substances.....mind, body and God. Maintaining dualism he presents mind and body as two independent substances that do not need one another for existence. Further, he affirms the absolute substantiality of God, who is in Himself and through

Himself. In comparison to God mind and body are relative substances, as they depend on the mercy of God for their occasional interaction. Thus, Descartes advocates dualism and interactionism while analysing substance.

Spinoza rejects Cartesian dualism and holds that mind and body are neither two independent substances nor do they interact with each other. He approves of one single substance, i.e., God and defines mind and body as two co-existent attributes of the single substance God. Being the attributes of God they do not interact but run parallelly in their own way. Thus, Contrary to Cartesian dualism and interactionism of substances, Spinoza advocates monism and parallelism.



## 10.11. MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Who offers dualistic view of substance?

**Q2:** What is the Greek origin of the term substance?

**Q3:** There is just one substance-that is God. Who says this?

**Q4:** Substance is the result of a mistake or illusion. Who said this?

**Q5:** Who offers the notion of pre-established harmony?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** What are the essential attributes of mind and body according to Descartes?

**Q2:** Mention three senses of substance offered by Aristotle?

**Q3:** What is substance according to Locke?

**C. Write short note**

a) Pre-established Harmony

b) Interactionism

**D. Long Questions (Write in about 300-500 words)**

**Q1:** Explain Aristotle's notion of substance presents in his book Categories.

**Q2:** Briefly discuss the role of God in the rationalists' account of substance.

**Q3:** Discuss the contemporary debate on substance.

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# UNIT 11: APPEARANCE AND REALITY

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

11.1. Learning Objectives

11. 2. Introduction: Are there any differences between appearance and reality?

11.3. Different views on the distinction between appearance and reality.

11.3.1. Bradley on the Distinction between Appearance and Reality:

11.3.2. Russell on the Distinction between Appearance and Reality:

11.3.3. Plato on the Distinction between Appearance and Reality:

11.3.4. Bradley on the Distinction between Appearance and Reality:

11.4. Responses against the distinction between appearance and reality.

11.4.1. Berkeley's Response on the Distinction between Appearance and Reality:

11.4.1. Thomas Reid's Response on the Distinction between Appearance and Reality:

11.5. Let us sum up

11.6. Further Readings

11.7. Answer to check your progress

11.8. Model questions

## 11.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Differentiate clearly the idea of "appearance from the idea of reality."
- Know how different philosophers tried to substantiate the idea of the distinction between appearance and reality.
- Know the responses of different philosophers regarding the division between appearance and reality.

## 11.2. INTRODUCTION:

This unit introduces to you the concepts of appearance and reality and will try to find out whether they are different from each other or not. Daniel Webster once stated, "The world is governed more by appearances

than realities, so that it is fully as necessary to seem to know something as to know it." In other words, much of what goes on in the world is due to what people think rather than what actually is; therefore, the only thing one must do is present himself in the way he wants others to believe he truly is. The difference between appearance and reality is studied extensively in the field of metaphysics. Distinguishing between reality and appearances is something that is done by everyone on a daily basis. The University of Oregon stated that appearances are deceptive and derivative, whereas reality is genuine. For instance, the appearance of the size of the sun from an observer on the ground is not the reality of the actual size of the sun but rather a derivative formed by the observer.

In the book "The Problems of Philosophy" Bertrand Russell also referred to the distinction between appearance and reality as "one of the distinctions that cause most trouble in philosophy." The distinction has played an important part in the thinking of many philosophers, and some of them, including Russell, have employed it in curious ways to support odd and seemingly paradoxical claims. It may be this last fact that Russell had in mind when he spoke of trouble.

## 11.3. DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

### 11.3.1. BRADLEY ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

Bradley's argument of Appearance and Reality is quite simple. It is divided into two books. The first and shorter one is titled "Appearance" and is about the contradictory character of only appearances. Book II is titled "Reality" and is about the Absolute. In Book I, certain concepts, such as relation, cause, space, time, thing, and self, and certain philosophical concepts, such as the thing-in-itself and the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, are declared to be self-contradictory and are in consequence "degraded to the rank of mere appearances." In Chapters 2

and 3 of Book I, titled, respectively, "Substantive and Adjective" and "Relation and Quality," In Book II, it is argued that if it is being self-contradictory that degrades mere appearances, then reality must at least be not self-contradictory, but consistent and pleasant. Finally, it is clear that reality must be inclusive and include all that is. If reality is a consistent and pleasant and all-inclusive experience, then it cannot be a plurality of independent reals, for whatever is related to anything else must be to some extent dependent on it. "Plurality and relatedness are but features and aspects of a unity." According to Bradley, our experience of related things arises out of a prior immediate experience in which there are felt differences but no distinct qualities, and therefore no conception of things with different qualities in relation with one another. In passing from the primitive harmonious vagueness to knowledge of related things, we pass from what might be called the state of precognitive innocence to the flawed world of contradiction. Wherever there is thought, there is the distinction between them and the, between ideal content and reality, between adjective and substantive; and hence wherever there is thought, there is contradiction. It is clear that contradiction, error, and evil are not harmonious and hence are not real, but it is equally clear that they are not anything. The Absolute must be conceived as analogous to immediate experience but transcending thought rather than falling short of it. How then must they be considered in the light of the Absolute? To this question Bradley gives a very interesting answer and his answer protects him against the demands to show exactly how appearances are self-contradictory, unreal, not nothing, and yet are elements in the total harmony. He says that although error and evil are conflicting and hence not real, it is possible that they contribute to the harmony of the whole, and if this is possible then we must conclude that it is so even though we do not know how it is possible. "For what is possible," he says, "and what a general principle compels us to say must be, that certainly is" (Appearance and Reality, Ch. 16).

## 11.3.2. RUSSELL ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

Russell begins by asking his reader to consider what knowledge exists that can be known beyond reasonable doubt. His purpose is to produce the realization that radical doubt soon brings even the most self-evident assumptions in our everyday lives under reconsideration. In the beginning of his chapter of The Problem of Philosophy, Russell describes a scene: "I am now sitting in a chair, at a table of a certain shape, on which I see sheets of paper with writing or print." All of these "facts" are easily called into question. Russell engages in his discussion to find out how knowledge of such things is possible at all. In order to lay bare the ordinary assumptions at issue, Russell concentrates on one example, and the table before him. Walking around the table, he distinguishes different colors from different points of view: in places seeming to reflect more light, a brighter shade of brown appears. In reality we assume that there is only one color of the table, yet the appearance of many colors contradicts our assumption. The color seems to be a relation depending on the observer, his point of view, and conditions like "the way the light falls on the table." It seems clearly that no two people could share one identical point of view, doubt raises on Russell's mind as to whether one real color of the table even exists. Russell continues his investigation of color by reasoning that in ordinary language usage, when we refer to the color of an object; we actually refer to something perceived from the usual perspective of observer. However, he continues, there is no reason to assume that the usual perspective should be considered real and other perspectives, under other conditions, be considered less real. Russell does not think that the most usual brown should be considered the brown of the table, to the exclusion of other apparent browns. As with color, the existence of just one quality of the table is unclear, because "to the naked eye, the table appears to be smooth and hard. Aided by microscope, the grain of the wood enlarges to appear as a mountainous range of different qualities. Russell argues that one cannot consider one texture more real than another. The shape of the table, a rectangle, also

changes immediate shape as one walks around it. Sensation of pressure depends on the force we exert on the table, as does the production of sound when we rap on the wood. Thus, the sensations of touch and sound, like sight, are not fixed by a reality; they are apparent possibilities and each depends on the conditions of observation. These observations lead to Russell's first distinction between appearance and reality. Russell writes, "The real table, if there is one, is not immediately known to us at all, but must be an inference from what is immediately known." The reality of the table, in the sense that there is a table, depends on a process of inference based on a knowable part of reality; the part Russell calls "sense-data". Sense-data are not the same as our sensations. Sense-data are "the things that are immediately known to us in sensation." Variations in our sensations indicate that sensation does not directly reveal the reality of an object like the table. Instead, it is probable that our sensations are "signs of some property which perhaps causes all the sensations." To fully grasp Russell's distinction, consider sensation as an act belonging to the realm of experience and consider the object of that direct experience to be sense-data. Since we have seen that certain knowledge of the table's reality is not available through the senses, Russell asks how we can know that a real table exists at all and what kind of certainty we can have. It remains clear that we do have an experience of awareness where we recognize colors and other properties as part of the table. While we may doubt the existence of a real table, it is harder to doubt our awareness of our own sensations. The next problem that arises is one of understanding if there is one real table, how can we relate it to our sense-data. Russell states that it is impossible to understand, if or how the relation would work. The questions we must first approach are: "is there a real table at all" and "if so, what sort of object can it be?" This relation, between sense-data and the real table, is a substantial concern for Russell's enquiry. Returning to his table, he admits that when we have been saying the "real table," we have meant the "physical object." Physical objects may be understood as "matter." The questions at issue become: "is there any such thing as matter" and "if so, what is its nature? " This is how Russell tried to explain the idea of the distinction between

appearance and reality in The Problem of Philosophy.

## 11.3.3. PLATO ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

According to Plato, knowledge is of reality and opinion can be related to the appearance of reality. The ways in which people makes sense of the world around them comes from a combination of appearances and reality, Plato presents "The Allegory of the Cave" to clearly explain the distinction between appearance and reality. The Allegory begins by describing what Plato takes to be an analogue of the epistemic position in which the majority of people belong to: People are inside a cave, facing away from a fire, and see only the shadows of objects which are moving behind them. Because they see nothing other than these shadows, they mistakenly assume that these shadows are real objects, and put much effort into watching them and discovering their details. Yet, Plato asserts, it is possible for someone to escape this position and leave the cave. Such a person would at first be blinded by the light of the real sun, yet would start acquiring knowledge of true things and realize the absurdity of the shadow-examination that continues in the cave. Explaining the meaning of each of the elements of the Allegory is a significant interpretive challenge, but the basic ideas are straightforward. The shadows correspond to the appearances with which our senses present us. The aspect of the story where the shadows are generated by objects illuminated by a light other than the sun is meant to indicate that they are somehow produced by real things, but in a very indirect manner. Leaving the cave is meant to correspond to a philosopher's ability to cease relying on his senses as a guide to reality and instead use his faculty of reason. Reason not only puts him in epistemic contact with the true elements of reality (the "Forms" of Plato's metaphysics), but also allows him to understand the degree to which appearances differ from these elements, and how they are produced by them.



**LET US KNOW**

In the Book VII of Republic Plato talks about the famous theory of "The Allegory of the Cave"

## 11.3.4. DESCARTES ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

In the Modern period of philosophy, a distinction between appearance and reality is also found in Rene Descartes' philosophy. He asked how much differences there could possibly be between the appearances he encountered and the world in which he existed. The answer is made clear by his description of a scenario in which he is the subject of deliberate and near-complete deception by a powerful "evil genius" a scenario which no appearances give him any grounds for ruling out as a genuine possibility. Descartes finally concluded that the gap between appearance and reality is resolvable, and that he can rule out the evil genius scenario. He reaches this conclusion by arguing from the fact that he has an idea of an omnipotent, benevolent God to the existence of that God, and then by arguing from the existence of such a God to two claims:

(1) Since God is responsible for the world and its appearances, it would be incompatible with God's goodness if there were to be a dramatic difference between the two.

(2) Since God is responsible for Descartes' own faculties, he must be capable of knowing the truth about the world around him.

Though Descartes' arguments made a huge impact on philosophy yet they were by no means universally accepted. There is a general agreement that his proofs for God's existence are much less convincing than he took them to be. Yet, for those who continued to accept the

fundamental distinction in Descartes' terms, it was unclear what else besides a knowable, benevolent God could fill the needed role.



**LET US KNOW**

'Meditations on First Philosophy' by Rene Descartes were originally published in 1641. Here Descartes highlighted the distinction with a simple but powerful imaginative project.

## 11.4 KANT

Immanuel Kant provided a more refined answer to the problem of the distinction between appearance and reality, over a century after the publication of Descartes' Meditations, by which would inspire the tradition known later as "German Idealism. Kant appears to accept something like Descartes' distinction, yet he poses the issue in terms of an opposition between "objects as they appear" and "objects as they are in themselves." Observers have no real knowledge of objects as they are in themselves, Kant claims, but it was a mistake on Descartes' part to think that they ever wanted such knowledge. Properties like spatial extension, temporal duration, and causal connection, Kant argues, properly belong to the realm of appearances. According to Kant an object of experience, when viewed from the transcendental perspective, it technically refers to an object considered to be conditioned by space and time, but not by the categories. Kant's appearances are a kind of representation which, as empirically real but transcendentally ideal, are also empirical objects, and are the objects of empirical knowledge and the objects of experience. The matter of all sensible thought is sensation, and our "receptivity" to sensation causes intuitions, which are representations of appearances. Appearances themselves contain both intuitive matter (corresponding to sensation) and discursive or conceptual form (which "determines the manifold" of sensation); we know them as "determined objects"--as empirically real objects, the only kind of

objects and only kind of reality which we can experience--only after sensation has been synthesized through the transcendental unity of apperception and judgment. According to Kant there are two types of world. One is phenomenal and the other one is noumenal. The phenomenal world is full of living beings and other material nonliving things. And the noumenal world is the world of spiritual things. For him the phenomenal world is known and knowable as we can directly connect with them and the noumenal world is unknown and unknowable though it has existence as we cannot directly come into contacts with them.

An important question may arise: if appearances are representations, what are they meant to represent? For Kant they do not represent things in themselves (or, at least, we cannot know that they do). On the one hand, there are certain "laws of appearances" which must agree with the conditions of understanding and sensibility (e.g., with the conditions of space and time and with the categories). On the other hand, "things in themselves would necessarily conform to laws of their own" and since we cannot know these laws (or anything about things in themselves), we cannot state that appearances represent things in themselves. It seems better to say that for Kant appearances are empirical objects and that, in the final analysis, empirical objects for Kant turn out to be a strange species of representation. Kant holds that much of reality remains unknowable, yet he takes this to be a desirable result, for it precludes scientific considerations (which only concern the appearance-based properties of objects) from ever ruling out freedom of the will or the existence of God, even while the actuality of the latter two remain unknowable.



**LET US KNOW**

As determined in empirical knowledge, there is no further question as to what appearances are or represent; they simply are empirically real objects. It takes discursive judgment to determine the appearance

as an empirical object; as given through intuition, appearances are "the undetermined object of an empirical intuition". Because appearances are in some sense "in us," and people are capable of knowing themselves, this opens the possibility of knowing whether objects really are spatially extended, causally related, etc.

## 11.5. RESPONSES AGAINST THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

There are again some responses that reject the distinction between appearance and reality. Those arguments or responses were given by Berkeley, Reid and many other thinkers. Let us discuss about Berkeley and Reid's responses towards the distinction between appearance and reality:

### 11.5.1. BERKELEY'S RESPONSE ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

The Irish Bishop George Berkeley saw skepticism as a serious, but resolvable, philosophical threat. Berkeley believed that it was a mistake to distinguish appearances from reality in the first place. Following his predecessor John Locke, Berkeley puts the discussion in terms of "ideas," where these include both the appearances one encounters in sensory perception, as well as the mental entities involved in one's thoughts. Berkeley's fundamental claim was that all that exists are minds and the ideas they have. Skepticism about the external world, he argued, arose from a wholly unwarranted positing of "material substance," understood as something distinct from ideas and minds, which is somehow represented by ideas and thereby mediately encountered by minds. Yet, Berkeley argued, it was an unwarranted break with common sense for philosophers to assume the existence of material substance, and in doing so to create the distinction between appearance and reality. The objects that populate the world aren't something to be accessed by means of ideas; rather, they are those ideas. Berkeley has a simple argument for this claim:

People perceive objects immediately.
The only entities people can perceive immediately are ideas.
Therefore, objects are ideas.

