
UNIT 1 MASTERS OF SUSPICION (MARX, FREUD AND NIETZSCHE)

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

Paul Ricoeuran terminology of describing the unsurpassed thinkers, namely Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Nietzsche, as 'Masters of Suspicion,' is used as the title for this unit. These three thinkers left a legacy of their own in turning the history of human thought in different directions. The unit gives a gist of their critique and their vision.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

At each stage in human history, men and women have worked out some sort of picture of the world and their place in it. They develop a Philosophy. The pieces they use to make up this picture have been obtained by observing nature and through generalizing their day-to-day experiences.

1.2 KARL MARX: CRITIC OF SYSTEMIC DOMINATION

Karl Marx was a remarkable era in the field of socialist theory and political economy. In his conception of reality as subject to turbulent change led to view human beings as having potentiality to realize themselves in the struggle for freedom, equality and classlessness. Having been influenced tremendously by Hegel's dialectics, Marx developed his theory of historical and dialectical materialism. His contribution to world of philosophy is radical in a sense that he was not just providing critique of religion but worked for the change of view of the basics of everything to provide for human emancipation. He dismissed the illusion that reality as a whole is an expression of the Idea, the absolute rational order governing reality. Against this, Marx held a position that it is Man, not the Idea, who is the true subject. Secondly for him, political life and

societal ideology and everything associated with are determined by the character of economic life. Everything of man consists in human labour. If it is just performed at dictates of the market forces, Man is 'alienated' from his own creative force. Humans can recognize themselves as what they are, i.e. true creators of history, only when labour recovers its collective character. Labour is 'not only a means of life but life's prime want'.

Marx presented history as a progress through stages. At every stage, the society's level of productivity and the requirements condition the form of society. In capitalism, as the means of production are owned privately and labour is bought and sold like a commodity, exploitation flows from an arrangement that is accepted without the need for coercion. It only reflects the fact that the ruling dominant class has a special influence over ideas in society. In *Das Kapital*, monumental work of Marx, he identifies the oppressive dynamics of capitalism with its deceptive objective of having a discrepancy between its essence and its appearance. In Marx's view, it is inevitable that capitalism should give way to socialism. With conflict evident in capitalism as far the ownership of means of production is concerned, growing consciousness for collective ownership in 'socialized' environment, Marx believed that the transition to collective ownership will be natural and inevitable. Of course till the end Marx nowhere explained how this collective ownership and social control was to be exercised. His maxim in the final vision of communism echoes 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.' (Rosen 1998)

1.3 HISTORICAL AND DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

When one looks at history, it appears to be a mass of contradictions. Events are lost in a maze of revolutions, wars, periods of progress and of decline. Conflicts of classes and nations swirl around in the chaos of social development. Marx attaches enormous importance to the study of history. Marxism is the science of perspectives, using its method of Dialectical Materialism to unravel the complex processes of historical development. Marxist philosophy examines things not as static entities but in their development, movement and life. Historical events are seen as processes. Evolution, however, is not simply the movement from the lower to the higher. Life and society develop in a contradictory way, as Lenin puts it, through, "spirals not in a straight line; a development by leaps, catastrophes, and revolutions; breaks in continuity; the transformation of quantity into quality; inner impulses towards development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies." As Marx explained, "the mode of production of material life conditioned the social, political and intellectual life processes in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary their social being that determines their consciousness".

Using this method, Marx was able to indicate "the way to an all embracing and comprehensive study of the processes of the rise, development, and decline of social-economic systems. People make their own history." Marx drew attention and indicated the way to a scientific study of history as a single process, which, with all its immense variety and contradictoriness, is governed by definite laws. From primitive communism, through slave society and feudalism, the western society has evolved into capitalism. The socialist transformation ushers in a new and higher form of society by breaking the fetters on the development of the productive forces. With huge strides forward in production, based on the most advanced science and conscious planning, humanity

enters the higher realms of real society. At each point in class society, the rising revolutionary class, aiming to change society, have to fight for a new world outlook and have to attack the old philosophy, which, being based on the old order, justified and defended it.

1.4 MARX ON ALIENATION

In capitalist society, man is not truly free. He is an alienated being. He is not at home in his world. The idea of alienation, Marx takes from Hegel and Feuerbach. The causes of alienation come to have an increasingly economic and social content. The alienation of labour takes place in the fact that the more the worker produces the less he has to consume. And the more values he creates the more he devalues him. The reason is His product and his labour is estranged from him. The life of the worker depends on capital. On things that he has created but that are not his. Instead of finding his rightful existence through his labour he loses it in this world of things that are external to him” no work, no pay. Under these conditions, labour denies the fullness of concrete man. Nature, his body, his spiritual essence become alien to him. “Man is made alien to man” Private property becomes the product of alienated labour. Alienated labour is seen as the consequence of market product, the division of labour, and the division of society into antagonistic classes.

Economic Alienation

As producers in society, men create goods only by their labour. These goods are exchangeable. Their value is the average amount of social labour spent to produce them. The alienation of the worker takes on its full dimension in that system of market production. In it part of the value of the goods is taken away from and transformed into surplus value. The capitalist appropriates this privately. Market production also intensifies the alienation. By encouraging specialization, piecework, and setting up of large enterprises. Thus the labour power of the worker is used along with that of others tools of production. Thus losing their quality as human products, the products of labour become alien and oppressive realities.

The fundamental economic alienation is accompanied by **political and ideological alienation**. The ideas that men form are closely bound up with their material activity and their material relation. This is true of human activity in political, intellectual, and spiritual. Men produce their representations and their ideas, but it is as living men, men acting as theory are determined by a definite development of their powers of production. Law, morality, metaphysics, and religion do not have a history of their own. Men developing their material production modify together with their real existence their ways of thinking and the products of their ways of thinking. “It is not consciousness, which determines existence; it is existence, which determines consciousness. **Ideological alienation** takes different forms, appearing in economic, philosophical and legal theories. Ideological alienation expresses itself supremely in religion. Taking up the ideas about religion that were current in left post-Hegelian circles, together with the thought of Feuerbach, Marx considered religion to be a product of man’s consciousness. It is a reflection of the situation of a man, who ‘either has not conquered himself or has already lost himself again.

1.5 MARXIAN CRITIQUE OF RELIGION

In the famous words of Marx, 'Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people'. For Marx, the world of religion is a reflection of a particular form of society. The state or the society produces religion. In religious belief, Man finds himself reflected in the 'fantastic reality of heaven.' Religion provides a realm in which individuals can realize themselves. In a desperate world full and adequate self-realization is said to be impossible. In this way, religion attempts to preserve the social order of which it is a by-product. The fundamental points on which Marxian critique of religion rest are: (1) Religion is a by-product of the impoverished and distorted world. (2) The image of reality produced by religion is falsely transfigured. (3) Human beings are made to believe that religion has its origins in other than the mundane reality. (Rosen 1998)

Marx directs his critique of religion specifically on the final aspect of unacknowledged origins in social existence. His critique aims at calling people to abandon their illusions and move towards, with help of philosophy, unmasking human self-alienation in its secular forms. The critique of religion is to throw away all conditions in which human beings are debased, enslaved, neglected, contemptible. It asserts a doctrine that man is the supreme being for man. (Marx, 1843a: 251). For Marx, speculative philosophy must move beyond itself and makes use of means of *praxis* towards human emancipation. A truly successful critique of religion requires the transformation of the social conditions within which religion is generated and sustained.

Marxian anthropology

Human history is therefore living human seeking to satisfy certain primary needs. "The first historical fact is the production of the means to satisfy these needs." This satisfaction opens the way for new needs. Human activity is essentially a struggle with nature, which becomes the means of satisfying his needs. Humans are productive being who humanize themselves by their labour. Humans humanize nature while they naturalize themselves. By his creative activity, by his labour, he realizes his identity with the nature that he masters, while at the same time he achieves free consciousness. "All that is called history is nothing else than the process of creating man through human labour, the becoming of nature for man. Man has thus evident and irrefutable proof of his own creation by himself." Understood in its universal dimension, human activity reveals that 'for man, man is the supreme being.' It is thus vain to speak of god, creation, and metaphysical problems. Fully naturalized, man is sufficient unto himself: he has recaptured the fullness of man in his full liberty.

1.6 SIGMUND FREUD: ANALYST OF HUMAN PSYCHE

Freud who is well known psychologist and psychotherapist developed the theory and practice of psychoanalysis. On Freud's account everyday actions are determined by motives which are far more numerous and complex than people realize. The most basic and constant motives which influence our actions are unconscious. Such motives are residues of encounters with significant persons and situations from the past. They operate not to achieve realistic satisfaction, but rather to secure a form of pacification through representation. He gave the psychological accounts of neurosis and psychosis. He explicated how the past gives significance to the present in normal mental functioning. Past desires are continually re-articulated through symbolism and representational pacification throughout life. In this Freud provides both a radically holistic account of the causation of action and a naturalistic description of the generation of meaning in

life. Significant desires can remain forever flexible, renewable and satisfiable in their expressions, precisely because they are immutable, frustrated and unrelenting at the root.

The childhood motives revealed by analysis characteristically included sensual love for one parent combined with rivalry and jealous hatred for the other, a constellation Freud called the 'Oedipus complex'. Children were liable to intense psychical conflict, as between desires to harm or displace each parent, envied and hated as a rival for the love of the other, and desires to preserve and protect that same parent, loved sensually and also as a caretaker, helper and model. Children apparently attached great emotional significance to their interactions with their parents in such basics of disciplined and cooperative activity as feeding and the expulsion and management of waste through various organs. Freud framed an account which systematically linked normal and abnormal sexual phenomena in the development of the individual.

Freud allocated the task of fostering the sense of reality to a hypothetical neural structure, or functional part of the mind, 'the ego.' He linked this structure with two others, the 'super-ego' and the primitive 'it', or *id*., The 'super-ego' judged or criticized the ego. It included the ego-ideal, representing the ideals or standards by which the ego was judged. "*Id*" is the natural matrix of basic and potentially conflicting instincts or drives. Overall the ego, super-ego and *id* are neural systems described in a functional way.

The drives constituting the *id* are divisible into two main categories: those which engender motives which are creative and constructive, such as affection, love and care, which he called the life instincts; and those which yield motives linked to aggression, such as envy and hate, which he called the destructive or death instincts.

1.7 FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE: UNSYMPATHETIC DETRACTOR

Nietzsche has left a deep imprint on most areas of Western intellectual and cultural life. He is one of Germany's greatest prose stylists and one of its most important, if controversial, philosophers. Nietzsche attacks almost everything that has been considered sacred: Socrates, scholarship, God, truth, morality, equality, democracy and most other modern values. He gives a large role to the will to power. He proposes to replace the values he attacks with new values and a new ideal of the human person, 'overhuman' or 'superhuman'. Nazi theoreticians attempted to associate these ideas with their own cause. Actually, Nietzsche despised and unambiguously rejected both German nationalism and anti-Semitism.

Nietzsche's philosophizing began from a deep sense of dissatisfaction with modern Western culture. In that, he found superficial and empty in comparison with that of the ancient Greeks. He located the source of the problem in the fact that modern culture gives priority to science. Pre-Socratic Greece had given priority to art and myth. He wanted modern culture to return to the Greek valuation of art, calling for a recognition of art as 'the highest task and the truly metaphysical activity of this life'. In the works of his middle period he rejects metaphysical truth but celebrates the valuing of science and empirical truth over myth as a sign of high culture. He committed his own philosophy to a thoroughgoing naturalistic understanding of human beings. (Clark 1998)

1.8 KNOWLEDGE, TRUTH AND METAPHYSICS

Nietzsche denies often that any of our theories and beliefs are really true. The rejection of metaphysics (a belief in a second world) forms the cornerstone of his later philosophy. Human, All Too Human offers a genealogy of this belief, first in the dreams and in considering empirical world as mere appearance. Metaphysics is purported knowledge of this non-empirical world. He shows that knowledge of a non-empirical world is cognitively superfluous. Although Enlightenment established the adequacy of empirical methods, belief in a metaphysical world persisted because that world is assumed to be necessary to account for the things of the highest value in the human world. Nietzsche offers a naturalistic account of higher things, which presents them as sublimations of despised things and therefore as 'human, all too human'.

Nietzsche's position on knowledge is a combination of empiricism, antipositivism and perspectivism. 'All evidence of truth comes only from the senses.' He considers the rest of purported knowledge 'miscarriage and not yet science', or formal science, like pure logic and mathematics. Nietzsche's antipositivism involves a rejection of foundationalism. He denies that there is any experience that is unmediated by concepts, interpretation or theory. Sense experience, our only evidence of truth, is always already interpreted. Knowledge is therefore interpretation, as opposed to the apprehension of unmediated facts. Nietzsche's perspectivism is often thought to imply that empirical knowledge offers us 'only a perspective' and not truth. Nietzsche himself puts forward as truths not only perspectivism, but also many other claims. Perspectivism is a claim about knowledge; it is not a claim about truth, and it does not entail that truth is relative to perspective. Further, knowledge is always from the viewpoint of a particular set of beliefs and that there are always alternative sets that would ground equally good views of an object. Nietzsche's explicit point in describing knowledge as perspectival is to guard against conceiving of knowledge as 'disinterested contemplation'. This does not mean that true knowledge requires assuming as many perspectives as possible. knowledge does not require complete knowledge, and complete knowledge is not Nietzsche's epistemological ideal. (Clark 1998)

1.9 AGAINST ASCETIC IDEAL

For him, ascetic ideal takes the highest human life to be one of self-denial, denial of the natural self, thereby treating natural or earthly existence as devoid of intrinsic value. Nietzsche saw this life-devaluing ideal at work in most religion and philosophy. Values always come into existence in support of some form of life. They gain the support of ascetic religions and philosophies only if they are given a life-devaluing interpretation. Ascetic priests interpret acts as wrong or 'sinful' because the acts are selfish or 'animal' - because they affirm natural instincts. Ascetic philosophers interpret whatever they value - truth, knowledge, philosophy, virtue - in non-natural terms. It is because they share the assumption that anything truly valuable must have a source outside the world of nature. The ascetic ideal itself undermines values. It deprives nature of value by placing the source of value outside nature. It promotes the value of truth above all else and it leads to a denial that there is anything besides nature.