Berkeley's system is strikingly elegant. Unsurprisingly, however, he is hard-pressed to account for the phenomena that originally motivated the distinction, such as perceptual illusions and scientific advancement. Ultimately, Berkeley appeals to God, as causal source of the ideas, who maintains a certain order among them that one can only gradually come to understand. So we can say that Berkeley rejected the appearance/reality distinction by making reality more mental (and so, in a sense, claiming that all there is are appearances).

Let us know: Berkeley's claims against the distinction between appearance and reality developed in his books- Principles of Human Knowledge (1710) and in his Three Dialogues between Hylan and Philonous (1713)),

## 11.4.2. THOMAS REID'S RESPONSE ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY:

The first sustained attempt to develop the position to reject the distinction between appearance and reality came from Thomas Reid, a Scottish minister and professor. When one perceives an object, Reid claimed, they do so directly, not by means of any idea or appearance. Such ideas would amount to a veil between observers and the world, whereas in truth there is no such barrier. Like Berkeley, however, Reid was hard-pressed to explain away illusions, and ultimately ended up assuming the existence of "sensations"-mental entities with some similarity to Lockean ideas. Nevertheless, many contemporary philosophers have found his attempt convincing.

Though there are both types of arguments in support and against of the distinction between appearance and reality yet most convincing points are in favor of the support of the distinction between appearance and reality.

There are both common-sense and historically contingent sources of motivation for the distinction between appearance and reality. Because of everyday experience, people frequently find themselves in situations where they are presented with appearances known to be misleading. Some instances of this are dramatic, such as crafted perceptual illusions that immediately come across as unbelievable. In other cases, the knowledge that the appearances are misleading requires more experience and investigation (e.g. rainbows). In general terms, these are cases which one can report in a sentence of the form, "It seemed to me that Z, but really, it's not the case that Z." Further, one might compare two instances where things seemed to be the same way, whereas there was a difference in reality. One way to report that would be to say that the appearances were the same in both instances, though the underlying reality differed. Whether it is looking at the rainbows in the sky or watching a person perform a magic trick, people constantly discern between what is real and what appears to be real. In general, appearances are more likely to be misleading when compared to reality, which exists regardless of whether or not.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** Who are the philosophers who have given arguments in support of the distinction between appearance and reality?

.....

**Q2:** Name any two philosophers who denied any distinction between appearance and reality.

.....

**Q3:** Who presented the idea of "The Allegory of the Cave?"

.....

**Q4:** What are the two claims made by Descartes?

.....

**Q4:** Write the names of the two famous books written by Berkeley.

.....



## 11.6. LET US SUM UP

- There are clear differences between appearance and reality
- Russell asserts that no two people could share one identical point of view, doubt raises on Russell's mind as to whether one real color of the table even exists.
- Russell continues, there is no reason to assume that the usual perspective should be considered real and other perspectives, under other conditions, be considered less real.
- For Plato knowledge is of reality and opinion can be related to the appearance of reality. The ways in which people makes sense of the world around them comes from a combination of appearances and reality.
- Plato presented in his Republic "The Allegory of The Cave" to explain clearly the distinction between appearance and reality
- Descartes reaches his conclusion that the gap between appearance and reality is resolvable by arguing from the fact that he has an idea of an omnipotent, benevolent God to the existence of that God.
- Kant argues; properly belong to the realm of appearances.
- Berkeley rejected the appearance/reality distinction by making reality more mental
- Reid claimed, when one perceives an object, they do so directly, not by means of any idea or appearance.



## 11.7. FURTHER READING:

1. The history Philosophy, Bertrand Russell,1945
2. The History of western philosophy, Frank Thilly, 1914
3. The Problems of Philosophy, Bertrand Russell, 1912
4. Appearance and Reality, F.H Bradley,1893

5. Appearance and Reality (Stanford Encyclopedia)

## 11.8. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** Bertrand Russell, Plato. Kant, Descartes

**Ans to Q. No.2:** Berkeley and Reid

**Ans to Q. No.3:** Plato

**Ans to Q. No.4:** The two claims made by Descartes are-

(1) Since God is responsible for the world and its appearances, it would be incompatible with God's goodness if there were to be a dramatic difference between the two.

(2) Since God is responsible for Descartes' own faculties, he must be capable of knowing the truth about the world around him.

**Ans to Q. No.5:** The name of the two famous books written by Berkeley are- 1. Principles of Human Knowledge (1710) and 2. Three Dialogues between Hylan and Philonous (1713)

## 10.11. MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Who is the author of the book "The Problems of Philosophy?"

**Q2:** What is the title of Bradley's BOOK II?

**Q3:** Who wrote Meditation?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** How many types of world are there according to Kant what are they? Are they all known and knowable?

**Q2:** What are the main concepts that are declared to be self-contradictory by Bradley in his BOOK I?

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 150 words)**

**Q1:** Explain Russell's idea about the distinction between appearance and reality

**Q2:** Explain the ideas of Kant and Descartes regarding the distinction between appearance and reality and compare.

**Q3:** Who gave arguments against the distinction between appearance and reality? Explain their arguments and justifications.

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# UNIT 12: THE PROBLEM OF CATEGORIES OF KANT AND RYLE

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

12.1 Learning objectives

12.2 Introduction

12.3 Problem of category in Kant's Philosophy

12.4 Synthetic unity of Apperception and the categories

12.5 Schematism

12.6 Criticism

12.7 Introduction of Ryle's category

12.8 Problem of category in Ryle's Philosophy

12.9 Concept of category mistake

12.10 Ryle's approach to Category

12.11 Criticism

12.12 Let us sum up

12.13 Further Readings

12.14 Model Questions

## 12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Explain categories in Kant's philosophy
- Discuss the relation between synthetic unity of Apperception and the categories.
- Elaborate schematism.
- Describe critically Kant's problem of categories. Explain category mistake.
- Understood the theories related to category mistake.
- Describe how Ryle establish category mistake.
- Explain the critical appreciation of Ryle philosophy

## 12.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you Immanuel Kant's problem of knowledge. He was a German Philosopher who has revolutionized philosophical thinking of the west through his versatile analytical and critical approach to the principal issues of philosophy. He was known as one of the greatest philosopher in modern philosophy as his philosophical thinking may try to solve various philosophical problems and approach us towards the current issues of philosophy. His theory of knowledge is known as Criticism. As a result of the reconciliation of Rationalism and Empiricism his theory of knowledge arises. The basic problem of his theory of Knowledge is what is knowledge? From which knowledge arise? How knowledge is possible? What is the limitation of knowledge? Is universal and necessary knowledge possible etc. These are the basic problems of Kantian philosophy.

According to Kant, empiricism and rationalism both had failed to explain knowledge as both of them were based on common assumption concerning the status of objects. They both regard things as objects of knowledge exist external to the mind. Hence the mind has to approach them in order to know them. But if objects be external to mind, then we can know them only by having experience on them. It means if objects are external to the human mind which it has to approach to know, then universal and necessary proposition concerning objects are not possible.

By seeing the failure of rationalism and empiricism concerning objects he requires a bold step and stated that instead of the mind approaching objects, we have to assume that the objects must approach the mind to be known at all. The mind lays down the conditions for the objects to become objects for knowledge. And these preconditions for objects are the two forms of sensibility-space and time and twelve categories of understanding-substance, causality etc. However Kant did not reject empiricism and rationalism outright. So his statement was that both empiricism and rationalism are right in what they affirm, but wrong in what they deny. Empiricism affirms that knowledge is constituted by experience and

rationalism affirms that knowledge is constituted by innate or apriori ideas. He reconciles both the view and said that knowledge begins with sense, proceeds thence to understanding and ends in reason. Kant called his epistemological enquiry as transcendental. Because all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to possible apriori.

Kantian philosophy is encompassed with three great Critiques-

- Critique of Pure Reason
- Critique of Practical Reason
- Critique of Judgment

According to Kant, Critique of Pure Reason is concerned with the faculty of reason in general, in respect of all knowledge after which it may strive independently all experience. In other words Kant's enquiry is transcendental in which he seeks to put down the apriori elements which the mind brings to bear upon knowing any objects whatsoever. The Kantian enquiry is entirely concerned with apriori contributions of mind. The problem of category has been discusses in Kant's epistemological masterpiece 'Critique of Pure Reason' wherein Kant's thoughts on the fundamental logical concepts and principles are present. His philosophy of logic is bound together with his epistemological and metaphysical thoughts. It has played the more important part than the other Critiques. Kant divides his Critique in the following way-

Critique of Pure Reason is classified into two parts--Transcendental aesthetic and Transcendental Logic. Again Transcendental Logic is divided into two-Transcendental Analytic and Transcendental Dialectic.



**LET US KNOW**

priori knowledge is that which can be obtained without experience of the events of the world. And A posteriori knowledge can be obtained through sense experience.

## 12.3 PROBLEM OF CATEGORY IN KANT'S PHILOSOPHY

In Critique of Pure Reason Kant has discussed the concept of category. In this Critique he has asked the question-how is knowledge possible? This question itself is divided into further two questions-how is sense perception possible and how is understanding possible? The former question is answered by him in the part of the book the 'Critique of Pure Reason' named 'Transcendental Aesthetic'. And the later question is answered by Kant in this Critique. In order to answer this question Kant has presented a doctrine of concepts and judgments. In this Critique he was concerned with explaining the structure of rational thought. According to Kant, our knowledge springs from two fundamental sources of mind-sensibility and understanding. Sensibility is the capacity of receiving presentation and understanding is the power of knowing an object through these representations. It means through sensibility objects are given to us and through understanding they are thought. It is only through their union knowledge can arise. These two sources of human knowledge perhaps spring from one source i.e. reason. It is also another faculty of human mind. According to Kant, transcendental logic makes a synthesis of the manifold of apriori sensibility which constitutes the objects of knowledge and to unify our experiences. The mind achieves this synthesis first by imposing on our various sensible manifolds of two forms of intuition. They are space and time. But knowledge is judgmental knowledge and sensibility cannot provide this judgmental knowledge. According to Kant, judgment can be produced only by the understanding. In order to produce judgments the human mind employs certain apriori concepts. These a priori concepts are called categories of thought. In other words it can be said that the human mind in order to produce judgments employs certain apriori concepts which are known as categories. These categories are original pure concepts of synthesis which the understanding contain within itself apriori. Kant believes that the whole of experience can not be explained only on the basis of space and time. Besides space and time, for an integrated experience,

categories are necessary. In order to discover the categories it is necessary to isolate the understanding by eliminating from knowledge whatever is empirical and intuitive.

According to Kant, human understanding conceives knowledge. Conceiving knowledge refers to judging knowledge. Consequently in order to discover all the possible modes of thinking we have to establish all the possible forms of judgment. All possible forms of judgments as granted by Kant were actually exhausted in Aristotle's fourfold classification of judgments. Kant recognized Aristotle as only one who tried to discover all the concepts. But Kant finds blunder with the chaotic method that Aristotle used in his attempt. Therefore he seeks to formulate a systematic method to bring to completion the valuable endeavor that Aristotle tried to execute with his unsystematic method.

Kant said categories are deduced from judgments. Again judgments are prior to categories though necessarily connected with them. Kant's method of discovering categories is known as Metaphysical deduction of categories. Hence Kant says that judgments provide the evidence to the discovery of all pure concepts or categories of understanding.

Kant attempted to give a complete and systematic table of categories of these categories. Kant has given his table of judgment in which he divides judgments into four heads-Quantity, Quality, Relation and Modality. Each head is subdivided into three. As a result we obtain twelve kinds of judgments and corresponding to each judgment we get a category. The tabular representation is the following-

| **Kinds of Judgments** | **Table of Category** |
|---|---|
| **QUANTITY** | |
| 1. Universal All S/is/P | 1. Unity |
| 2. Particular Some S/is/P | 2. Plurality |
| 3. Singular This S/is/P | 3. Totality |

| | |
|---|---|
| **QUALITY** | |
| 1. Affirmative S is P | 1. Reality |
| 2. Negative S/is not/P | 2. Negation |
| 3. Infinite S/is/not-P | 3. Limitation |
| **RELATION** | |
| 1. Categorical S is P | 1. Substance-Accident |
| 2. Hypothetical if S, then P | 2. Cause-Effect |
| 3. Disjunctive S is either P or Q | 3. Reciprocity or Action |
| **MODALITY** | -Reaction |
| 1. Problematic S may be P | 1. Possibility-Impossibility |
| 2. Assertory S is P | 2. Existence-Non-existence |
| 3. Necessary S must be P | 3. Necessity-Contingency |

The first six categories are derived by Kant from formal judgments according to quality and quantity, as mathematical. The remaining six are called by him as dynamical. The dynamical categories are concerned with all objects, whether pure or empirical. The dynamical categories are concerned with the existence of these objects, in their relation either to each other or to the understanding. Again the mathematical categories have no correlates but the dynamical categories always go in pair.

In the above table Kant derives the concept of unity, plurality and totality from the judgments which are universal, particular and singular respectively. He maintains that the judgments of quality are mutually interrelated because totality is just plurality considered as unity. In case of Quality, Kant deduces the concept of reality, negation and limitation from judgment that are affirmative, negative and infinite. They are mutually related as limitation is simply reality combined with negation. Again according to relation Kant deduces the concept of substance and accident, cause and effect, and reciprocity from categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive respectively. They are interrelated since community is the causality of substances reciprocally determining one another. And finally Kant derives the category of possibility and impossibility, existence and non-existence,

necessity and contingency from problematic, assertoric and apodectic respectively. These are interrelated for necessity is just the existence which is given through possibility itself. There is a close relationship among these concepts on the following grounds-

- There is a relationship among them because they are derived from one original source i.e. understanding. Being derived from understanding each category is apriori.
- Every judgment may be regarded to have quantity, quality, relation and modality. For instance in 'All men are mortal', the quantity is universal, quality is affirmative, relation is categorical and modality is assertoric. So it is evident that the four types of judgments can be shown to be interrelated.
- Again categories can be shown to be interrelated as they are applicable to sensible intuitions only by transcendental schema which is homogeneous.

Another very important in this metaphysical deduction in that the third category results from the combination of the first and the second. But this does not mean that the third is derivative. Because the combination require a special act of understanding different from the act of the first and the second. The third member of the division of Kant's table is his own additions. The Aristotelian table contains only two and hence Kant's table is an expansion or transformation of the Aristotelian one.

These twelve kinds of categories are original pure concepts of synthesis which the understanding contain within itself apriori. But categories are empty if they are not applied to the sensible intuitions which are the objects of knowledge. Therefore categories and sensible intuitions must come together in order to give knowledge of something. But they can come together only if there is something common both for the categories and the objects of knowledge. So Kant maintains that there must be something which is homogeneous and which makes possible the application of the categories to the appearance (sensible intuition). This mediating representation is pure and in one respect intellectual and in another respect

sensible. This is called by Kant a transcendental schema.

A transcendental schema leads to the applicability of the categories to the manifold of sensible intuition. By determining the categories all the manifolds of sensible intuitions are given a universal and necessary order. That is why Kant says categories constitute the apriori basis of human cognition. The constitution of knowledge by the categories is regarded as the activity of human mind. So it can be said that the categories are formed out of the apriori activity of the human mind and the sensible intuitions have no place in the process of the formation of categories.

In Transcendental Analytic thus Kant presented the list of categories. He also offered a transcendental justification of the employment of these categories. That transcendental justification of the employment of these categories is called by him 'Transcendental Deduction of Categories'. These categories are the apriori conditions of all possible experiences. If objects of experience were not synthesized by the apriori conceptions we will not have any experience or judgmental knowledge.



**LET US KNOW**

Critique of Pure Reason is divided into two parts-Transcendental Aesthetic and Transcendental Logic. Transcendental aesthetic shows that propositions of mathematics can be synthetic a priori only when space and time are apriori precepts. Again transcendental logic is divided into two parts-Transcendental Analytic and Transcendental Dialectic. The first section contains metaphysical, transcendental deduction of categories, the schematism and the principles of pure understanding. And the second section he tried to show that without precepts, with the help of the twelve categories of the understanding alone one can not know these three ideas of world, soul and God.

## 12.4 SYNTHETIC UNITY OF APPERCEPTION AND THE CATEGORIES

The entire complex of categories, schema and sensible intuition is brought to the unity of apperception. This unity perceives all things and events of space and time. It comprehends them under the categories. For Kant, the unity of apperception constitutes the ultimate subject of knowledge. The principle of appreciation is the highest principle in the whole sphere of human cognition. It is the logical pre-supposition for the unity between the categories and sensible intuition.

The synthetic unity of apperception is apriori i.e. it is a ground of any objective connection at all, without which there can be no knowledge whatsoever. It is one and the same consciousness which carries on the diverse operations of sensing, imaging and conceiving. This unity being apriori is the same for all persons. Hence it is the absolute condition of objective empirical knowledge. But it never reaches the level of Absolute Mind. According to Kant, the apriori synthetic unity of apperception is only a logical presupposition of any objective empirical knowledge. Kant would also emphasize the essentially apriori forms of sensibility and categories of the understanding as the combining principles of the discrete, sensory impression into the cognition of an object. If there would be objects of knowledge, they must be presented as interrelated wholes. To be interrelated wholes, they must also be connected by certain fixed rules. These fixed rules of combining the precepts into objective judgments are known as the categories. So according to Kant, if the rules are same and identical for all, they must be grounded in the same unity of consciousness. And this consciousness to be the same for all must be apriori. So it can be said that the combining functions of the categories are all derived from the fundamental unity of apperception. It can be explained in the following way-

1. Firstly, we can receive the discrete, disconnected manifold of impressions through our sensibility. As soon as discrete impressions are received, the mind is at once stirred into activity and passing the manifold is

arranged into precepts through the two forms of Space and Time. The combination of discrete impressions into precepts arises automatically.

2. A judgment alone is constitute of knowledge and is true unit of knowledge. In this sense a precept is an implicit judgment. A judgment is a relation between two or more precepts. All combination of precepts, empirical or non-empirical, conscious or unconscious, is an act of the understanding. This combination of precepts into judgments is done through the concepts or categories.

3. The unity or the synthesis as a whole, at both the levels of sensibility and understanding is not itself derived from either sensibility or understanding, but is prior of and basic to both of them.

This supreme condition of any combination at any level is the synthetic unity of apperception. So all the principles of combination of the understanding are derived from this fundamental principle of the transcendental unity of apperception.

## 12.5 SCHEMATISM

Kant's schematism is his important contribution to the western philosophy. In his theory of knowledge Kant draws a sharp distinction between sense and intellect but the concepts must be applied to the sensible in order to constitute knowledge. On the other hand the concepts are universal that involves no element of time but the sensible is essentially temporal. So there is a need for something which will mediate between the heterogeneous elements of sense and understanding. It is the form of time which is the form of all perceptions either external or internal. Time is pure like the concepts and is at the same time sensuous. Then every concept can be applicable to the sensible must be cast in the form of time i.e. the abstract concept is to be imaged in the time-form. Every universal has to be pictured or a concept has to be exemplified by an instance of it. And each concept requires an ideal particular. For e.g. The category of substance is the idea of something which is always a subject and never a predicate.

When it is schematized then it stands for something permanent in time. Kant has schematized various kinds of categories in the following way-

1. Quantity: Time-series. One moment of time expresses singularity; general moments express particularity and all moments denote universally.

2. Quality: Time content. Reality is that which fills time, i.e. when a certain length of time is filled with uniform and continuous sensations. Negation is empty time i.e. when the same length of time is characterized by the absence of sensations. Limitation is that in which we pass from the absence of sensation to some particular degree of sensation with a certain length of time.

3. Relation: Time-order. Substance is that which remains permanent when everything else changes. Causality is that upon which something else invariably follows of time. Reciprocal action is that in which the qualities of substance and those of another are seen invariably appearing together in time.

4. Modality: Time-comprehension. Possibility is something existing at any time, actually is that which exists at a definite time and necessity is that which exists at all times.

So the concepts come to be applied to the sensible through the time-schema. The need for schematism ties down the intellect to a sensuous form, but then for the limitation to the sensible alone the schematism clothes the concepts in reality.

## 12.6 CRITICISM

The Kantian problem of categories has been criticized by many philosophers. By analyzing his metaphysical deduction of categories that said that Kant has blindly accepted the Aristotelian classification of judgment and distorted it arbitrarily to derive a list of already prepared categories. Moreover the forms of judgment as given by Aristotle and modified by Kant

do not yield the requisite categories. Again these critics also pointed out that Kant fails to give any satisfactory reason for selecting some of the concepts and elevating them to the honourable status of the categories. But here we may say that the forms of judgment that Kant assumes belong to the range of formal logic and these forms has nothing to do with the content of knowledge.

Again Kant assumes that formal logic achieved a complete systematization at the hands of Aristotle. On the basis of these assumptions Kant believes that the table of judgments is an established legacy from Aristotelian formal logic. But here he also admits that the third members of the division of his table are his own addition. In Aristotelian table there are only two members in each division. So from this side we can say that Kant's table may be either an expansion or transformation of the Aristotelian table. Yet Again Kant's quantity of judgments may resemble with Aristotle's judgments of Distribution (universal and particular). Here Kant introduces a third form, singular judgment. It not the singular judgment as found in Aristotelian logic. According to Kant, a judgment whose subject is a universal term in singular form is called a singular judgment. This type of singular judgment deserves a separate place on the ground that singular propositions differ from universal proposition and particular proposition in the quantity of knowledge they contain. Thus he believes that these three kinds of judgments differ in quantity of content of knowledge.

In case of Quality Kant's judgments resembles Aristotle's Affirmation and Denial. Here also Kant adds a third form, the infinite. The infinite judgment has an infinite predicate. He never recognized that the logical classification of judgment is based on the nature of the predicate terms as their nature does not belong to the range of formal logic. So Kant asserts that the content of knowledge belongs to the span of transcendental logic, not to formal logic. For this peculiarity of transcendental logic Kant may use of predicates in his classification of judgment.

Kant's relation of judgment, according to critics, may resemble with

Aristotle's classification of simple and compound proposition. According to N.K. Smith, Kant has probably adopted the following method-

Simple= Categorical

Copulative i.e. categorical with more than one subject or more than one subject or more than one predicate.

Complex=Hypothetical

Disjunctive

As because this chart is complex, Kant strikes out the distinction between the smile and complex judgments and then eliminate the copulative or conjunctive judgment. In this way he gets the triad of the categorical, the hypothetical and the disjunctive.

Finally whereas of Aristotle recognizes only two pairs of modal proposition Kant presents three kinds of Modal judgments. Kant presents three kinds of modal judgments- problematic, assertoric and apodictic. In his metaphysical deduction of Kant repudiates the traditional modal concepts on the ground that modal concepts have nothing to do with the content of knowledge. So he replaces the traditional modes with his epistemic modes. Thus it can be seen that Kant has to modify the Aristotelian analysis with radical steps and transforms them into transcendental logic.

## 12.7 INTRODUCTION OF RYLE'S CATEGORY

Gilbert Ryle was a philosopher who taught at Oxford University and he made important contribution to the philosophy to mind and Ordinary Language Philosophy. However he had an enormous influence on the development of twentieth-century Analytic philosophy. His most important writings included Philosophical Arguments, The Concept of Mind, Dilemmas, On Thinking etc. The Concept of Mind remains his best known and most important work. Through this work, Ryle is thought to have accomplished two major tasks. First, he was seen to have put the final nail in the coffin of Cartesian dualism. Second, as he himself anticipated, he is thought to have argued on behalf of, and suggested as dualism's replacement, the doctrine

known as philosophical (and sometimes analytical) behaviourism. In "Systematically Misleading Expressions" (1932) Ryle proposed a philosophical method of dissolving problems by correctly analyzing the derivation of inappropriate abstract inferences from ordinary uses of language. Applying this method more generally in "Categories" (1938), Ryle showed how the misapplication of an ordinary term can result in a category mistake by which philosophers may be seriously misled. It is known as philosophical and sometimes analytical behaviourism. Sometimes he is known as an 'ordinary language', sometimes as an 'analytic' philosopher, Ryle may be mentioned in the same breath as Wittgenstein and his followers- is considered to be somewhat idiosyncratic and difficult to characterize philosophical track. Ryle has tried to solve his problem of category in a particular way that differs from other philosophers.

Categories have continued to play a central role in analytic philosophy in the past century and the focus has shifted to articulating particular category differences without attempting to provide an exhaustive inventory of metaphysical categories. Recent work on categories has been strongly directed by reaction to skepticism about the possibility of offering a system of ontological categories. On the one hand, difficulties have undermined the idea that a uniquely true and comprehensive system of categories could be developed.

On the other hand, an even more influential source of skepticism about the possibility of laying out a system of ontological categories in the realist spirit derives from the general positivist rejection of metaphysics: if all metaphysical talk is nonsense, then talk about what sorts of thing there really are in the world is just part of the general garbage constituting metaphysics, and debates about, e.g., whether or not substance is a category of being, whether there are ten or twelve or twenty-seven top level categories, whether or not there is a single highest category, etc. are all meaningless. In response to such positivist and naturalistic doubts, talk about categories over the past century has also tended to shift to identifying differences in semantic categories. So when Gilbert Ryle talks of categories, he does not

speak directly of categories of entities, but rather of differing logical types of concepts, where such type differences are detectable by the absurdities that result from substituting in terms of one sort for terms of another in sentences of certain kinds.

## 12.8 PROBLEM OF CATEGORY IN RYLE'S PHILOSOPHY

Before Ryle the problem of category was discussed by Aristotle. He can introduce the word 'category' in a very technical sense. In his short treatise 'categories' he held that every uncombined expression signifies one or more things fall at least one of the following ten classes: quality, relation, place, time, posture, state, action and passion. By 'uncombined expression' Aristotle meant an expression considered apart from its combinations with other expressions in a sentence and he intended his account to apply only to those expressions are called descriptive and non-logical. Each of ten classes of entities signified to constitute a category. Regarding category he can use one specific word 'category mistake'. By 'category mistake' one may distinguish a mistake that violates what is essential to the theory from a mistake that violates a particular category difference marked by the theory. Only a mistake of the first kind is strictly a category mistake. The second kind of mistake is a kind form a subclass of equivocation. Ryle can follow Aristotle and introduce this concept into linguistic analysis of philosophy. According to Ryle, categories are indefinitely numerous. The totality of categories is not in principle and infinite hierarchy of types. They provide no such classification as Kant's fourfold division of triads. And there is no distinction setting of one category from all other basic regardless of their number as Aristotle's distinction between substance and accident. Thus there are no strictly category mistakes rather than ordinary equivocations or absurdities. Ryle in his article "Categories" explains that he uses 'absurdity' rather than 'non-sense' as he wants to distinguish a category mistake from more sound without sense. According to Ryle a category mistake is not a meaningless noise but a remark that is somehow out of place when its literal meaning is taken seriously are in fact 'type-pranks'.

From the above discussion it can be understood that Ryle has no theory of categories and no principle by which categories can be determined and ordered at all. He is especially concerned with countering the impression that category differences are on a par with differences created by a particular set of linguistic rules. His concept of 'category' can be exhibited through Descartes' mind-body relation. In spite of his great contribution, his dualism has to face a lot of criticism from different angels. His conception of mind and body as dependent substance is strongly criticized by Spinoza.

Simultaneously Ryle also criticized Descartes' dualism in his famous book 'The Concept of Mind''. Gilbert Ryle very clearly described what he understood by mind. His chief aim is to refute the myth of the dogma of the "ghost in the machine" and to rectify the notions about mind. By "myth' he does not mean fairy story. By it he means "the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idioms appropriate to another".

Ryle tried to prove the falsity of the Cartesian dualistic theory of mind. According to Ryle, there is an obvious mistake in Cartesian philosophy which he calls 'a category mistake'. According to Ryle, the entire philosophy of the dualistic concept of mind is based on such mistake. Descartes' dualistic concept of mind is titled by Ryle as "Descartes' Myth". Ryle admits that this official theory occupies an important place in the mind of philosophers, psychologists and religious teachers. This theory has its own difficulties and philosophers thought that these difficulties can be overcome without modification of their basic concepts. But Ryle maintains that the central principles of the dualistic theory are unsound and full of conflict.

For Ryle, Descartes believes that every human being possess a body and a mind. But it is doubtful whether idiots or infants have minds. Some people have both a body and a mind. In his living life he is a complex of body and mind but his mind may continue to exist and function after the destruction of his body.

As stated above human bodies, though it is subject to destruction, occupies an important place while the man is alive. It governs all other

bodies in space because it is superior to other bodies. It occupies space and is subject to mechanical laws. But minds are not as publicly observable as it does not occupy space and not subject to mechanical laws. One can not know what is going on in others minds.

Thus Ryle observes that Descartes' bifurcates the person's life into two values, one is external and the other is internal. All the physical things including human bodies belong to external world while the states and processes of one's own mind are internal. But Ryle maintains that this anti-thesis of outer and inner world is nothing but metaphor. As if the spatial existence of mind is denied then it is not possible to speak of the mind as being spatially 'inside' something.

But though Ryle interpreted the official theory as metaphor, he is very much conscious about the theoretical difficulties of the influences of mind and body to each other. It is true that there is some kind of influence of mind on body and vice-versa. But it remains unsolved how two opposite's existents can influence each other. This kind of knowledge can be inspected neither by introspection nor by laboratory experiment.

The Official theory believes that there are two kinds of existence or states, one is physical existence and another is mental existence. Thus whatever exists must have either physical or mental states. What has physical existence occupies space and time and what has mental existence is found not in space but only in time. The physical existence consists of matter whereas the mental existence consists of consciousness. It is observable that physical body through which one person's mind is distinguished from another. The mind exists in our inner life and each of us possesses this ghostly thing. One can see, hear and touch another's body, but it is totally impossible for one to see or hear the workings of another's mind.

This theory maintains that the working processes of one's own mind are perfectly known by the person himself. It can be said that the process of

knowing one's own mind has no doubt as mental state and processes are normally conscious states and processes. So it is absurd to say that one is unaware of what is going on in his mind because life of person is a stream of consciousness.

Furthermore this official theory maintains that addition to ordinary perception, in a person may possess a special kind of perception in different occasions, which is called by the theory as inner perception or introspection. The reports of one's own mind regarding the occurring of his mental processes is more reliable that of the report based on sense-experience. Sense-perception may give us mistaken or confused knowledge but introspection and consciousness can not do so. So the best way to know the working processes of one's own mind is introspection. This theory further maintains that there is no direct way to know the inner life of others. That is why it is not possible to know directly the events that are happening in another's mind as we can know our own. It is from the behaviour of others that we make analogy with our own and then one infers the occurrences of another's mind. But Ryle maintains that the official theory fails to prove the existence of other minds than one's own as analogical argument is very weak. Ryle says that even if the official theory believes that the existences of other minds are like one's own. It can not rightly claim to discover that the other minds possess individual characteristics. In this way Ryle analyzes the official theory which he calls 'Descartes' Myth'. This analysis is often called by him as 'the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine'.