Nietzsche proclaims that 'God is dead' and that morality will gradually perish. Morality has been brought about by the ascetic ideal as only possible form of ethical life. That ideal has little life

left in it, according to Nietzsche. Morality now has little power to inspire human beings to virtue or anything else. It does not inspire human beings to take on the task of becoming more than they are. It only induces them to internalize their will to power against themselves. Nietzsche believes that we need a new ideal, a real alternative to the ascetic ideal. He calls the philosophers to create new values and not continue merely to codify and structure the value legislations of ascetic priests. But Nietzsche now saw that there was no way to go back to earlier values and recognized the need for new values. Thus, in his own writings he exhibits a new ideal, often exemplifying old virtues that are given a new, life-affirming interpretation. (Clark 1998)

1.10 NIETZSCHE'S CLAIM OF 'DEATH OF GOD' AND NIHILISM

Nietzsche proclaimed the death of God that churches are now 'tombs and sepulchres of God', and that we are all God's 'murderers'. The 'death of God' is a metaphor for a cultural event that he believes has already taken place. Belief in God has become unbelievable and the Christian idea of God is no longer a living force in Western culture. Nietzsche views all gods as human creations, reflections of what human beings value. Non-Christian gods were constructed from the qualities human beings saw and valued in themselves. The Christian God was given qualities that were the opposite of what humans perceived in themselves, the opposite of our inescapable animal instincts. Constructed thus to devalue human natural being it interpreted natural being as 'guilt before God.' and taken to indicate our unworthiness. Nietzsche views that Christian theism is nearing its end as a major cultural force. The development of atheism in the West and the will to truth, a commitment to truth 'at any price', undermine the whole Christian worldview. Science has given us reason to believe that we can explain all the explicable features of empirical reality without appealing to God or any other transcendent reality. Theism has become cognitively superfluous. Atheism is 'the awe-inspiring catastrophe of a two-thousand year discipline in truth that finally forbids itself the lie involved in belief in God.'

Although atheism undoubtedly weakens Christianity, depriving it of both creative energy and prestige, it does not bring about the death of God by itself. Besides other factors that weaken the influence of Christianity and its ideal, Nietzsche includes the development of money-making and industriousness as ends in themselves, democracy, and the greater availability to more people of the fruits of materialistic pursuits. Loss of belief in God will initiate a 'monstrous logic of terror' and the collapse of all that was 'built upon this faith, propped up by it, grown into it.' Nietzsche calls this collapse of values 'nihilism;' and predicts 'the advent of nihilism' as 'the history of the next two centuries', and calls himself 'the first perfect nihilist of Europe'. However, he said that he has 'lived through the whole of nihilism, to the end, leaving it behind.' Nihilism is not his own doctrine. He does not believe that nothing is of value (or that 'everything is permitted') if God does not exist. (Clark 1998)

1.11 NIETZSCHE'S CRITICISM OF MORALITY

Every ethical code or system for evaluating conduct is 'a morality' in the wider. A system that determines the value of conduct solely in terms of 'the retroactive force of success or failure' is what Nietzsche counts it as 'pre-moral' in the narrower sense. Nietzsche calling himself an 'immoralist' (one who opposes all morality) repeatedly insists that morality 'negates life'. He turned against it inspired by an 'instinct that aligned itself with life.' However, his point is not

that morality is 'unnatural' restricting the satisfaction of natural impulses. His objection to morality rests on the fact that it promotes and celebrates a kind of person in which he finds nothing to esteem. It makes him a 'herd animal' who has little idea of greatness and seeks above all else security, absence of fear, absence of suffering. His immoralism does not oppose all forms of ethical life. He called himself an 'immoralist' as a 'provocation.' The three main strands of morality are the good (in the sense of virtue), the right (or duty), and a general understanding of value. Nietzsche's ideal celebrates the affirmation of life even in the face of its greatest difficulties. It gives rise to a doctrine and valuation of life that is fundamentally opposed to the one he finds behind morality. Committed to finding the sources of value in life, he rejects all non-naturalistic interpretations of ethical life which make reference to a transcendent or metaphysical world.

What he opposes in morality is not the idea of virtue, or standards of right and wrong, but the moralization of virtue and duty brought about by the ascetic ideal. Morality 'negates life' because it is an ascetic interpretation of ethical life. By interpreting virtue and duty in non-natural terms that things of the highest value must have their source 'elsewhere' than in the natural world. He calls the morality of contemporary Europe 'herd animal morality' because of the almost complete agreement 'in all major moral judgments'. There is nothing in it to hold out an ideal of the human person that encourages individuals to take up the task of self-transformation, self-creation, and to funnel into it the aggressive impulses, will to power. As the ascetic ideal is now largely dead (as part of the 'death of God'), we need something to replace it: a great ideal that will inspire the striving, internalization, virtue and self-creation. (Clark 1998)

1.12 THE SUPER-HUMAN AND THE WILL TO POWER

As an alternative to 'herd-animal morality' is Nietzsche's 'super-human' or 'overman' to bring out the idea of a being who overcomes in itself what has defined us as human. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche's work of philosophical fiction, Zarathustra is returning from ten years of solitude in the wilderness, bringing human beings a gift: his teaching that humanity is not an end or goal, but only a stage and bridge to a higher type of being, the overhuman. He teaches that now that God is dead, it is time for humanity to establish this higher type as the goal and meaning of human life, a goal that can be reached only if human beings overcome what they now are, overcome the merely human. Zarathustra commits himself to its central task: urging human beings to raise their sights above their usual immersion in materialistic pursuits to recognize the outlines of a higher form of being that calls them to go beyond themselves, to become something more than they are. Zarathustra's overhuman is a successor to the images of 'higher humanity' offered by traditional religions. It is not to encourage human beings to throw off the constraints and shackles of morality but to combat the forces of barbarism by encouraging us to take on a more demanding ethical task of becoming a 'true human being'. It applies only to 'those no-longer animals, the philosophers, artists, and saints'. In other words, the overhuman must overcome all the impulses that led human beings to accept the ascetic ideal, an ideal that has so far defined what counts as 'human'.

Nietzsche's central teaching is the will to power, which is one human drive among others, the striving for competence or mastery. It has apparent omnipresence in human life. It does not mean that that life is will to power (or that power is the only thing humans want). It does mean that

power has a special relation to human happiness. He calls the will to power ‘the most life-affirming drive’, that is, the one whose satisfaction contributes most to finding life worth living. Zarathustra claims that this ‘will to be master’ is found in all that lives, and that this explains why life is ‘struggle and becoming’, always overcoming itself, always opposing what it has created and loved. Nietzsche does say that life, and even reality itself, is will to power. Reality consists of fields of force or dynamic quanta, each of which is essentially a drive to expand and thus to increase its power relative to all other such quanta. Philosophers’ ultimate aim, he claims, is not to obtain knowledge or truth, but to interpret the world in terms of their own values. (Clark 1998)

1.13 LET US SUM UP

The unit aims at detailing of their ‘suspicion’ of the existing package of ideology handed down to their time. Instead of chewing what is given, they examined everything; criticised the existing and proposed their ideal vision of their own. Should their ideals be treated as a ‘given’ one and swallowed up uncritically? The students of philosophy are expected to follow the path of these masters of suspicion and critically accept or reject what is handed over to them. Mere critique may end up in ideological anarchy if not propped up by one’s own vision and ideal.