The main aim of his philosophy is to prove the above theory as totally false. He says that the entire theory suffers from different binds of particular mistakes combined together but from one big mistake which is named by Ryle as a 'category mistake'. This mistake arises when the mental life is assumed to belong to one category when it really belongs to another category. The Philosophers' Myth is therefore called by Ryle as 'dogma'. Hence Ryle's aim is to prove the falsity of the myth.

## 12.9 CONCEPT OF CATEGORY MISTAKE

The concept of 'category mistake' was introduced by Gilbert Ryle. In the language of Ryle category mistake is the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idioms appropriate to another. This concept arose out of Ryle's earlier investigation into what he called "systematically misleading expressions". The intension of his philosophy is enabling us to avoid category mistakes. According to Ryle, "Philosophy is the replacement of Category habits by category discipline".

In analyzing the nature of the category mistake as committed by Descartes Ryle noted the few important factors. According to him, the category mistake is committed by persons who are perfectly competent to apply concepts in the situations with which they are familiar. But such competent persons are often liable in their abstract thinking to place these concepts in logical types to which they do not belong. So it is clear that according to Ryle, people who in their everyday life use concepts competently may commit the category mistake in abstract thinking. Perhaps he thought that Descartes was such an individual who committed the category mistake in abstract thinking. Facts of mental life belong to one particular category. But Descartes showed them as belonging to another logical category. So the point of view of Ryle's analysis Descartes definitely committed the category mistake.

The concept of 'category mistake' is enumerated by Ryle by giving a series of examples:

1) A foreigner
2) The March past of a division witnessing by a child.
3) A foreigner witnessing his first game of cricket.

In his first example a foreigner when visiting the Oxford University for the first time he is shown all the colleges, libraries, playgrounds, museums, scientific departments and administrative offices. But after seeing all these he may ask where the university is? He forgets that the university

is just the way in which all that he has already seen is organized. When they are seen and when their co-ordination is understood, the university has been seen. It is his innocent but mistaken assumption that like the 'Christ church, the Bodleian library, the Ashmolean museum……the university stood for an extra member of the class of which these other units are members. He mistakenly believes that the university is like other institution and thus allocates it to the category to which other institutions belong.

In the second example, a child is witnessing the march past of a division. He may say that he has seen the march past of the battalions, batteries and squadrons. But he has not seen the march past of the division. The child should be told that in watching the march past of the battalions, batteries and squadrons the child has seen the march past of the division. His mistake was a category mistake.

The third example of Ryle is about team spirit found in cricket. Someone having no previous knowledge of cricket may remark-"Well, I have seen the functions of the batsman, the bollars, the wicket keeper and the fielders but I had heard about team-spirit. Who is the individual responsible for maintaining the team-spirit?" The person is to be told that the individual players in performing their allotted task have ultimately preserved the team-spirit. No additional individual is required for maintaining the team spirit. In thinking otherwise the individual had committed the category mistake.

By giving the above examples Ryle denies the fact that minds are merely ghosts put into the machines of bodies rather he believes that minds are themselves ghost machines. He tries to treat the human body as engine but at the same time warns us to treat it as an ordinary engine. Some of the workings of this body-engine are governed by another engine which resides within this body engine and this is a very special sort of engine. This interior governor-engine is not able to be seen or learned. Again, it has neither shape nor weight. This very particular engine can not be broken into parts and it is not possible to know the laws which it obeys. Thus how the bodily

engine is governed by its totally unknown.

The official theory also believes that mind and bodies belong to same category. It is the assumption of many theorists that minds are obviously governs by the rigid non-mechanical laws because bodies are govern by rigid mechanical laws. They however say that like the physical world, the mental world must be a deterministic system. Nevertheless Ryle says that whether both minds and bodies are governed by deterministic laws then the modification of mind and body is not possible. In the same way the concepts of responsibility, choice, merit and demerit are inapplicable to mind as there is no chance for its modification. Ryle says that we can construct a conjunctive proposition between two terms belonging to the same category but it is absurd to conjoin two terms belonging two different categories.

According to Ryle, the purpose is to show that the source of double life theory is a family of category mistakes. The official theory tries to prove that the ghost of a person is somehow embodied in a machine. He says that a person's thinking, feeling and purposive doing is impossible to describe in the idioms of physics, chemistry and physiology alone. As a result they must be described in a different way. Like the human body, the human mind is complex organized unit though these two differ in stuff and structure.

By criticizing the official theory Ryle says that this theory suffers from a chief theoretical difficulty from the very beginning in explaining the problem of influence of mind upon bodies and vice-versa. He raises questions that how can a mental process, such as, willing, come spatial movements like the movements of the tongue? How can a physical change in the optic nerve have among its effects a mind's perception of a flash of light? Thus these complex questions compel Descartes to mould his theory of mind logically. Ryle calls it self-same mould. In order to describe the nature of mind Descartes believes that it is opposite to body.

Ryle refuses that minds are merely ghosts put into machines of bodies rather he believes that minds are themselves ghost machines. He

admits to heat the human body as engine but at the same time warns us to treat it as an ordinary engine. Some of the workings of this body-engine is governed by another engine which resides within this body engine and this is a very special sort of engine. This interior governor-engine is not able to be seen or learned. Again, it has neither shape nor weight. This very particular engine can not be broken into parts and it is not possible to know the laws which it obeys. Thus how the bodily engine is governed by its totally unknown. Again the official theory believes that mind and bodies belong to same category. It is the assumption of many theorists that minds are obviously governs by the rigid non-mechanical laws because bodies are govern by rigid mechanical laws. They further believed that like the physical world the mental world must be deterministic law then the modification of mind and body is not possible. Similarly the concept of responsibility, choice, merit and demerit are inapplicable to mind as there is no chance for its modification. Ryle says that we can construct a conjunction proposition between two terms belonging to the same category but it is absurd to conjoin two terms belonging two different categories.

## 12.10 RYLE'S APPROACH TO CATEGORY

By analyzing Descartes' mind-body dualism Ryle tries to prove that the official theory wrongly refers to something as private entity when there is nothing of such type. So he says that the Cartesian dualism is a futile doctrine and thus this theory is eliminated by him from the field of the philosophy of mind. The supposition of existence of two collateral worlds, of inner and outer, of private and public is strongly criticized by him. Hence he rectifies the logical geography about the function of the mind. The official theory maintains that the mind performs many activities but the primary activity of mind is to theorize. It is a private and internal operation of the mind. This theory is called by him as the 'intellectual legend'.

In his book 'Concept of Mind' Ryle reduces mind to a set of disposition, behaviour and acts of habits. He says that to have the knowledge of something is the product of practice. It is through practice that we become

able to apply rules in different occasions. When we say that some one is skilled in doing something we understand that he acquired this skill after continuous practices. But Ryle never says this skill is acquired only through habits. He makes a distinction between habitual actions and intelligent capacities. Suppose that a boy intends to learn the game of carom, he should have to learn the rules of the game. This kind of knowledge is acquired through habit. But there are some other actions which are not habitual but reflective actions. In this regard he has cited the example of a mountaineer who climbs over the ice-covered rock not with blind habit but with some degree of intelligence. Therefore Ryle says that habit can be built up by practice but intelligent is acquired through training.

Explaining the position of mind some philosophers say that the mind is in its own place. But Ryle refutes such conception and says that the place of mind can not be described metaphorically. According to Ryle, mind is not the name of another person, working or frolicking behind an impenetrable screen, neither the name of another place where work is done or games are played.

The official theory believes that mind has three parts: thinking, feeling and willing. Volition or will is a special act of mind. It is through this volition mind actualizes its ideas. So this theory refers the existence of two separate entities like mental and physical and there is no identity in their occurrences. Ryle rejects this theory on the ground that it is just an inevitable extension of the myth of the ghost in the machine. Again regarding feeling or emotion he says that emotions are the turbulences in the stream of consciousness. They can not be publicly observed. Generally emotions are used to designate three or four different kinds of things. These are inclinations, moods, agitations, feelings etc.

Ryle also explains all the mental phenomena in terms of processes and dispositions. Such dispositional words are known, believe, aspire, clever, humorous etc.

## 12.11 CRITICISM

Ryle has established his view regarding Category by criticizing Descartes' mind-body dualism. But Ryle's view is also rejected by many philosophers including Russell. It has been pointed out that it does not possible to avoid category mistakes by specification of a criterion. It is said that given any two concepts, one can almost always construct a sentence such that if it is taken as a sentence about one of the concepts it makes sense, while if that concept is replaces in the sentence by the second, the sentence becomes absurd. Here the question arise-do all concepts? Or the words denoting them belong to different categories? These types of questions are not clear in the philosophy of Ryle.

Ryle wrote about the category mistake. He employed the idea of category mistake to refute Cartesian dualism. But nowhere have we found Ryle was giving a clarification of the concept of category. The notion of category may be useful as a sorting device but it can never be the justification for sorting out things in a particular way. Ryle without clarifying the idea of category went on to write about category mistake. He then went on to criticize Cartesian dualism by applying his idea of category mistake. But the fundamental mistake remained.



## 12.7 LET US SUM UP

- Kant's theory of knowledge is the reconciliation of Empiricism and Rationalism.
- Categories constitute the apriori basis of human cognition. Categories have objective validity.
- Sensible intuitions have no place in the process of the formation of categories..
- Kant's schematism is an important contribution to western philosophy.

- Ryle presents a specific outlook to the problem of category.
- Ryle established his problem of category by criticizing the official theory of Descartes.
- Ryle believes category mistake arise when the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idioms appropriate to another..
- The notion of category may be useful at a sorting device but it can never be the justification for sorting out things in a particular way.



## 12.12 FURHER READING


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## 10.11. MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** What is the primary problem of Kantian Philosophy?

**Q2:** Who wrote "The Concept of Mind"?

**Q3:** What are the three great Critiques of Kant?

**Q4:** Who is the predecessor of Kant?

**Q5:** What do you mean by category mistake?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Write short note on

a) Synthetic Unity of Apperception

b) Descartes' myth.

**Q2:** What do you mean by Schematism?

**Q3:** How Kant derives various categories from judgments?

**Q4:** What do you mean by the Official theory

**Q5:** Is there any distinction between Aristotle's conception of categories and Kant's conception of Categories? Explain.

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 150 words)**

**Q1:** Discuss the Metaphysical deduction of Categories.

**Q2:** Explain critically Kant's problem of Categories.

**Q3:** Discuss the relation between Synthetic unity of Apperception and categories.

**Q4:** Explain the problem of category in the philosophy of Ryle.

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# UNIT-13: ARISTOTLE'S CONCEPT OF CAUSATION

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

13.1 Learning objectives

13.2 Introduction

13.3 The four types of causes

13.4 Form and Matter

13.5 Potentiality and Actuality

13.6 Comparison between Aristotle's conception of causation and modern analysis of causation

13.7 Let us sum up

13.8 Further readings

13.9 Answer to check your progress

13.10 Model questions

## 13.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- the four types of causes according to Aristotle
- view of the ancient Greek philosophers regarding causes
- association of the concept of causation with the relation between actuality and potentiality
- comparison between Aristotle's causation and modern analysis of causation

## 13.3 INTRODUCTION

Aristotle was not the first person to engage in a causal investigation of the world around us. From the very beginning, and independently of Aristotle, the investigation of the natural world consisted in the search for the relevant causes of a variety of natural phenomena. The so-called "inquiry into nature" consisted in a search for "the causes of each thing; why each thing comes into existence, why it goes out of existence, why it exists". In this tradition of investigation, the search for causes was a search for answers

to the question "why?". It was not Aristotle's habit to propound his theories as if they were something absolutely new, sprung for the first time out of his own brain. In attacking any problem, his custom was to begin by enumerating current and past opinions, to criticize them, to reject what was valueless in them, to retain the residue of truth, and to add to it his own suggestions and original ideas. The resultant of this process was his own theory, which he thus represented, not as absolutely new, but as a development of the views of his predecessors. All his predecessors were engaged in an investigation that eventuated in knowledge of one or more of the following causes: material, formal, efficient and final cause. Aristotle provides his reader with a general account of the four causes because it is an indispensable tool for a successful investigation of the world around us. The first book of Aristotle- "Metaphysics" is a history of all previous philosophy, from Thales to Plato, undertaken with the object of investigating how far the four causes had been recognized by his predecessors.

## 13.3 THE FOUR TYPES OF CAUSES

The most important passages where Aristotle discussed his theory of 'causation' are to be found in his "Posterior Analytics", his "Physics", and his "Metaphysics". Aristotle's conception of causation includes both what we have called causes and reasons. Whatever is necessary, whether facts or principles, whether causes or reasons, fully to understand the existence of a thing or the happening of an event is included in the Aristotelian notion of causation?

Aristotle stated that, in reference to any singular entity, the question 'What is this?' could be answered in four different ways, each of which corresponded to what he called a 'cause' in the sense of 'something without which the thing would not be' (aitia). Thus, given a marble statue, the question 'What is this?' could correctly be answered in one of the following ways: 'This is marble', 'This is what was made by Phydias', 'This is something to be put in the temple of Apollo' and 'This is Apollo.' These answers are the answers to four different questions, respectively: 'What is this made of', 'By

whom is this made?', 'What is this made for?' and 'What is it that makes this what it is and not something else?' The answers have come to be known as, again respectively, the material cause, the efficient cause, the final cause and the formal cause. These are not alternative causes; it is not meant that, to explain anything, one or other of the four must be present. In every case of the existence or production of a thing all four causes operates simultaneously. Moreover the same four causes are to be found both in human and in cosmic production, in the making of manufactured articles by man and in the production of things by nature. They are more clearly and easily seen, however, in human production, from which sphere, therefore, we select our example.

**The material cause:** The material cause points to "that from which, as a constituent, an object comes into being. Aristotle considers the material cause of an object is equivalent to the nature of the raw material out of which the object is composed. For example, in the making of a bronze statue of Hermes, the bronze is the material cause of the statue.

The material cause, Aristotle says, had been recognized from the first. The Ionics believed in this and no other cause. They sought to explain everything by matter, though they differed among themselves as to the nature of the material cause, Thales describing it as water, Anaximenes as air. Later philosophers also gave different accounts of it. Heraclitus thinking it was fire, Empedocles the four elements, Anaxagoras an indefinite number of kinds of matter. But the point is that they all recognized the necessity for a material cause of some sort to explain the universe.

**The formal cause:** The formal cause points to, "the account of what-it-is-to-be", e.g., the shape of a statue. The formal cause embodies the essential nature (all essential attributes) and represents the model or archetype of the outcome. It is the idea of the statue as present in artist's head. Aristotle considers the formal cause as describing the pattern or form which when present makes matter into a particular type of thing, which we recognize as being of that particular type.

Formal causes had, perhaps, been recognized by the Pythagoreans, for numbers are forms. But they straightway degraded the formal cause to the level of a material cause by declaring that number is the stuff or matter of which things are made. Plato alone clearly saw the necessity of the formal cause, for formal causes are, as we have seen, the same as Plato's Ideas. But Plato's philosophy contains only two of the four causes, namely the material and the formal, for Plato made all things out of matter and the Ideas.

**The efficient cause:** The efficient cause is "the source of the change or rest"; it is the moving cause. The efficient cause is always defined by Aristotle as the cause of motion. It is the energy or moving force required to bring about change. Aristotle defines the agent or efficient cause of an object as that which causes change and motion to start or stop. In many cases, this is simply the thing that brings something about. For example, in the case of a statue, it is the sculptor who transforms a block of marble into a statue, the efficient cause of a table is a carpenter, or a person working as one, and according to Aristotle the efficient cause of a boy is a father. Only this one of the four causes is like what an ordinary person considers to be a cause.

The ancient philosophers realized that matter itself does not produce its motion. Wood is not the cause of its becoming a bed, nor is brass the cause of its becoming a statue Hence arose the idea of the efficient cause. The Eleatics did not recognize it, for they denied motion, and for them, therefore, no cause of motion could be assumed. But Parmenides, Aristotle thinks, wavered on this point, somehow allowing vaguely the existence of a second cause. Other philosophers clearly assumed an efficient cause, for they thought that one element, for example, fire, is more active, that is, more productive of motion, than others. Empedocles certainly attained to the idea of an efficient cause, for he named as moving forces, harmony and discord, love and hate. Anaxagoras also, used Nous as a moving force.

**The final cause:** The final cause is that "for the sake of which a

thing is what it is". For a seed, it might be an adult plant. For a sailboat, it might be sailing. For a ball at the top of a ramp, it might be coming to rest at the bottom. Aristotle defines the end, purpose, telos, or final cause as that for the sake of which a thing is done. As for example, health is the end of walking, losing weight, purging, drugs, and surgical tools. The final cause is why efficient causes do what they do and why formal causes do what they do.

Final causes were introduced into philosophy by Anaxagoras, whose doctrine of the world-forming mind was assumed to explain the design and purpose which the universe exhibits. But as his system developed he forgot about this, and used the Nous merely as a piece of mechanism to explain motion, thus letting it sink into nothing more than an efficient cause.

In the result, Aristotle finds that all four causes have been recognized in greater or lesser degrees by his predecessors, and this, in his opinion, greatly reinforces his own doctrine. But whereas material and efficient causes have been clearly understood, his predecessors had only vaguely foreshadowed and dimly perceived the value of formal and final causes.

According to Aristotle, once a final cause is in place, the material, efficient and formal causes follow by necessity. The four causes are not mutually exclusive. For Aristotle, several answers to the question "why" have to be given to explain a phenomenon and especially the actual configuration of an object. For example, if asking why a table is such and such, a complete explanation, taking into account the four aitias, would sound like this: This table is solid and brown because it is made of wood (matter), it does not collapse because it has four legs of equal length (form), it is as such because a carpenter made it from a tree (agent), it has these dimensions because it is to be used by men and women (end).

Aristotle marked two modes of causation: proper (prior) causation and accidental (chance) causation. All causes, proper and incidental, can be spoken as potential or as actual, particular or generic. The same language

refers to the effects of causes; so that generic effects assigned to generic causes, particular effects to particular causes, and operating causes to actual effects. It is also essential that ontological causality does not suggest the temporal relation of before and after - between the cause and the effect; that spontaneity (in nature) and chance (in the sphere of moral actions) are among the causes of effects belonging to the efficient causation, and that no incidental, spontaneous, or chance cause can be prior to a proper, real, or underlying cause per se.

## 13.4 FORM AND MATTER

The next step in Aristotle's metaphysics is to reduce these four principles to two, which he calls matter and form. This reduction takes place by showing that formal cause, efficient cause, and final cause, all melt into the single conception of form. In the first place, the formal cause and the final cause are the same. For the formal cause is the essence, the concept, the Idea, of the thing. Now the final cause, or the end, is simply the realization of the Idea of the thing in actuality. What the thing aims at is the definite expression of its form. It thus aims at its form. Its end, final cause, is thus the same as its formal cause. Secondly, the efficient cause is the same as the final cause. For the efficient cause is the cause of becoming. The final cause is the end of the becoming, it is what it becomes. And, in Aristotle's opinion, what causes the becoming is just that it aims at the end. The striving of all things is towards the end, and exists because of the end. The end is thus itself the cause of becoming or motion. That is to say, the final cause is the real efficient cause. We may see this well by an example. The end or final cause of the acorn is the oak. And it is the oak which is the cause of the acorn's growth, which consists essentially in a movement by which the acorn is drawn towards its end, the oak. We may see this even more definitely in the case of human productions, because here the striving towards an end is conscious, whereas in nature it is unconscious or instinctive. The efficient cause of the statue is the sculptor. It is he that moves the brass. But what moves the sculptor, and causes him to act upon the brass, is the idea of the

completed statue in his mind. The idea of the end, the final cause, is thus the real ultimate cause of the movement. Only, in the case of human production, the idea of the end is actually present in the sculptor's mind as a motive. In nature there is no mind in which the end is conscious of itself, but nevertheless nature moves towards the end, and the end is the cause of the movement. Thus the three causes named all melt into a single notion, which Aristotle calls the form of the thing. And this leaves only the material cause unreduced to any other. So we are left with the single antithesis of matter and form. Now as matter and form are the fundamental categories of Aristotle's philosophy, by means of which he seeks to explain the entire universe, it is essential that we should thoroughly understand their characteristics. First of all, matter and form are inseparable. We think of them as separate in order to understand them clearly. And this is quite right, because they are opposite principles, and therefore they are separable in thought. But they are never separable in fact. There is no such thing as form without matter, or matter without form. Every existent thing, that is, every individual object, is a compound of matter and form. We may compare them in this respect to the material and the shape of a thing, though we must be careful not to think that form is merely shape. Geometry considers shapes as if they existed by themselves. But, in fact, we know that there are no such things as squares, circles, and triangles. There are only square objects, circular objects, etc. And as there are no shapes without objects, so there are no objects without shapes. We talk of things being shapeless, but this only means that their shape is irregular or unusual. An object must have some shape. Yet, though shape and matter are inseparable in fact, they are opposite principles, and are separable in thought. Geometry is quite right to treat shapes as if they existed by themselves, but it is nevertheless dealing with mere abstractions. Just in the same way, matter and form are never apart, and to think of form by itself or matter by itself is a mere abstraction. No such thing exists. In fact, to imagine that forms can exist by themselves was just the mistake of which, as we have seen, Aristotle accuses Plato. For Plato, form is the Idea, and Plato imagined that Ideas exist in a world of their own. From this, too, we can see that the form is the

universal, the matter the particular. Form is the Idea, and the Idea is the universal. To say that form and matter cannot exist apart is thus the same as saying that the universal only exists in the particular, which, as we have seen, is the fundamental note of Aristotle's philosophy. But if we thus identify matter with the particular element in things, we must be careful that we do not confuse the particular with the individual. We often use these two words as practically synonymous, and there is no harm in this, but here we must be careful to separate them. For every individual is, according to Aristotle, a compound of matter and form, of the particular and the universal. And when we say that matter is the particular, we mean, not that it is such a compound, but that it is the absolutely particular which has no universal in it. But the absolutely particular and isolated does not exist. So that the particular, as such, has no existence, but this is only the same as saying, what we have already said, that matter has no existence apart from form. A very natural mistake would be to suppose that by matter Aristotle meant the same as we do, namely, physical substance, such as wood or iron, and that by form he meant simply shape. Now although there is a kinship in the ideas, these two pairs of ideas are far from identical. Let us begin with matter. Our ordinary idea of matter as physical substance is an absolute conception. That is to say, a thing which we call material is absolutely, once and for all, matter. It is not material from one point of view, and immaterial from another. In every possible relation it is, and remains, matter, nor does it in process of time cease to be matter. Brass never becomes anything but matter. No doubt there are in nature changes of one sort of matter into another, for example, radium into helium. And for all we know, brass may become lead. But even so, it does not cease to be matter. But Aristotle's conception of matter is a relative conception. Matter and form are fluid. They flow into one another. The same thing, from one point of view, is matter, from another, form. In all change, matter is that which becomes, that upon which the change is wrought. That is form towards which the change operates. What becomes is matter. What it becomes is form. Thus wood is matter if considered in relation to the bed. For it is what the bed becomes. But wood is form if considered in relation to the growing plant. For it is what the plant becomes.

The oak is the form of the acorn, but it is the matter of the oak furniture. That matter and form are relative terms shows, too, that the form cannot be merely the shape. For what is form in one aspect is matter in another. But shape is never anything but shape. No doubt the shape is part of the form, for the form in fact includes all the qualities of the thing. But the shape is quite an unimportant part of the form. For form includes organization, the relation of part to part, and the subordination of all parts to the whole. The form is the sum of the internal and external relations, the ideal framework, so to speak, into which the thing is molded. Form also includes function. For it includes the final cause. Now the function of a thing is just what the thing is for. And what it is for is the same as its end, or final cause. Therefore function is included in form. For example, the function of a hand, its power of gripping, is part of its form. And therefore, if it loses its function by being cut off from the arm, it likewise loses its form. Even the dead hand, of course, has some form, for every individual object is a compound of matter and form. But it has lost the highest part of its form, and relatively to the living hand it is mere matter, although, relatively to the flesh and bones of which it is composed, it is still form. Clearly, then, form is not merely shape. For the hand cut off does not lose its shape. The form includes all the qualities of the thing. The matter is what has the qualities. For the qualities are all universals. A piece of gold is yellow, and this means simply that it has this in common with other pieces of gold, and other yellow objects. To say that anything has a quality is immediately to place it in a class. And what the class has in common is a universal. A thing without qualities cannot exist, nor qualities without a thing. And this is the same as saying that form and matter cannot exist separately.

## 13.5 POTENTIALITY AND ACTUALITY

Matter is the substratum which tries to underlie everything. It has, in itself, no character. It is absolutely featureless, indefinite, without any quality. Whatever gives a thing definiteness, character, and quality, whatever makes it a 'this' or 'that', is its form. Consequently, there are no differences within matter. One thing can only differ from another by having different qualities.

And as matter has no qualities, it has no difference. And this in itself shows that the Aristotelian notion of matter is not the same as our notion of physical substance. For, according to our modern usage, one kind of matter differs from another, as brass from iron. But this is a difference of quality, and for Aristotle all quality is part of the form. So in his view the difference of brass from iron is not a difference of matter, but a difference of form. Consequently, matter may become anything, according to the form impressed upon it. It is thus the possibility of everything, though it is actually nothing. It only becomes something by the acquisition of form. And this leads directly to a most important Aristotelian antithesis, that between potentiality and actuality. Potentiality is the same as matter, actuality as form. For matter is potentially everything. It may become everything. It is not actually anything. It is a mere potentiality, or capacity of becoming something. But whatever gives it definiteness as a 'this' or 'that', whatever makes it an actual thing, is its form. Thus the actuality of a thing is simply its form. Aristotle claims that by means of the antithesis of potentiality and actuality, to have solved the ancient problem of becoming, a riddle, propounded by the Eleatics, which had never ceased to trouble Greek thinkers. How is becoming possible? For being to pass into being is not becoming, for it involves no change, and for not-being to pass into being is impossible, since something cannot come out of nothing. For Aristotle, the sharp line drawn between not-being and being does not exist. For these absolute terms he substitutes the relative terms potentiality and actuality, which shade off into each other. Potentiality in his philosophy takes the place of not-being in previous systems. It solves the riddle because it is not an absolute not-being. It is not-being inasmuch as it is actually nothing, but it is being because it is potential being. Becoming, therefore, does not involve the impossible leap from nothing to something. It involves the transition from potential to actual being. All change, all motion, is thus the passage of potentiality into actuality, of matter into form. Since matter is in itself nothing, a bare unrealized capacity, while form is actuality, the completed and perfected being, it follows that form is something higher than matter. But 'matter' is what becomes 'form'. In order of time, therefore, matter is earlier, form later. But in order of thought, and in reality, it is

otherwise. For when we say that matter is the potentiality of what it is to become, this implies that what it is to become is already present in it ideally and potentially, though not actually. The end, therefore, is already present in the beginning. The oak is in the acorn, ideally, otherwise the oak could never come out of it. Since all becoming is towards the 'end' and would not take place except for the 'end', the 'end' is the operative principle and true cause of becoming. Motion is produced not by a mechanical propulsive force, pushing from behind, so to speak, but by an ideal attractive force, drawing the thing towards its end, as a piece of iron is drawn to the magnet. It is the end itself which exerts this force. And, therefore, the end must be present at the beginning, for if it were not present it could exert no force. It is not only present in the beginning, it is anterior to it. The 'end' is the cause of the motion, and the cause is logically prior to its consequence. The 'end', or the principle of form, is thus the absolute first in thought and reality, though it may be the last in time. If, we ask what, for Aristotle, then is that ultimate reality, that first principle, from which the entire universe flows, the answer is, the end, the principle of form. And as form is the universal, the Idea, we see that his fundamental thesis is the same as Plato's. It is the one thesis of all idealism, namely, that thought, the universal, reason, is the absolute being, the foundation of the world. Where he differs from Plato is in denying that form has any existence apart from the matter in which it exhibits itself.

## 13.6 COMPARISON BETWEEN ARISTOTLE'S CONCEPTION OF CAUSATION AND MODERN ANALYSIS OF CAUSATION:

If we take Mill's definition of a cause as the best expression of modern scientific ideas, we find that he defines a cause as the "invariable and unconditional antecedent of a phenomenon." This cuts out final causes at once. For the final cause is the end, and is not an antecedent in time. It also does not include formal causes. We do not now think of the concept of a thing as being part of its cause. This leaves us with only material and efficient

causes, and these correspond roughly to the modern notions of matter and energy. Even the efficient causes of Aristotle, however, appear on further consideration, to be excluded from the modern idea of causation. For, though the efficient cause is the energy which produces motion, modern science regards it as purely mechanical energy, whereas Aristotle thinks of it, as we shall see, as an ideal force, operating not from the beginning but from the end. But it must not be supposed that, in saying that the modern idea of causation excludes formal and final causes, we mean that Aristotle is wrong in adding them, or that the modern idea is better than Aristotle's. It is not a question of better and worse at all. Modern science does not in any way deny the reality of formal and final causes. It merely considers them to be outside its sphere. It is no business of science whether they exist or not. As knowledge advances, differentiation and division of labour occur. Science takes as its province mechanical causes, and leaves formal and final causes to the philosopher to explicate. Thus, for example, formal causes are not considered by science because they are not, in the modern sense causes at all. They are what we have called reasons. If we are to explain the existence of an object in the universe it may be necessary to introduce formal causes, concepts, to show why the thing exists, to show in fact its reasons. But science makes no attempt to explain the existence of objects. It takes their existence for granted, and seeks to trace their history and their relations to each other. Therefore it does not require formal causes. It seeks to work out the mechanical view of the universe, and therefore considers only mechanical causes. But Aristotle's theory, as being philosophy rather than science, includes both the principles of mechanism and teleology.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** What is the material cause of the universe according to Heraclitus?

**Ans:** .....

**Q2:** Who regarded formal cause as 'Ideas'?

**Ans:** .....

**Q3:** Why the Eleatics did not recognize efficient cause?

**Ans:** .....

**Q4:** Can form exist apart from matter?

**Ans:** .....

**Q5:** **Fill in the blanks.**

(a) The material cause of the universe according to Thales is _____.

(b) Plato's philosophy contains only two of the four causes, namely the material and the _____

(c) Mill defines cause as the _____ and unconditional antecedent of a phenomenon.

(d) The material cause of the universe according to Anaximenes is _____.

**Q 6:** **Write true or false.**

(a) Matter is compared to potentiality by Aristotle.