1.14 KEY WORDS

Das Capital :Central teaching of Karl Marx on critique of capitalism

Id :pleasure principle

Death of God :a metaphor for a cultural event that he believes has already taken place.

‘Super-human’: idea of a being who overcomes in itself what has defined us as human.

Will to power : one human drive among others, the striving for competence or mastery

1.15 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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UNIT 2 PRAGMATISM

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

Pragmatism is the thinking about solving problems in a practical and sensible way rather than by having fixed ideas and theories. . The core of pragmatism was the pragmatist maxim, a rule for clarifying the contents of hypotheses by tracing their ‘practical consequences’. In the work of Peirce and James, the most influential application of the pragmatist maxim was to the concept of truth. But the pragmatists have also tended to share a distinctive epistemological outlook, a fallibilist anti-Cartesian approach to the norms that govern inquiry.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Pragmatism is a philosophical movement that includes those who claim that an ideology or proposition is true if it works satisfactorily, that the meaning of a proposition is to be found in the practical consequences of accepting it, and that unpractical ideas are to be rejected. Pragmatism originated in the United States during the latter quarter of the nineteenth century. Although it has significantly influenced non-philosophers notably in the fields of law, education, politics, sociology, psychology, and literary criticism this article deals with it only as a movement within philosophy.

The term “pragmatism” was first used in print to designate a philosophical outlook about a century ago when William James (1842-1910) pressed the word into service during an 1898 address entitled “Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results,” delivered at the University of California (Berkeley). James scrupulously swore, however, that the term had been coined almost three decades earlier by his compatriot and friend C. S. Peirce (1839-1914). (Peirce, eager to distinguish his doctrines from the views promulgated by James, later relabeled his own position “pragmaticism” a name, he said, “ugly enough to be safe from kidnappers.”) The third major figure in the classical pragmatist pantheon is John Dewey (1859-1952), whose wide-ranging writings had considerable impact on American intellectual life for a half-century. After Dewey, however, pragmatism lost much of its momentum.

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in pragmatism, with several high-profile philosophers exploring and selectively appropriating themes and ideas embedded in the rich tradition of Peirce, James, and Dewey. While the best-known and most controversial of these so-called “neo-pragmatists” is Richard Rorty, the following contemporary philosophers are often considered to be pragmatists: Hilary Putnam, Nicholas Rescher, Jürgen Habermas, Susan Haack, Robert Brandom and Cornel West.

2.2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW ON PRAGMATISM

Classical Pragmatism: From Peirce to Dewey

In the beginning was “The Metaphysical Club,” a group of a dozen Harvard-educated men who met for informal philosophical discussions during the early 1870s in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Club members included proto-positivist Chauncey Wright (1830-1875), future Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841-1935), and two then-fledgling philosophers who went on to become the first self-conscious pragmatists: Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), a logician, mathematician, and scientist; and William James (1842-1910), a psychologist and moralist armed with a medical degree.

Peirce summarized his own contributions to the Metaphysical Club’s meetings in two articles now regarded as founding documents of pragmatism: “The Fixation of Belief” (1877) and “How To Make Our Ideas Clear” (1878). James followed Peirce with his first philosophical essay, “Remarks on Spencer’s Definition of Mind as Correspondence,” (1878). After the appearance of *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), James went on to publish *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (1896), *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (1907), and *The Meaning of Truth: A Sequel to Pragmatism* (1909). Peirce, unfortunately, never managed to publish a *magnum opus* in which his nuanced philosophical views were systematically expounded. Still, publish he did, though he left behind a mountain of manuscript fragments, many of which only made it into print decades after his death.

Peirce and James traveled different paths, philosophically as well as professionally. James, less rigorous but more concrete, became an esteemed public figure (and a Harvard professor) thanks to his intellectual range, his broad sympathies, and his Emersonian genius for edifying popularization. He recognized Peirce’s enormous creative gifts and did what he could to advance his friend professionally; but ultimately to no avail. Professional success within academe eluded Peirce; after his scandal-shrouded dismissal from John Hopkins University (1879-1884) his sole academic appointment, he toiled in isolation in rural Pennsylvania. True, Peirce was not entirely cut off: he corresponded with colleagues, reviewed books, and delivered the odd invited lecture. Nevertheless, his philosophical work grew increasingly in-grown, and remained largely unappreciated by his contemporaries. The well-connected James, in contrast, regularly derived inspiration and stimulation from a motley assortment of fellow-travellers, sympathizers, and acute critics. These included members of the Chicago school of pragmatists, led by John Dewey (of whom more anon); Oxford’s acerbic iconoclast F.C.S. Schiller (1864-1937), a self-described Protagorean and “humanist”; Giovanni Papini (1881-1956), leader of a cell of Italian pragmatists; and two of James’s younger Harvard colleagues, the absolute idealist Josiah Royce (1855-1916) and the poetic naturalist George Santayana (1864-1952), both of whom challenged

pragmatism while being influenced by it. (It should be noted, however, that Royce was also significantly influenced by Peirce.)

The final member of the classical pragmatist triumvirate is John Dewey (1859-1952), who had been a graduate student at John Hopkins during Peirce's brief tenure there. In an illustrious career spanning seven decades, Dewey did much to make pragmatism (or "instrumentalism," as he called it) respectable among professional philosophers. Peirce had been *persona non grata* in the academic world; James, an insider but no pedant, abhorred "the PhD Octopus" and penned eloquent lay sermons; but Dewey was a professor who wrote philosophy as professors were supposed to do namely, for other professors. His mature works *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *Experience and Nature* (1925), and *The Quest for Certainty* (1929) boldly deconstructs the dualisms and dichotomies which, in one guise or another, had underwritten philosophy since the Greeks. According to Dewey, once philosophers give up these time-honoured distinctions between appearance and reality, theory and practice, knowledge and action, fact and value they will see through the ill-posed problems of traditional epistemology and metaphysics. Instead of trying to survey the world *sub specie aeternitatis*, Deweyan philosophers are content to keep their feet planted on *terra firma* and address "the problems of men."

Dewey emerged as a major figure during his decade at the University of Chicago, where fellow pragmatist G.H. Mead (1863-1931) was a colleague and collaborator. After leaving Chicago for Columbia University in 1904, Dewey became even more prolific and influential; as a result, pragmatism became an important feature of the philosophical landscape at home and abroad. Dewey, indeed, had disciples and imitators aplenty; what he lacked was a bona fide successor someone, that is, who could stand to Dewey as he himself stood to James and Peirce. It is therefore not surprising that by the 1940s shortly after the publication of Dewey's *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938) pragmatism had lost much of its momentum and prestige.

This is not to say that pragmatists became an extinct species; C. I. Lewis (1883-1964) and Sidney Hook (1902-1989), for instance, remained prominent and productive. But to many it must have seemed that there was no longer much point in calling oneself a pragmatist especially with the arrival of that self-consciously rigorous import, analytic philosophy. As American philosophers read more and more of Moore, Russell, Wittgenstein, and the Vienna Circle, many of them found the once-provocative dicta of Dewey and James infuriatingly vague and hazy. The age of grand synoptic philosophizing was drawing rapidly to a close; the age of piecemeal problem-solving and hard-edged argument was getting underway.