(b) According to Aristotle the efficient cause of a boy is a father.

(c) The bronze is the final cause of the statue.

(d) In order of time, matter is earlier and form is later.

**Q7:** How many causes are there according to Aristotle? What are they?

**Ans:** .....

**Q8:** Name three books of Aristotle.

**Ans:** .....

**Q9:** What is final cause?

**Ans:** .....

Q10: What is formal cause?

**Ans:** .....



## 13.7 LET US SUM UP

- Aristotle's theory of causation is not absolutely new, but it is a development of the views of his predecessors.
- There are four types of causes according to Aristotle. They are- material, formal, efficient and final cause.
- The material cause of an object is equivalent to the nature of the raw material out of which the object is composed. For example, in the making of a bronze statue the bronze is the material cause of the statue. The formal cause is the pattern or structure of the object. For example, the shape of the statue. The efficient use is the active agent which produces the thing. For example, the sculptor who makes the statue. The final cause is that for the sake of which a thing is made. For example, health is the final cause of exercise.
- A thing without qualities cannot exist, nor qualities without a thing. So as form and matter cannot exist separately. We think of them as separate in order to understand them clearly. There is no such thing as form without matter, or matter without form. Every existent thing, that is, every individual object, is a compound of matter and form.
- Potentiality is the same as matter, actuality as form. For matter is potentially everything. It may become everything. It is not actually anything. It is a mere potentiality, or capacity of becoming something. Thus the actuality of a thing is simply its form. In order of time, matter is earlier and form is later. But in order of thought, form is earlier and matter is later.



## 13.8 FURTHER READING

1. Stace, W.T. (2005), A Critical history of Greek Philosophy, New Delhi: Macmillan India LTD.

2. Falcon, Andrea. Aristotle on causality, Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy 2008

## 13.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q 1:** Ans to Q 1. Fire

**Ans to Q 2.** Plato

**Ans to Q 3.** The Eleatics did not recognize efficient cause because they denied motion.

**Ans to Q 4.** No

**Ans to Q 5.** (a) Water, (b )Formal, (c) Invariable, (d) Air

**Ans. to Q6.** (a) True, (b)True, (c)False, (d)True

**Ans. to Q7.** There are four types of causes according to Aristotle. They are- material, formal, efficient and final cause.

**Ans to Q 8.** The name of three books of Aristotle are- Posterior Analytics, Physics, and Metaphysics.

**Ans to Q 9.** Aristotle defines the final cause as that for the sake of which a thing is done. For example-For a sailboat, it might be sailing. For a ball at the top of a ramp, it might be coming to rest at the bottom.

**Ans to Q 10.** Aristotle considers the formal cause as describing the pattern or form which when present makes matter into a particular type of thing. As for example, the shape of a statue.

## 10.11. MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** Who is the author of the book, "Metaphysics"?

**Q2:** What is the literal meaning of the term 'aitia'?

**Q3:** What is the final cause?

**Q4:** 'Matter and form are fluid'- Whether this statement is true or false?

**Q5:** Which tries to underline everything?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** What is material cause? Explain briefly

**Q2:** Write a short note on formal cause.

**Q3:** Briefly explain the efficient cause.

**Q4:** Discuss briefly the formal cause.

**Q5:** What are the two modes of causes presented by Aristotle?

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 150 words)**

**Q1:** Explain the relationship between form and matter.

**Q2:** Explain the four causes of Aristotle.

**Q3:** Why matter is regarded as potentiality by Aristotle?

**Q4:** Why form is regarded as actuality by Aristotle?

**Q5:** Explain the difference between Aristotle's conception of causation and modern analysis of causation

**Q6:** Write a short note on modern analysis of causation.

**Q7:** Why Mill rejected 'final cause' as a cause?

**Q8:** "In order of time, matter is earlier and form is later." Explain.

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# UNIT-14 THE CONCEPT OF PERSON

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

14.1 Learning Objectives

14.2 Introduction

14.3 The Concept of Person (Locke)

14.4Hume's View

14.5 Persons and their experiences

14.6 Rene Descartes and the "no ownership doctrine"

14.7 The Concept of person as primitive

14.8 Appreciation and criticism of Strawson's theory

14.9 Let us Sum Up

14.10 Further Readings

14. 11 Answer to Check Your Progress

14.12 Model Questions

## 14.1 LEARNING OJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Explain the Concept of person
- Discuss briefly about some philosophers like Descartes, Locke, Kant, Hume and Strawson
- Explain the concept of person according to Locke
- Discuss Hume's view on person
- Explain Descartes' view on person
- Discuss the concept of person as primitive
- Explain P.F. Strawson's View on Person
- Discuss Mind and Body relation which is related to a person
- Explain about person and their experience
- Discuss Vagaries of Personal Identity

## 14.2 INTRODUCTION

Person is an individual capable of moral agency. Although the details of their theories of human nature differ widely, Descartes, Locke, Kant and

Strawson, all accepted a functional description of the person that includes both mental and physical features: the attribution of responsibilities to a moral agent requires both the ability to choose and an ability to act on that choice.

One of the central problems of metaphysics is what it is to be a person. The answer ought to account for central phenomena of personhood; traditionally, command of language, self-consciousness, control or agency, and moral worth or title to request are amongst the salient characteristics that have been thought to distinguish persons from other forms of life. In Lock, "person" is a "forensic term, applying for moral reasons." A dualistic approach regards a person as an amalgam of an essentially separate mind and body, with the resulting problem of reinventing their unity in the living person, monistic theories, such as that of Strawson's Individuals (1959), work with a primitive concept of a person, as someone think logically capable of being described in bodily or mental terms. A popular modern analogy is with the compatible software and hardware descriptions of a computer.



**LET US KNOW**

**Descartes, Rene (1596-1650):** French philosophers. Descartes's efforts to achieve certainty in the face of scepticism mark the origins of modern epistemology.

**Locke (1632-1704):** English Philosopher. Lock was born in Wrington and educated at Oxford, where he seemed destined for a career in medicine.

**Kant, Immanual(1724-1804):** German philosopher who revolutionised modern philosophy, in an effort to counter the sceptical arguments of Hume and provide a firm basis for human knowledge and morality. Kant used transcendental arguments to show that human

beings apply synthetic a priori judgements as the preconditions for any possible experience.

**Strawson, Peter F. (1919- ):** British philosopher who applies the methods of analytic philosophy to traditional philosophical problems.Strawson criticised Russell's theory of descriptions in "On Referring" (1950) and developed the notion of descriptive (as opposed to revisionary) metaphysics in reference to problem of reidentification of particulars in Individual: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics (1959). His The Bounds of Sense (1966) is an extended commentary on the critical philosophy of Kant.

## 14.3 THE CONCEPT OF PERSON (LOCKE)

The concept of person is closely related with the concept of personal identity. Person is a term that has various technical and semi technical use in philosophy. It is derived from the Latin word 'persona'. Boethius, a Roman philosopher meant by person "an individual substance of a rational kind. "The concept of rationality has occurred in subsequent accounts of person. In the modern period the definition of person has been given clearly by Locke, the eminent British empiricist philosopher. Locke began his discussion by raising the question-what personal identity is? Such identity, Lock tells us, is purely a matter of consciousness. It rests upon the continuity introduce into consciousness by memory. Locke wrote, "in this alone consists personal identity, that is, the sameness of a rational being; and as far as these can be extended backwards to any past action of thought so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now as it was them" Therefore, we might add even supposing that there were reincarnation, the reborn soul, though the same thinking substance, would not be even the same person any longer, since in this reincarnation he has forgotten his former lives. Thus Locke defined 'person' in terms of memory continuity.

A number of subsidiary points have now to be considered. Can this continuity of consciousness and memory be preserved, when the substance

underlying it is changed? Locke replies that since the body can be mutilated and altered and even completely renewed without interfering with personal identity, continuity of consciousness is not dependent upon permanence of organic constitution. So, too, there is no reason why it should not be independent of changes in thinking substance, or the soul. There is no certainty that one and the same consciousness and the personal identity might not be "transferred from one thinking substance to another", in which case "it will possible that two thinking substance may make but one person. For the same consciousness being preserved, whether in the same or different substances, the personal identity is preserved,"

Supposed, however, "I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my life beyond a possibility of retrieving them yet am I not the same person that did those actions, had those thought that I was conscious of, though I have now forgotten them? 'No' Locke replies. I am the same man but not the same person. Thus Locke introduces a significant distinction between person and man. One and the same man might be a number of different persons. "If he had distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times."

So, Locke argued that to remain the same man (or woman) is to keep the same body ( but of course with renewed material), to remained the same person is to keep the same mind, with its ability to remember its past, while to remained the same immaterial substratum is for something pretty much incomprehensible and unverifiable to happens . According to Locke, it is person, not man, who is morally responsible. Locke's understanding of the nature of a person has been criticized by many philosophers.



**LET US KNOW**

Boethius, Anicius Manlius Severinus (480-524): His commentary on the Isagoge of Porphyry (itself a discussion of Aristotle's Categories)

carefully distinguished Aristotelian essences from Platonic Forms, setting the basic terms employed in subsequent mediaeval discussion of the problem of universals. De consolation philosophae (The consolation of Philosophy), written during the imprisonment that preceded his execution, considers the possibility of achieving human happiness despite the inescapable presence of evil, extols the benefits of reason even in the face of misfortunate and bad advice and proposes a compatibilist account of human freedom in the face of divine foreknowledge.



**Activity 14.1**

Write down the concept of person according to Lock

.....

.....



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1: fill in the blanks:**

The concept of person is closely related with the concept of personal_____.

Person is derived from the Latin word '_____'.

_____, a Roman philosopher meant by person "an individual substance of a rational kind. ".

The concept of rationality has occurred in subsequent accounts of _____.

Such identity, Lock tells us, is purely a matter of consciousness. It rests upon the continuity introduce into consciousness by _____.

**Q 2:** What Locke said about the distinction between 'man' and 'person'?

.....

.....

## 14.4 HUME'S VIEW

In the philosophy of Hume the term 'person' is employed in the sense of mind. It is a restricted framework. Here a person is nothing but a bundle of impressions and ideas. Hume rejected the possibility of the existence of one continuing substance underlying the multiplicity of perceptions. The question at this stage may be raised-what criterion should applied to decide that a particular being is a person? Two criteria are generally applied by philosophers;one is the criteria of bodily identity. According to it we reidentify a person on the basis of bodily continuity. This criterion, as we have seen, was employed by Locke.

It has been commented that there are several ways in which the bodily criterion is more fundamental than the memory criterion. A few points are to be noted here-

Although both criteria are sufficient only bodily identity is necessary. The bodily criterion is more extensive. It is matter of chance that men remember the tracks of their lives that they do remember rather than those they do not and we can apply the memory criterion only when there are memories to use. But in a clear sense the bodily criterion can always be used, for the body is always present whenever the person is.

P.F. Strawson has given a very influential definition of person in the contemporary period. He says that the concept of a person is a logically primitive concept. Person is that to whom both mental and physical attributes can be ascribed. Person is, in other words. The entity underlying both the physical and mental attributes.



**LET US KNOW**

**Hume (1711-76):** Scottish philosopher, historian and essayist. Hume is the most influential Thoroughgoing naturalist in modern philosophy.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 3:** What criterion should apply to decide that a particular being is a person?

.....

.....

## 14.5 PERSONS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES

We have seen how the positing of physical objects leads to our drawing a distinction between the objects as they are in themselves and the experiences through which we come to know them. The objects are thought to retain their perceptible properties whether or not anyone actually perceives them. When percepts do occur they are treated as sensations which belong to the observer in the same way as the thoughts and images and feelings that do not supply material for the construction of the physical world. The question which we must now try to answer is how these various elements are brought together and how they are related to the body by which the observer is identified.

In saying that the observer is identified by his body, we have to employ physical criteria for the identification of other people will hardly be disputed, but it may well be denied that this applies also to our identification of ourselves. Descartes is not the only philosopher, much less the only person, to have believed that in being self-conscious one is aware of a

spiritual substance which is housed contingently and perhaps only temporarily in the body.( Rene Descartes, Discourse on Method, Part-V). This view may not be tenable, but it surely deserves to be examined

Self-consciousness is not a primitive datum, or in other words that the observer's experiences are not intrinsically marked as his own. They are distinguished as his experiences only by contrast with the external world and with the experiences of others who also inhabit it. But then to arrive at these contrasts he must, as we have seen, distinguish the central body from other physical objects, and in particular from those other objects which are also the sources of signs. It is, as I said, his ability to interpret these signs as corroborating his main account of the world but not as corroborating his subsidiary accounts, and also as giving subsidiary accounts which he cannot corroborate, that leads him to think of the central body as sharing with other bodies the property of being the focus of an independent series of experiences. His own experiences are thus initially characterized as those of which the central body is the focus. Once this point has been reached, it may be possible to proceed to a more sophisticated theory in which the attachment of experiences to a body, or to a particular body, is not conceived to be necessary, or even to a theory in which they are assigned a different sort of owner. Whether any such theories are tenable remains to be seen. It is also of importance that the observer's identification of himself goes together with his identification of other persons and with their identification of him. He takes the signs which emanate from these other bodies as a ground for attributing experiences to the persons with whom he now associates them, and he realizes that these persons take the signs which emanate from the central body as a ground for attributing experiences to him. Seeing himself, as it were, through their eyes, he regards the central body as belonging to him in the special way in which their bodies belong to them, and he thinks of his body not only as a contributory cause of his percepts but also as the medium through which his entertainment of them, and indeed of his experiences in general, is made known to others.



## LET US KNOW

**Descartes, Rene (1595-1650):** French philosopher. Descartes' efforts to achieve certainty in the face of scepticism mark the origin of modern epistemology

**Consciousness:** The subjective phenomenon of self-awareness that normally accompanies human experience. Correct analysis of consciousness is a central goal in the philosophy of mind.



## Activity 14.2

Give some examples of Consciousness and non-consciousness

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## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 4:** What is Consciousness?

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**Q 5:** Who is the author of Discourse on Method?

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## 14.6 Rene Descartes and "No-ownership doctrine"

According to Cartesianism, when we speak of a person we are really referring to one or both of two distinct substances of different types, each of which has its own appropriate types of states and properties

States of consciousness belong to one of these substances and not to other. Strawson rejects this theory because for him "the concept of the pure individual consciousness 'the pure ego', is a concept that can't exist; or at last, can't exist as a primary concept in terms of which the concept of a person can be explained or analysed. It can exist only, if at all, as a secondary, non-primitive concept, which itself is to be explained, analysed in terms of a person." (Strawson, 1959, p.102)

In our day-to-day speech we use expressions like "I am in pain", "I had a severe pain", "my pain…" etc. These expressions somehow suggest that I am the owner of this particular experience of having pain. According to the no-ownership theorist, experience can be said to have an owner only in the sense of their casual dependence upon the state of some particular body. This casual dependence is sufficient to ascribe one's experiences to some particular, individual thing. We can own something only if its ownership is logically transferable. Thus, experience is not owned by anything except in the dubious sense of being causally dependent on the state of a particular body.

This theory according to Strawson is incoherent. The theorist denies the existence of the sense of possession but he is forced to make use of it when he tries to deny its existence. Strawson argues that any attempt to eliminate the "my", "my experience", "my headache" etc. would yield something that is not a contingent fact at all. It is simply wrong to state that all experiences are causally dependent on the state of of a single body. But the theorist cannot consistently argue that 'all experiences of person p means the same thing as all experience of a certain body B' for then the proposition would not be contingent, as his theory requires, but analytic. With "my

experience" he means a certain class of experiences of a person. It is the sense of this 'my' and 'of' that he requires to deny that, because being 'my experience' is -for the experience in question-no contingent matter but necessary. That my headache is my headache is-for the headache -no contingent matter.



**Activity 14.3**

How you define your pain to other person

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.....



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 6:** What is no-ownership Theory?

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.....

**Q 7:** Why no-ownership theory is incoherent according to Strawson?

.....

.....

## 14.7 THE CONCEPT OF PERSON AS PRIMITIVE

To get of these difficulties Strawson's suggests acknowledging the concept of person as primitive i.e. as a concept that cannot be analysed further in a certain way to another. That means: "the concept of a person is the concept of a type of entity, such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type" (Strawson). In other words, the states of consciousness cannot be ascribed at all, unless they are ascribed at all, unless they are ascribed to persons

(in Strawson's sense) It is to this concept of person, not to the pure ego, that the personal pronoun "I' refers. Thus the concept of a person is logically prior to that of an individual consciousness.

Strawson names the predicates ascribing corporeal physical characteristics, M-predicates and those ascribing states of consciousness, P- predicates. All P predicates may not be said to be ascribing states of consciousness but they all imply the possession of consciousness on the part of that to which they are ascribed. To learn their use is to learn both the aspects of their use. We speak of 'behaving in a depressed way' and of "feeling depressed". Feelings can only be left not observed, and behaviour can only be observed not felt. But to have the concept like "X's depression", the concept must cover both what is felt by X and what is observed by others. "It is not that these predicates have two kinds of meaning. Rather, it is essential to the single kind of meaning that they do have, that both ways of ascribing them should be perfectly in order."



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 8:** What are Strawson's suggestions about acknowledging the concept of person as primitive?

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.....

## 14.8 APPRECIATION AND CRITICISM OF P.F. STRAWSON'S THEORY

P.F. Strawson has given a very influential definition of person in the contemporary period. He says that the concept of a person is a logically primitive concept. Person is that to whom both mental and physical attributes can be ascribed. Person is, in other words. The entity underlying both the physical and mental attributes.

Strawson makes an attempt to show that the concept of person is primitive or simple in the sense that it cannot be further analysed. The whole argument is based on a group of central P-predicates which are other-ascribable and self ascribable. Persons cannot be defined as a union of mind and body because the possession of mental properties as well as physical properties presupposes that the owner is a person. His subtle point is that the criteria of application of any particular psychological state or property are indistinguishable from the criteria of application of physical properties unless the subject has already been identified as a person.

Strawson's theory of persons does not meet at least some important aspects of the mind-body problem, although he explicitly pretends to deal with it. His attempt has resultant not in solving the problem, but in escaping it or explaining it away. What he does is only to suggest that there is no problem with the concept of person, so to say, 'if you consider it like this', that is to say, if you consider the concept in a non-Cartesian and non-Physically way, the problem vanishes. In other words, his suggestion to consider the concept of person as primitive does not solve the traditional problem of the relation between mind and body, ontologically considered. So he offers only a conceptual solution to a real problem. And it is the real problem with which philosophers of mind deal with, especially under the influence of modern neurosciences. For instance Strawson's' conceptual analysis cannot cover problems in the context of questions concerning mental causation. How should we explain the causal relevance of mental states in the physical world in a Strawsonian way?

Another aspect of criticism may be that Strawson's criteria can be applied to other living beings like animals (perhaps to plants and trees) too, without any modification. At least a big class of P-predicates can be applied to any short of animals. No doubt, animals also have experiences; they too feel pain and so on. Even the behaviour of plants can be interpreted in vocabulary using P- predicates. If this the case, how does Strawson distinguish between animals and plants on the one hand and human persons on the other, if at all he distinguishes? Or does he intend to raise animals

and plants to the level of human beings and to credit them too with personhood? How to argue for this rather radical thesis? These and same similar questions are left open from Strawson's treatment of the concept of person.

In this context it is also worth mentioning that it is difficult to distinguish between Strawson's concept of a person and the concept of a human being, understood as the concept of a member of a biological species. Obviously the concept of a human being can also be analysed in terms of M- and P-predicates. Is Strawson of the opinion that there should not be such a distinction at all? Then he is confronted with all the problems concerning the "traditional concept" of persons, which takes "person" as synonymous with "member of the species of human beings".



**LET US KNOW**

Strawson. Peter F. (1919) British philosopher who applies the methods of analytic philosophy to traditional philosophical problems. Strawson criticised Russell's theory of descriptions in 'On Referring' (1950) and developed the notion of descriptive( as opposed to revisionary) metaphysics in reference to problem of reidentification of particulars in Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics (1959). His bounds of Sense (1966) are an extended commentary on the critical philosophy of Kant.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q9: Say true or false:**

a) P.F. Strawson has given a very influential definition of person in the contemporary period.(T/F)

b) He says that the concept of a person is a logically not a primitive concept. (T?F)

c) Person is that to whom both mental and physical attributes can be ascribed. Person is, in other words. The entity underlying both the physical and mental attributes.(T/F)

d) Strawson makes an attempt to show that the concept of person is primitive or simple in the sense that it can be further analysed.

e) Persons cannot be defined as a union of mind and body because the possession of mental properties as well as physical properties presupposes that the owner is a person. (T/F)



## 14.9 LET US SUM UP

To sum up we can mention, that Strawson's theory may be seen as a conclusive theory of the concept "person". Nevertheless it cannot solve the main problems of a philosophy of personality or personhood as they are discussed nowadays in philosophy. It is an open question whether we can reformulate Strawson's theory or we must refute it altogether. At any rate we can come to be applied to a modern theory of personality without more detailed considerations.



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## 14.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR

**Ans to Q 1:** (a) identity (b) persona (c) Boethius ( d)person (e) memory

**Answer to Q No.2:** Locke introduces a significant distinction between person and man. One and the same man might be a number of different persons. "If he had distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times."

**Answer to Q No. 3:** Two criteria are generally applied by philosophers; one is the criteria of bodily identity. According to it we reidentify a person on the basis of bodily continuity. This criterion, as we have seen, was employed by Locke.

**Answer to Q No. 4:** Consciousness is the subjective phenomenon of self-awareness that normally accompanies human experience. Correct analysis of consciousness is a central goal in the philosophy of mind.

**Answer to Q No 5:** Rene Descartes

**Answer to Q No 6:** In our day-to-day speech we use expressions like "I am in pain", " I had a severe pain", " my pain…" etc. These expressions somehow suggest that I am the owner of this particular experience of

having pain. According to the no-ownership theorist, experience can be said to have an owner only in the sense of their casual dependence upon the state of some particular body. This casual dependence is sufficient to ascribe one's experiences to some particular, individual thing. We can own something only if its ownership is logically transferable. Thus, experiences are not owned by anything except in the dubious sense of being causally dependent on the state of a particular body.

**Answer to Q No 7:** This theory according to Strawson is incoherent. The theorist denies the existence of the sense of possession but he is forced to make use of it when he tries to deny its existence. Strawson argues that any attempt to eliminate the "my", "my experience", "my headache" etc. would yield something that is not a contingent fact at all. It is simply wrong to state that all experiences are causally dependent on the state of a single body. But the theorist cannot consistently argue that 'all experiences of person p means the same thing as all experience of a certain body B' for then the proposition would not be contingent, as his theory requires, but analytic. With "my experience" he means a certain class of experiences of a person. It is the sense of this 'my' and 'of' that he requires to deny that, because being 'my experience' is -for the experience in question-no contingent matter but necessary. That my headache is my headache is-for the headache -no contingent matter.

**Answer to Q No 8:** To get of these difficulties Strawson's suggests acknowledging the concept of person as primitive i.e. as a concept that cannot be analysed further in a certain way to another. That means: " the concept of a person is the concept of a type of entity, such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type" ( Strawson). In other words, the states of consciousness cannot be ascribed at all, unless they are ascribed at all, unless they are ascribed to persons ( in Strawson's sense) It is to this concept of person, not to the pure ego, that the personal pronoun "I' refers. Thus the concept of a person is logically prior to that of an individual consciousness.

**Answer to Q No 9:** (a) T (b) F (c) T (d) F (e) T

## 14.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** What is person?

**Q2:** Is the concept of person primitive?

**Q3:** Who introduced No-ownership Doctrine?

**Q4:** Is person and man same?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Distinguish between Person and Man

**Q2:** What are the differences between Locke's and Hume's view on Person

**Q3:** Briefly explain the person and their experience

**Q4:** What is no-ownership doctrine?

**Q5:** Distinguish between Descstes' and Strawson's view

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 150 words)**

**Q1:** Discuss Locke's view on the concept of person.

**Q2:** How Hume defines Person? Discuss.

**Q3:** Explain the concept of Descartes' concept of no-ownership theory.

**Q4:** Critically discuss Strawson's concept of person.

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# UNIT 15: LANGUAGE AND REALITY

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

15.1 Learning Objectives

15. 2. Introduction

15.3 Language and the nature of language

15.4 Reality and the nature of reality

15.5 The relationship between language and reality

15.5.1 The relationship between language and reality with reference to Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (TLP).

15.5.2 Picture as a model of reality

15.5.3 Strawson's interpretation of the relationship between language and reality

15. 6 Let us sum up

15. 7 Further Readings

15. 8 Answers to Check Your Progress

15.9 Model Questions

## 15.1 LEARNING OJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Define Language;
- Make clear various nature of language within the realm of linguistic philosophy or analytic philosophy;
- Explain and examine philosophical problems are linguistic in nature;
- Describe the linguistic turn or linguistic revolution in 20th century analytic philosophy;
- Discuss semantics, pragmatists, mentalist and poetic approaches of language;
- Define Reality. Describe the very nature of Reality or ontology;
- Describe Wittgenstein's picture as a model of reality
- Explain the semantic, pragmatic, cognitive and metaphysical approach of the relationship between language and reality;

- Discuss the relationship between Language and Reality with reference to Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus;
- Discuss the relationship between Language and Reality after P. F. Strawson.

## 15. 2. INTRODUCTION:

The main contention of this unit is to show the relationship between language and reality. This unit may be segmented into three different sub-sections. Section one deals with the very nature of language; section two deals with the very nature of reality or ontology and section three deals with the relationship between language and reality.

## 15.3. LANGUAGE AND THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

What then is language? The general definition of language is that it is a medium of communication between the speaker and the hearers. Thus communication is binary in the real sense of the term where there remain two communicators of which one has been designated speaker and the other has been designated hearer. In this sense communication is made possible with the speaker and the hearer. When we talk of communication, we thereby mean speaker-hearer communication. Language thus is the tool or instrument through which communication is made possible. This is the general perception of language. But when we understand language with regard to linguistic philosophy or philosophy of language, we have a different perception of language. In fact we notice various nature of language within the realm of linguistic philosophy or analytic philosophy. According to Locke, every word is the sensible mark of ideas. In this sense every word as the constituent of language is significant because it is associated with idea. Every word bears a sense as the mark of ideas. According to Noam Chomsky, language is the mirror of human mind (Language and Mind). A man is known by the language he uses. As language is the mirror, it would reflect the inner mind of man. Chomsky says that every normal individual at the time of his or her birth biologically preoccupied a language organ in his

left hemisphere from which language has been generated spontaneously. Chomsky calls it Transformational Generative Grammar (in short TGG). Thus, we have a mentalist interpretation of language after Chomsky.

According to Martian Heidegger, language is the house of being. Language is poetic and creative according to Heidegger. He talks in favor of poetic language and the distinctive feature of language is that it would be creative in nature.

Besides Locke, Chomsky and Heidegger, the central issue of language is primarily concerned with Semanticists and Pragmatists. Initially linguistic turn or linguistic revolution appeared during the first few decades of 20th century mainly for two important accounts. First, philosophical problems are linguistic in nature. Secondly, most of the traditional philosophical problems were engendered due to the misinterpretation or misapprehension of the meaning of language. As philosophical problems are linguistic in nature, they must be either solved or resolved or dissolved by means of language. Thus language upfront took the guard of linguistic philosophy. The impact of linguistic philosophy is revolutionary because it discarded the relevance of metaphysics by conceiving it as a dead body.

However, regarding the very nature of language, linguistic philosophers were sharply divided into two board groups, such as, semanticist and pragmatists. Semanticists talk in favor of ideal or artificial or constructed or logical language, whereas pragmatists talk in favor of natural or ordinary or everyday language. Thus our understanding of language would either be artificial language or ordinary language or poetic language or mental language. Those who talk in favor of ideal language, they are called semanticists. Russell, early Wittgenstein, Frege, Carnap, Tarski etc., are the proponent of ideal or artificial or logical or constructed language. On the other hand, those who talk in favor of natural language, they are called pragmatists. Later Wittgenstein, Strawson, Austin, Ryle etc., are the proponents of natural or ordinary or everyday language. From philosophical point of view there are different approaches of language, such

as, semantics, pragmatists, mentalist and poetic approaches. Each school conceives language as a tool or instrument or medium of communication.



**Activity 15.1**

- Explain various nature of language within the realm of linguistic philosophy or analytic philosophy.

  .....

  .....

- How many ways the impact of linguistic philosophy is revolutionary? Give reason in support of your answer.

  .....

  .....



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** Communication is binary. (True/ False)

**Q 2:** According to Chomsky / Locke every word is the sensible mark of ideas.

**Q 3:** According to Noam Chomsky / Locke / Wittgenstein language is the mirror of human mind.

**Q 4:** Linguistic philosophers were sharply divided into two / three / four board groups.

**Q 5:** Name the supporters of ideal language.

## 15.4 REALITY AND THE NATURE OF REALITY

Just like language there are various perceptions about the nature of reality. Various linguistic philosophers have given various interpretation of reality. According to Locke, reality is nothing but the totality of experience.

For Quine, reality is what there is in the world. For Wittgenstein, reality is the totality of facts. For Strawson, reality is the totality of particulars and for Heidegger; reality is the totality of equipment. Thus within the sphere of linguistic philosophy there we find different interpretations of reality. Reality is nothing but the part of the world. Reality may be internal or external, empirical or metaphysical.

## 15.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND REALITY

So far we have outlined the nature of language as well as the nature of reality within the realm of linguistic philosophy. It is revealed that there are various perceptions of both language and reality. Accordingly, there develops various theories as of the relationship between language and reality. There is no question of doubt that language is all about of knowing reality. Even many would say that reality is nothing but linguistic decision. That means the nature of reality would be determined on the basis of the nature of language. In linguistic philosophy we may find four different theories of the relationship between language and reality. These are as follows:

(a) The semantic approach of the relationship between language and reality.
(b) The pragmatic approach of the relationship between language and reality.
(c) The cognitive approach of the relationship between language and reality.
(d) The metaphysical approach of the relationship between language and reality.

Linguistic philosophy was dominated by the semantic and pragmatist approaches of the relationship between language and reality. These two approaches actually try to develop the relationship between language and reality from external point of view. For them language and reality are separate entities and language has external responsibility or implication of knowing reality. Reality is something external and language is taken into account to know the external reality. Unlike the semantic and pragmatic approach, the cognitive approach of the relationship between language and reality is

internal in nature. It states that the basic function of language is not external, but internal. Language is the mirror, the bearer of ideas. Therefore, language helps us to know what is going on internally. The metaphysical approach of the relationship between language and reality differs from other three approaches. This actually appears as a rebound of what had been lost at the hand of logical positivism. It states that language is the house of being. As the question of being is a sort of metaphysical inquiry, the language of being has a different nature altogether. Heidegger is the proponent of such approach where he conceives poetic language as the house of being. According to Heidegger, the very nature of poetic language is that it is creative in nature. And that is why it is capable of knowing being. Language is the house of being, being is nurtured by means of language, being takes the help from language of becoming. This ongoing unit will confine to show the relationship between language and reality within the semantic and pragmatic approaches.