Post-Deweyan Pragmatism: From Quine to Rorty

And so it was that Deweyans were undone by the very force that had sustained them, namely, the progressive professionalization of philosophy as a specialized academic discipline. Pragmatism, once touted as America's distinctive gift to Western philosophy, was soon unjustly derided by many rank-and-file analysts as *passé*. Of the original pragmatist triumvirate, Peirce fared the best by far; indeed, some analytic philosophers were so impressed by his technical contributions to logic and the philosophy of science that they paid him the (dubious) compliment of re-making him in their own image. But the reputations of James and Dewey suffered greatly and the influence of pragmatism as a faction waned. True, W.V.O. Quine's (1908-2000) landmark article "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" (1951) challenged positivist orthodoxy by drawing on the legacy

of pragmatism. However, despite Quine's qualified enthusiasm for parts of that legacy an enthusiasm shared in varying degrees by Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), Rudolf Carnap (1891-1970), Hans Reichenbach (1891-1953), Karl Popper (1902-1994), F.P. Ramsey (1903-1930), Nelson Goodman (1906-1999), Wilfrid Sellars (1912-1989), and Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996) mainstream analytic philosophers tended to ignore pragmatism until the early 1980s.

What got philosophers talking about pragmatism again was the publication of Richard Rorty's *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979) a controversial which repudiated the basic presuppositions of modern philosophy with élan, verve, and learning. Declaring epistemology a lost cause, Rorty found inspiration and encouragement in Dewey; for Dewey, Rorty pleaded, had presciently seen that philosophy must become much less Platonist and less Kantian less concerned, that is, with unearthing necessary and ahistorical normative foundations for our culture's practices. Once we understand our culture not as a static edifice but as an on-going conversation, the philosopher's official job description changes from foundation-layer to interpreter. In the absence of an Archimedean point, philosophy can only explore our practices and vocabularies from within; it can neither ground them on something external nor assess them for representational accuracy. Post-epistemological philosophy accordingly becomes the art of understanding; it explores the ways in which those voices which constitute that mutable conversation we call our culture the voices of science, art, morality, religion, and the like are related.

In subsequent writings *Consequences of Pragmatism* (1982), *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (1989), *Achieving Our Country* (1998), *Philosophy and Social Hope* (1999), and three volumes of *Philosophical Papers* (1991, 1991, 1998) Rorty has enthusiastically identified himself as a pragmatist; in addition, he has urged that this epithet can be usefully bestowed on a host of other well-known philosophers notably Donald Davidson (1917-2003). Though Rorty is the most visible and vocal contemporary champion of pragmatism, many other well-known figures have contributed significantly to the resurgence of this many-sided movement. Prominent revivalists include Karl-Otto Apel (b. 1922), Israel Scheffler (b. 1923), Joseph Margolis (b. 1924), Hilary Putnam (b. 1926), Nicholas Rescher (b. 1928), Jürgen Habermas (b. 1929), Richard Bernstein (b. 1932), Stephen Stich (b. 1944), Susan Haack (b. 1945), Robert Brandom (b. 1950), Cornel West (b. 1953), and Cheryl Misak (b. 1961). There is much disagreement among these writers, however, so it would be grossly misleading to present them as manifesto-signing members of a single sector clique.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) What is pragmatism? Give explanation on it.

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2) What is Classical pragmatism? Give explanation on it.

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3) Explain Post-Deweyan pragmatism.

2.3 PRAGMATIC THEMES AND THESES

What makes these philosophers *pragmatists*? There is, no simple answer to this question. For there is no pragmatist creed; that is, no neat list of articles or essential tenets endorsed by all pragmatists and only by pragmatists. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify certain ideas that have loomed large in the pragmatist tradition though that is not to say that these ideas are the exclusive property of pragmatists, or that they are endorsed by all pragmatists. Here, then, are some themes and theses to which many pragmatists have been attached.

2.4 A METHOD AND A MAXIM

Pragmatism may be presented as a way of clarifying (and in some cases dissolving) intractable metaphysical and epistemological disputes. According to the down-to-earth pragmatist, bickering metaphysicians should get in the habit of posing the following question: “What concrete practical difference would it make if my theory were true and its rival(s) false?” Where there is no such difference, there is no genuine (that is, non-verbal) disagreement, and hence no genuine problem.

This method is closely connected to the so-called “pragmatic maxim,” different versions of which were formulated by Peirce and James in their attempts to clarify the meaning of abstract concepts or ideas. This maxim points to a broadly verificationist conception of linguistic meaning according to which no sense can be made of the idea that there are facts which are unknowable in principle (that is, truths which no one could ever be warranted in asserting and which could have absolutely no bearing on our conduct or experience). From this point of view, talk of inaccessible Kantian things-in-themselves of a “True World” (Nietzsche) forever hidden behind the veil of phenomena is useless or idle. In a sense, then, the maxim-wielding pragmatist agrees with Oscar Wilde: only shallow people do not judge by appearances.

Moreover, theories and models are to be judged primarily by their fruits and consequences, not by their origins or their relations to antecedent data or facts. The basic idea is presented metaphorically by James and Dewey, for whom scientific theories are *instruments* or *tools* for coping with reality. As Dewey emphasized, the utility of a theory is a matter of its problem-solving power; pragmatic coping must not be equated with what delivers emotional consolation or subjective comfort. What is essential is that theories pay their way in the long run that they can be relied upon time and again to solve pressing problems and to clear up significant difficulties confronting inquirers. To the extent that a theory functions or “works” practically in this way, it makes sense to keep using it though we must always allow for the possibility that it will eventually have to be replaced by some theory that works even better. (See Section 2b below, for more on fallibilism.) An intriguing variant on this theme can arguably be found in Popper’s falsificationist philosophy of science: though never positively justified, theories (understood as bold conjectures or guesses) may still be rationally accepted provided repeated attempts to falsify them have failed.

2.5 ANTI-CARTESIANISM

From Peirce and James to Rorty and Davidson, pragmatists have consistently sought to purify empiricism of vestiges of Cartesianism. They have insisted, for instance, that empiricism divest itself of that understanding of the mental which Locke, Berkeley, and Hume inherited from Descartes. According to such Cartesianism, the mind is a self-contained sphere whose contents “ideas” or “impressions” are irredeemably subjective and private, and utterly sundered from the public and objective world they purport to represent. Once we accept this picture of the mind as a world unto itself, we must confront a host of knotty problems about solipsism, skepticism, realism, and idealism with which empiricists have long struggled. Pragmatists have expressed their opposition to this Cartesian picture in many ways: Peirce’s view that beliefs are rules for action; James’s teleological understanding of the mind; Dewey’s Darwinian-inflected ruminations on experience; Popper’s mockery of the “bucket theory of the mind”; Wittgenstein’s private language argument; Rorty’s refusal to view the mind as Nature’s mirror; and Davidson’s critique of “the myth of the subjective.” In these and other cases, the intention is emancipatory: pragmatists see themselves as freeing philosophy from optional assumptions which have generated insoluble and unreal problems.