As the semantic approach there we find the contribution of many linguistic philosophers. So considering the length of this unit, we confine ourselves only within a very important model offered by early Wittgenstein in his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (henceforth TLP). Again under pragmatic approach there we find the contribution of many linguistic philosopher of making the relationship between language and reality. However, considering the length of this unit, we may confine only within a particular model offered by P. F. Strawson.

## 15. 5. 1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND REALITY WITH REFERENCE TO WITTGENSTEIN'S TLP:

Wittgenstein's interpretation of the relationship between language and reality is known as the atomistic or logical interpretation. Here he conceives language as propositional and reality as the totality of facts. We think his interpretation of language and reality is technical. He conceives language as the totality of propositions. What then is a proposition? He understands proposition form logical point of view. According to Wittgenstein

every proposition has two sense, i.e., either the proposition would be true or the proposition would be false. That means a proposition says something always either in the form of 'to be the case' or 'not to be the case'.

As Wittgenstein conceives language as the totality of proposition, he accordingly prefers logical or ideal language instead of ordinary language. Like many other semanticist Wittgenstein finds ambiguity and vagueness in ordinary or natural language. As a result of that instead of ordinary language, he has chosen idea or artificial language for knowing reality. As a proponent of ideal language, Wittgenstein was influenced by Russell. Russell has offered a very unique feature of ideal language. Semanticists in general hold that ordinary language by its very nature is ambiguous. Accordingly, ordinary language has to be revised in favor of artificial or constructed language. Thus there appears the relevance of constructionism or revisionism. Russell, Mill, Carnap, Frege and others employed ideal language as the semanticists. For them the body of ideal language would be proper names. It is because to be a name is to be a name of an object. However, Russell advanced one step further in order to show that not all proper names would be genuine proper names. In this regard, he classified proper names as logical and ordinary proper names and then claimed that only logical proper names known by acquaintance would be treated as genuine proper names. In this regard he developed theory of acquaintance and theory of descriptions.

Wittgenstein in his TLP took clues from Russell. His interpretation of language is to some extent Russellian. For Wittgenstein, the constituent of proposition are logical proper names. Accordingly, it can be said that language is the totality of propositions and the constituents of propositions are logically proper names. A name, according to Wittgenstein, denotes an object and the meaning of a name is the meaning of an object. If a name fails to denote an object, then it would not be treated as a name. Thus, there is no scope for a name of denoting an object. A proposition is formed by means of two or more names with the help of relational terms. Relational

term is needed because without the help of relational term, no proposition is formulated. Thus, out of two names along with a relational term an atomic proposition is formed. In every atomic proposition there are two names and one relational term. From atomic proposition one may construct compound or complex proposition. Alternatively, it can be said that language is the totality of propositions. A proposition, if not atomic, can be analyzed into atomic proposition. An atomic proposition is further analyzed into names. A name cannot be further analyzed into name. A name denotes an object. A name is thus treated as the atomic constituent of proposition or language. This is how Wittgenstein formulates language as the mark of reality.

Reality for Wittgenstein is the totality of facts. What then is a fact? A fact is something which makes a proposition as either true or false. In this regard, Wittgenstein in his TLP says, "The world is the totality of facts, not of things." Why does Wittgenstein say that the world is the totality of facts, but not things? Many would say that the world is the totality of things or objects. Why does Wittgenstein deny this? Actually Wittgenstein intends to know the world with regard to truth and falsity. He introduces his celebrated picture theory of meaning or proposition to know about the world. If the world is conceived as the totality of things, then it would be a mere description to know the world. But his anticipated structure of proposition is no longer associated with description. Instead of description he introduces the concept of logical space to know the world or reality. In this regard Wittgenstein says, "The facts I logical space are the world." There remains the possibility of accident in description, because it may perhaps be the case what is described may not be a real or proper description. This was the problem of ordinary language. However in logic, nothing is accidental according to Wittgenstein. He goes on to say that if a thing can occur in a state of affairs, the possibility of the state of affairs must be written into the thing itself. In logical space there is nothing accidental, because no new possibility can be discovered later.

## 15. 5. 2. PICTURE AS A MODEL OF REALITY:

Wittgenstein brings the concept of Picture as a model of reality. That means the relationship between language and reality is made possible with the help of his picture theory of proposition. According to Wittgenstein, a picture represents a situation in logical space, the existence and non-existence of states of affairs. That is why he attributes a picture as a model of reality. But in what sense a picture is anticipated as a model of reality? In this regard Wittgenstein says a picture is a model of reality because a picture is a fact. Thus a fact through a picture makes the proposition as either true or false. Alternatively, it can be said after Wittgenstein that every proposition pictures a fact. There must be a one to one correspondence between each element of the picture and each element of the fact. The elements of the proposition are names and the elements of the fact are objects. Every name denotes an object. Wittgenstein says the fact that the elements of a picture are related to one another in a determinate way represents that things are related to one another in the same way. There must be a structural isomorphism or structural connection between the elements of the propositions and the elements of the fact. In this regard, Wittgenstein brings the concept of pictorial form and pictorial relationship. According to Wittgenstein, pictorial form is the possibility that things are related to one another in the same way as the elements of the picture. That is how a picture is attached to reality.

This is so happened because there underlies pictorial relationship which makes it into a picture. It is mainly for the pictorial relationship the relation between language and reality is made possible. Wittgenstein anticipates such correlations while preconceiving the relationship between language and reality. Such correlations between the elements of the propositions and the elements of the fact make the picture possible. If a fact is to be a picture, it must have something in common with what it depicts. There must be something identical in a picture and what it depicts. This enables the one to a picture of the other. Wittgenstein says, "What a picture must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it - correctly

or incorrectly - in the way it does, is its pictorial form". He then says 'a picture cannot, however, depict its pictorial form, it displays it'. Even though a picture represents its subject from a position outside it, but it cannot place itself outside its representational form. Every picture irrespective of its form must have in common in reality in order to be able to depict it. It is the form of reality according to Wittgenstein. As Wittgenstein introduces the concept of logical space, he thereby means to say that a picture whose pictorial form is logical form is called a logical picture. Every picture is logical picture because whatever it depicts, it depicts in logical space. Only logical pictures, according to Wittgenstein, can depict the world or reality. The logico-pictoirial form of a picture is common with what it depicts. A picture represents a possible situation in logical space. As a model of reality, every picture agrees with reality or fails to agree. If it will agree with reality it would be true picture and if it will fail to agree with reality then it would be false. Pictorial form plays all important roles in representing reality. The agreement or disagreement of its sense with reality constitutes its truth or falsity. In order to tell whether a picture is true or false we must compare it with reality. As proposition and fact are independent with each other, there are no pictures that are true a priori. This is how the relationship between language and reality is made possible after early Wittgenstein.

## 15. 5. 3 STRAWSON'S INTERPRETATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND REALITY:

P.F. Strawson is a pragmatist. Being a pragmatist, he is doing linguistic philosophy with the help of natural or ordinary language. Thus for Strawson, language means natural language and reality is nothing but the totality of particulars. His understanding of particular is at par with object. Thus, he takes commonsense view of the world or reality. Like early Wittgenstein, he does not think that the world is the totality of facts; rather he asserts that the world is the totality of particulars or objects. Thus, he was very much specific about the nature of language as well as the nature of reality.

Before delving into the relationship between language and reality after Strawson, let us know about his understanding of conceptualism. Strawson was a leading proponent of conceptualism. In this regard, he was indebted to Kant. Kant admitted categories of understanding which are common in every human. As a result of that Kant admitted a unified conceptual scheme of humans. Strawson took clues from Kant. Like Kant, Strawson also acknowledged unified conceptual scheme of humans. Such unified core of conceptual scheme would play a vital and significant role in human understanding. There are categories of understanding which are common in humans. Now to make our communication successful, the unified core of conceptual scheme would play vital role.

According to Strawson, we have a unified conceptual scheme on the basis of which successful communication between the speaker and the hearer is made possible. As reality for him is the totality of particulars, identification the particulars means to identify or to know reality. Thus for Strawson to know about the world or reality one has to put emphasize more on successful communication between the speaker and the hearer. Successful communication between the speaker and the hearer will ensure identification of particulars. As a believer of ordinary language, Strawson inclines to say that ordinary language is adequate to make communication successful. Ordinary language at times needs to be revised. However, such revision will confine within the same language. The revision of ordinary language does not lead us to construct an artificial form of language.

How does successful communication between the speaker and the hearer make possible? If the utterance of a speaker is being understood by the hearer then we can say after Strawson that the communication is successful. However, when the hearer failed to understand what the speaker intends to say in such a case communication would be unsuccessful. What does the speaker communicate? What is the content of communication? The speaker communicates the information about particulars (objects). As the world is the totality of particulars, the speaker -hearer communication always would be about particulars. Now as the content of communication is

all about of particulars, any sort of successful communication would ensure the knowledge of particulars. Knowledge of particular or identification of particular is at par with knowledge of reality or identification of reality according to Strawson.

How does Strawson ensure that the speaker-hearer communication would always be successful? Does Strawson rules out the possibility of unsuccessful communication or failure of successful communication? Even though Strawson's conceptualism is based on successful communication and he has claimed that in the process all communication between the speaker and the hearer would be successful, but he does not rule out unsuccessful communication between the speaker and the hearer. It is a general perception that when speaker and hearer do involve in communication, their main intention is to make their communication successful. But in normal cases, it seems to us that sometimes communication would be unsuccessful. In Strawson's case no communication at the end would remain unsuccessful. If speaker-hearer communication would remain unsuccessful then the relationship between language and reality cannot be established. In this sense, Successful communication between the speaker and the hearer would be the hallmark of knowing reality by means of language.

Strawson, of course, inclines to say that at times there remains the possibility of making our communication unsuccessful. In this regard, he classified the totality of particulars in two different categories, such as, basic and non-basic particulars. He then denies unsuccessful communication in the case of basic particulars and affirms the possibility of unsuccessful communication in the case of non-basic particulars. He says when the communication between the speaker and the hearer is confined within non-basic particulars; we cannot deny the possibility of unsuccessful communication. However, such unsuccessful communication eventually be made successful because it would be linked with another language where the content of communication is basic particular. The speaker-hearer

communication is just like a chain of communication where one sentence is linked with another sentence. Every sentence is associated with particular, either basic or non-basic. Basic particular are known to all. Therefore, there is no possibility of unsuccessful communication. According to Strawson there are two predicates, such as, P predicate and M predicate which are basic and of which nobody can make mistake. All other predicates or particulars are in some sense or other associated with these two basic particulars.
What makes us guarantee that sentences associated with basic particulars would be successful all without exception according to Srawson? In this regard, one has to understand Strawson's conceptualism. Strawson following Kant admits that there is a unified core of human conceptualism. All language users have a common unified core of human thinking because of the core conceptual thinking. Such unified core of human thinking makes all communications successful when they are associated with basic particulars. This is how Strawson enables to show the relationship between language and reality.

This position of Strawson, however, cannot be accepted without begging question. After Strawson, many linguistic philosophers have severely criticized Strawson's very idea of unified core of conceptual scheme. Willard Van Orman Quine is a leading proponent of conceptual relativist who not only criticized Strawson; he equally criticized Kant as well. Davidson was also a conceptual relativist and criticized Strawson. They think that there is no unified conceptual scheme for which successful communication between the speaker and the hearer is made possible. Even the position of later Wittgenstein and Austin does not support Strawson. Having said this there is no question of doubt that Strawson's conceptualism opens a new dimension as far as the relationship between language and reality is concerned.



**Activity 15.2**

**Q1:** How do philosophers view Reality? Explain briefly

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.....

**Q2:** Explain and examine various theories of the relationship between language and reality.

.....

.....



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 6:** According to Locke, reality is nothing but the totality of experience. (True/False) 7.

**Q 7:** "Reality is what there is in the world" - who said this?

**Q 8:** Who introduces the concept of logical space?

**Q 9:** According to Wittgenstein / Strawson / Quine reality is the totality of particulars.

**Q 10:** For Heidegger / Locke / Strawson reality is the totality of equipment



## 15. 6 LET US SUM UP

- In this ongoing unit we have discussed two different models of the relationship between language and reality.
- Wittgenstein's atomistic model would be treated as the replica of semantic approach. Being an original thinker Wittgenstein's picture theory of proposition would impact a lot to other semantic approach.

- Likewise within the realm of pragmatic approach, Strawson's conceptualism holds a unique position. It deserves worthy of philosophical implication.

- Strawson not only extended Kantian forceful conceptualism, he equally has developed how the interpersonal communication between the speaker and hearer makes successful for identifying particulars which are the constituents of reality in general.

- Even many other subsequent theories have been developed within the realm of conceptualism which is in some sense or other would be treated corollary of Strawson's theory of conceptualism.



## 15. 7 FURTHER READING

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## 15. 8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. True.
2. Locke
3. Noam Chomsky
4. Two
5. Russell, early Wittgenstein, Frege, Carnap, Tarski etc., are the proponent of ideal language.
6. Ture.
7. Willard Van Orman Quine
8. Wittgenstein
9. Strawson
10. Heidegger

## 14.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A. Very short Questions**

**Q1:** What is language?

**Q2:** Define Reality.

**Q3:** Who is the author of Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus?

**Q4:** What is Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG)?

**Q5:** What is a fact according to Wittgenstein?

**Q6:** Name the supporters of ordinary or natural language.

**Q7:** What is a name according to Wittgenstein?

**Q8:** 'The relationship between language and reality is known as the atomistic or logical interpretation'- Who expressed this view?

**Q8:** State Martian Heidegger's account of language.

**Q10:** Quine is a leading proponent of conceptual relativist - Is it true?

**B. Short Questions (Write in about 100-150 words)**

**Q1:** Is language a tool or instrument or medium of communication? Explain.

**Q2:** Write a note on proposition after Wittgenstein.

**Q3:** What are the different theories of the relationship between language and reality?

**Q4:** Discuss Wittgenstein's atomistic model of the relationship between language and reality.

**Q5:** "Language is the house of being." Elucidate.

**Q6:** Distinguish between semanticists and pragmatists.

**Q7:** Distinguish between semantic, pragmatic, cognitive and metaphysical approach of the relationship between language and reality.

**Q8:** Explain the relationship between language and reality with the help of Wittgenstein's picture theory of proposition.

**Q9:** Why does Wittgenstein say that the world is the totality of facts, but not things? Explain briefly.

**Q10:** How Wittgenstein formulates language as the mark of reality? Explain briefly.

**C. Long Questions (Write in about 150 words)**

**Q1:** What is language? Explain language as a medium of communication.

**Q2:** Discuss various nature of language within the realm of linguistic philosophy or analytic philosophy.

**Q3:** Write an essay on linguistic revolution or linguistic turn.

**Q4:** Explain and discuss the relationships between language and reality.

**Q5:** Explain and examine the relationship between language and reality with reference to Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (TLP).

**Q6:** What does Wittgenstein understand by fact? Explain, after Wittgenstein, the world is the totality of facts, but not things.

**Q7:** Why Wittgenstein attributes a picture as a model of reality? Discuss.

**Q8:** Discuss critically Strawson's interpretation of the relationship between language and reality.

**Q9:** Discuss fully conceptualism after P. F. Strawson.

**Q10:** What is successful communication? How does successful communication between the speaker and the hearer make possible? Discuss after P. F. Strawson.

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