Pragmatists also find the Cartesian “quest for certainty” (Dewey) quixotic. *Pace* Descartes, no statement or judgment about the world is absolutely certain or incorrigible. All beliefs and theories are best treated as working hypotheses which may need to be modified refined, revised, or rejected in light of future inquiry and experience. Pragmatists have defended such fallibilism by means of various arguments; here are sketches of five: (1) There is an argument from the history of inquiry: even our best, most impressive theories Euclidean geometry and Newtonian physics, for instance have needed significant and unexpected revisions. (2) If scientific theories are dramatically underdetermined by data, then there are alternative theories which fit said data. How then can we be absolutely sure we have chosen the right theory? (3) If we say (with Peirce) that the truth is what would be accepted at the end of inquiry, it seems we cannot be absolutely certain that an opinion of ours is true unless we know with certainty that we have reached the end of inquiry. But how could we ever know that? (See Section 2e below for more on Peirce’s theory of truth.) (4) There is a methodological argument as well: ascriptions of certainty block the road of inquiry, because they may keep us from making progress (that is, finding a better view or theory) should progress still be possible. (5) Finally, there is a political argument. Fallibilism, it is said, is the only sane alternative to a cocksure dogmatism, and to the fanaticism, intolerance, and violence to which such dogmatism can all too easily lead.

Pragmatists have also inveighed against the Cartesian idea that philosophy should begin with bold global doubt that is, a doubt capable of demolishing all our old beliefs. Peirce, James, Dewey, Quine, Popper, and Rorty, for example, have all emphatically denied that we must wipe the slate clean and find some neutral, necessary or presupposition-less starting-point for inquiry. Inquiry, pragmatists are persuaded, can start only when there is some actual or living doubt; but, they point out, we cannot genuinely doubt everything at once (though they allow, as good fallibilists should, that there is nothing which we may not come to doubt in the course of our inquiries). This anti-Cartesian attitude is summed up by Otto Neurath’s celebrated metaphor of the conceptual scheme as raft: inquirers are mariners who must repair their raft plank by plank, adrift all the while on the open sea; for they can never disembark and scrutinize their craft in dry-dock from an external standpoint. In sum, we must begin *in media res* in the middle of things and

confess that our starting-points are contingent and historically conditioned inheritances. One meta-philosophical moral drawn by Dewey (and seconded by Quine) was that we should embrace naturalism: the idea that philosophy is not prior to science, but continuous with it. There is thus no special, distinctive method on which philosophers as a caste can pride themselves; no transcendentalist faculty of pure Reason or Intuition; no Reality (immutable or otherwise) inaccessible to science for philosophy to ken or limn. Moreover, philosophers do not invent or legislate standards from on high; instead, they make explicit the norms and methods implicit in our best current practice.

Finally, it should be noted that pragmatists are unafraid of the Cartesian global skeptic that is, the kind of skeptic who contends that we cannot know anything about the external world because we can never know that we are not merely dreaming. They have urged that such skepticism is merely a *reductio ad absurdum* of the futile quest for certainty (Dewey, Rescher); that skepticism rests on an untenable Cartesian philosophy of mind (Rorty, Davidson); that skepticism presupposes a discredited correspondence theory of truth (Rorty); that the belief in an external world is justified insofar as it “works,” or best explains our sensory experience (James, Schiller, Quine); that the problem of the external world is bogus, since it cannot be formulated unless it is already assumed that there is an external world (Dewey); that the thought that there are truths no one could ever know is empty (Peirce); and that massive error about the world is simply inconceivable (Putnam, Davidson).

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) What are the Pragmatic Themes and Theses?

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2) Give explanation on Method and a Maxim.

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3) Give note on Anti-Cartesianism.

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2.6 THE KANTIAN INHERITANCE

Pragmatism’s critique of Cartesianism and empiricism draws heavily though not uncritically on Kant. Pragmatists typically think, for instance, that Kant was right to say that the world must be interpreted with the aid of a scheme of basic categories; but, they add, he was dead wrong to suggest that this framework is somehow sacrosanct, immutable, or necessary. Our categories and theories are indeed our creations; they reflect our peculiar constitution and history, and are not simply read off from the world. But frameworks can change and be replaced. And just as there is more than one way to skin a cat, there is more than one sound way to conceptualize the world and its content. Which interpretative framework or vocabulary we should use that of physics, say, or common sense will depend on our purposes and interests in a given context.

The upshot of all this is that the world does not impose some unique description on us; rather, it is we who choose how the world is to be described. Though this idea is powerfully present in James, it is also prominent in later pragmatism. It informs Carnap's distinction between internal and external questions, Rorty's claim that Nature has no preferred description of itself, Goodman's talk of world-making and of right but incompatible world-versions, and Putnam's insistence that objects exist relative to conceptual schemes or frameworks.

Then there is the matter of appealing to raw experience as a source of evidence for our beliefs. According to the tradition of mainstream empiricism from Locke to Ayer, our beliefs about the world ultimately derive their justification from perception. What then justifies one's belief that the cat is on the mat? Not another belief or judgment, but simply one's visual experience: one sees the said cat cavorting on the said mat and that is that. Since experience is simply "given" to the mind from without, it can justify one's basic beliefs (that is, beliefs that are justified but whose justification does not derive from any other beliefs). Sellars, Rorty, Davidson, Putnam, and Goodman are perhaps the best-known pragmatist opponents of this foundationalist picture. Drawing inspiration from Kant's dictum that "intuitions without concepts are blind," they aver that to perceive is really to interpret and hence to classify. But if observation is theory-laden, that is, epistemic access to reality is necessarily mediated by concepts and descriptions then we cannot verify theories or worldviews by comparing them with some raw, unsullied sensuous "Given." Hence old-time empiricists were fundamentally mistaken: experience cannot serve as a basic, belief-independent source of justification.

More generally, pragmatists from Peirce to Rorty have been suspicious of foundationalist theories of justification according to which empirical knowledge ultimately rests on an epistemically privileged basis that is, on a class of foundational beliefs which justify or support all other beliefs but which depend on no other beliefs for their justification. Their objections to such theories are many: that so-called "immediate" (or non-inferential) knowledge is a confused fiction; that knowledge is more like a coherent web than a hierarchically structured building; that there are no certain foundations for knowledge (since fallibilism is true); that foundational beliefs cannot be justified by appealing to perceptual experience (since the "Given" is a myth); and that knowledge has no overall or non-contextual structure whatsoever.

2.7 AGAINST THE SPECTATOR THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Pragmatists resemble Kant in yet another respect: they, too, ferociously repudiate the Lockean idea that the mind resembles either a blank slate (on which Nature impresses itself) or a dark chamber (into which the light of experience streams). What these august metaphors seem intended to convey (among other things) is the idea that observation is pure reception, and that the mind is fundamentally passive in perception. From the pragmatist standpoint this is just one more lamentable incarnation of what Dewey dubbed "the spectator theory of knowledge." According to spectator theorists (who range from Plato to modern empiricists), knowing is akin to seeing or beholding. Here, in other words, the knower is envisioned as a peculiar kind of voyeur: her aim is to reflect or duplicate the world without altering it to survey or contemplate things from a practically disengaged and disinterested standpoint.

Not so, says Dewey. For Dewey, Peirce, and like-minded pragmatists, knowledge (or warranted assertion) is the product of inquiry, a problem-solving process by means of which we move from

doubt to belief. Inquiry, however, cannot proceed effectively unless we experiment that is, manipulate or change reality in certain ways. Since knowledge thus grows through our attempts to push the world around (and see what happens as a result), it follows that knower as such must be agents; as a result, the ancient dualism between theory and practice must go by the board. This insight is central to the “experimental theory of knowledge,” which is Dewey’s alternative to the discredited spectatorial conception.

This repudiation of the passivity of observation is a major theme in pragmatist epistemology. According to James and Dewey, for instance, to observe is to select to be on the lookout for something is it for a needle in a haystack or a friendly face in a crowd. Hence our perceptions and observations do not reflect Nature with passive impartiality; first, because observers are bound to discriminate, guided by interest, expectation, and theory; second, because we cannot observe unless we act. But if experience is inconceivable apart from human interests and agency, then perceivers are truly explorers of the world not mirrors superfluously reproducing it. And if acceptance of some theory or other always precedes and directs observation, we must break with the classical empiricist assumption that theories are derived from independently discovered data or facts.

Again, it is proverbial that facts are stubborn things. If we want to find out how things really are, we are counseled by somber common-sense to open our eyes (literally as well as figuratively) and take a gander at the world; facts accessible to observation will then impress themselves on us, forcing their way into our minds whether we are prepared to extend them a hearty welcome or not. Facts, so understood, are the antidote to prejudice and the cure for bias; their epistemic authority is so powerful that it cannot be overridden or resisted. This idea is a potent and reassuring one, but it is apt to mislead. According to holists such as James and Schiller, the justificatory status of beliefs is partly a function of how well they cohere or fit with entrenched beliefs or theory. Since the range of “facts” we can countenance or acknowledge is accordingly constrained by our body of previous acquired beliefs, no “fact” can be admitted into our minds unless it can be coherently assimilated or harmonized with beliefs we already hold. This amounts to a rejection of Locke’s suggestion that the mind is a blank slate, that is, a purely receptive and patient *tabula rasa*.

2.8 BEYOND THE CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH

According to a longstanding tradition running from Plato to the present-day, truth is a matter of correspondence or agreement with reality (or with the aforementioned “facts”). But this venerable view is vague and beset with problems, say pragmatists. Here are just four: (1) How is this mysterious relation called “correspondence” to be understood or explicated? Not as copying, surely; but then how? (2) The correspondence theory makes a mystery of our practices of verification and inquiry. For we cannot know whether our beliefs are correspondence-true: if the “Given” is a myth, we cannot justify theories by comparing them with an unconceptualized reality. (3) It has seemed to some that traditional correspondence theories are committed to the outmoded Cartesian picture of the mind as Nature’s mirror, in which subjective inner representations of an objective outer order are formed. (4) It has also been urged that there is no

extra-linguistic reality for us to represent no mind-independent world to which our beliefs are answerable. What sense, then, can be made of the suggestion that true thoughts correspond to thought-independent things?

Some pragmatists have concluded that the correspondence theory is positively mistaken and must be abandoned. Others, more cautious, merely insist that standard formulations of the theory are uninformative or incomplete. Schiller, Rorty, and Putnam all arguably belong to the former group; Peirce, James, Dewey, Rescher, and Davidson, to the latter.

Apart from criticizing the correspondence theory, what have pragmatists had to say about truth? Here three views must be mentioned: (1) James and Dewey are often said to have held the view that the truth is what “works”: true hypotheses are useful, and vice versa. This view is easy to caricature and traduce until the reader attends carefully to the subtle pragmatist construal of utility. (What James and Dewey had in mind here was discussed above in Section 2a.) (2) According to Peirce, true opinions are those which inquirers will accept at the end of inquiry (that is, views on which we could not improve, no matter how far inquiry on that subject is pressed or pushed). Peirce’s basic approach has inspired later pragmatists such as Putnam (whose “internal realism” glosses truth as ideal rational acceptability) as well as Apel and Habermas (who have equated truth with what would be accepted by all in an ideal speech situation). (3) According to Rorty, truth has no nature or essence; hence the less said about it, the better. To call a belief or theory “true” is not to ascribe any property to it; it is merely to perform some speech act (for example, to recommend, to caution, etc.). As Rorty sees it, his fellow pragmatists James, Dewey, Peirce, Putnam, Habermas, and Apel all err in thinking that truth can be elucidated or explicated.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) What you mean by the Kantian Inheritance?

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2) Give description on against the Spectator Theory of Knowledge.

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3) What you mean by beyond the Correspondence Theory of Truth?

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2.9 LET US SUM UP

For the most part, pragmatists have thought of themselves as reforming the tradition of empiricism though some have gone further and recommended that tradition’s abolition. As this difference of opinion suggests, pragmatists do not vote *en bloc*. There is no such thing as the pragmatist party-line: not only have pragmatists taken different views on major issues (for example, truth, realism, skepticism, perception, justification, fallibilism, realism, conceptual

schemes, the function of philosophy, etc.), they have also disagreed about what the major issues are. While such diversity may seem commendably in keeping with pragmatism's professed commitment to pluralism, detractors have urged it only goes to show that pragmatism stands for little or nothing in particular. This gives rise to a question as awkward as it is unavoidable namely, how useful is the term "pragmatism"? That question is wide open.

2.10 KEY WORDS

Pragmatism: Thinking about solving problems in a practical and sensible way rather than by having fixed ideas and theories.

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UNIT 3 PROCESS PHILOSOPHY

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this unit is to introduce one of the contemporary trends in Western philosophy namely Process Philosophy. The objective is fourfold: to discuss the shift of emphasis from becoming to being that took place in modernity; the positive factors that accentuated the development of a philosophy of organism; the methodological shift that Whitehead calls for in view of the latter and to discuss the essential features of Process Philosophy. We will focus on its Western and Eastern contexts and the pioneers of this trend and the chief features of this approach in philosophy. Last part of the unit discusses some of the notional clarifications, such as creativity, prehension, actual entity, etc.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The chief advocate of process philosophy, a trend of philosophy in the twentieth century is Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), a British Mathematician, Scientist and philosopher. Whitehead addressed it as 'philosophy of organism'. For Whitehead any reality is constituted of two poles, a physical pole and a mental pole. And what is primary is not being but becoming. For Whitehead reality is process and God is no exemption to metaphysical principle, God is also a subject of becoming. Such a position was so radical and has invited so many criticism even from the religious circles. Whitehead's methodology is more attuned to East.

3.2 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF PROCESS PHILOSOPHY

Many factors contributed to its development. The early Greek thinking was more sensitive to the question of being and becoming and they were reluctant to follow a univocal approach to being and becoming. They accommodated both categories as facts of existence. Western philosophy, arguably from the Middle Ages, is a metaphysics of being. This emphasis upon 'being' determined with its own impacts the largest part of Western metaphysics not only in the Middle Ages, but in modernity as well. Thus the struggle between being and becoming is not a feature of 'classical' philosophy alone. We see a revival of it very clearly in Hegel's dialectical way of

philosophizing. Hegel unites being and becoming in a unique way in his thought. Nietzsche emphasized the reality of becoming. He considered reality itself as an endless Becoming (*Werden*). He believed that there is no final state of the universe; that the world is in a constant state of flux, always changing and becoming. Nietzsche holds that the world is a world of becoming and there is no being. A world of being is merely a world of appearances. The shift of emphasis from being and becoming in the early Greek thought to being in medieval and early modernity and again to becoming which characterises present day thinking. The East in general always maintained its primacy for being, except in the case of Buddhism.

However, the growth and development that one observes in nature is fascinating. It reveals a more profound truth that the fundamental characteristic of nature is not permanence but dynamism and activity. Whitehead's experience and the result of his analysis went against the general understanding of Western philosophy. For Whitehead, the enquiry into the nature of reality is as important as an enquiry into the fundamental reality in nature: what is primordial - being or becoming? The question of being and becoming can be considered as two sides of the same coin: the first raises the question what is the fundamental reality in nature; and the second, what is the nature of this fundamental reality.

Whitehead's shift from being to becoming recalls to mind of a more primordial shift that occurred in Greek philosophy from becoming to being, which was accentuated in modernity. One can say that the development of Process philosophy can be understood as a reaction to the modern philosophizing which maintained a univocal approach to the question of being. Process Philosophy will give us an opportunity to discuss modernity and the emergence of scientific materialism.

Scientific Materialism

Philosophy of being was the result of the "marriage" between science and philosophy that resulted in a static outlook of nature. This development in the course of history paved the way for a metaphysics of being which culminated in the modern scientifico-mechanistic understanding of nature and reality. Greek philosophy had in itself the potency to develop a static conception of nature and reality, which ultimately paved the way for developing a philosophy of being or a materialistic outlook of nature and reality in modernity at the cost of becoming. However, it is to be added that though one can identify traces of materialism already in Greek philosophy it was modernity and its materialistic outlook together with the Newtonian Mechanistic outlook that is in the background of the development of Process Philosophy.

Modern philosophers have given a new orientation to their ontological quest by introducing a new language and new thought pattern of ideas. Whitehead's philosophy at its inception was a reaction to the mathematico-mechanistic perspective of nature that dominated his own age. The material outlook of nature has passed through two major stages: one with Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo, and the other with Descartes, whereby nature was seen through the eyes of mathematics and science. If one is to identify a third stage that brought this process to its zenith it is the mechanization of the universe by Newton. Amidst the great service Newtonian thought rendered to modern thinking and developments it had its own flip side as well. It was Newton who gave a final stroke to the mathematico-mechanistic vision of the universe. From the very beginning Whitehead distanced himself from scientific materialism. Whitehead's goal was to construct an alternative all-inclusive cosmological scheme. With this goal in view Whitehead undertook a historical survey of the scientific development to establish the various impacts of

reigning cosmology on thought. It is over against this scientific materialism of the modern epoch that Whitehead developed his organic philosophy. A remarkable characteristic of nature is that we experience the whole as a flux, i.e., changing or becoming with the lapse of time. It was this mechanistic mode of thinking that prevailed during Whitehead's philosophical development that he inherited from tradition. Whitehead soon realized that it was his vocation to extricate philosophy from this false metaphysical perspective. He wanted to overcome the 'bifurcation of nature,' and the mathematico-mechanistic perspective of nature. Nevertheless, it was no easy task. Whitehead's purpose was to construct a cosmological doctrine that avows to include what is important for science as well as for its critics. The fundamental position enjoyed by inorganic matter in the scientific outlook is replaced by an organic synthesis in the philosophy of organism.

Whitehead's critique of materialism emphasized and advocated a metaphysic of static being against which Whitehead developed his metaphysics of becoming. Whitehead's objective was to develop a metaphysical system that would account for the total experience of human beings. The other two ideas that arrested the attention of the people were concerned with notions of transition or change. They were the doctrine of conservation of energy and the doctrine of evolution. However, we do not go into the details of these theories. For the moment it suffices to understand that the first theory has to do with the notion of quantitative permanence underlying change, and the latter was concerned with the emergence of new organisms as the outcome of chance (SMW 101). This had tremendous repercussions on the general train of thought. We see science is taking up a new orientation which is neither purely physical, nor purely biological. It becomes the study of organisms.

3.3 AN INEVITABLE SHIFT IN METHODOLOGY

Whitehead's exploration of scientific materialism brought out its inadequacy to account for the complete human experience. Therefore, Whitehead's objective was to develop an alternative metaphysics that would account for all dimensions of human experience. And Whitehead rightly divined that the first step to achieve this goal was a methodological shift. Whitehead was a mathematician and scientist during the first half of his life. The then circulated picture of the universe, namely, the mathematico-mechanistic mode of thinking based on the Newtonian science and philosophy was not very promising. Thus, a shift from pure science to a joint venture undertaken with the help of the necessary means available to him, namely, science and philosophy was inevitable. The nature of the physical universe for science was a static-mechanistic one. Contrary to the existing model of the universe Whitehead wanted to develop a picture of the universe more truthful to human experience. Whitehead observed that any reconstruction of cosmology should take into account the rich variety of human experience and should be in accord with the modern scientific developments.

3.4 PHILOSOPHY OF ORGANISM

A distinctive feature of the philosophy of organism is its attempt to combine philosophy and modern science into a "speculative synthesis." It attempts to formulate a comprehensive vision of the world. The philosophy of organism was thus proposed as an alternative to the "scientific

materialism”, which dominated the modern epoch of thought. Whitehead’s alternative metaphysics proposed a theory of an indefinite plurality of ‘actual entities’. What is emphasized in the organic philosophy is an ‘absolute no’ to the materialistic outlook on nature. In the organic philosophy, nature is characterised by ‘creative advance’; static nature becomes a ‘structure of evolving process’; the theory of simple location is substituted with a ‘process of prehensive unification’; the absoluteness of matter is replaced with ‘creativity’; and the traditional notion of substance (act) and potentiality are re-configured as actuality and eternal objects, respectively. Philosophy is no more the discourse of the static substance but rather of the dynamic organism.

From Being to Beingness in Becoming

In the previous section we saw that Whitehead’s attempt was to reinstate the metaphysics of becoming which was neglected in the modern period. The primary objective of this section will be to clarify the fundamental characteristics of the Whiteheadian actual entity.

The chief characteristic of Whitehead’s philosophy is that it has made a radical shift from philosophy of being to a philosophy of becoming. For him, “actual is a process, and is not describable in terms of the morphology of a “stuff” (PR 41). What does he mean by it? An actual occasion cannot be taken as some kind of stuff which exists or which is antecedent to its process. The fundamental fact about any actuality or that which constitutes any actuality is its process. Without process there is no actuality. For Whitehead an actual entity *is* (exists) only ‘in the becoming’ (Leclerc 71). The following quotes of Whitehead are self-explanatory: “The aim of the philosophy of organism is to express a coherent cosmology based upon the notions of ‘system,’ ‘process,’ ‘creative advance into novelty,’ ‘res vera,’ (in Descartes sense), ... as ultimate agents of stubborn facts” (PR 128).

“This doctrine of organism is the attempt to describe the world as a process of generation of individual actual entities, each with its own absolute self-attainment. This concrete finality of the individual is nothing else than a decision referent beyond itself. The ‘perpetual perishing’ (Locke II, XIV, I) of individual absoluteness is thus foredoomed. But the ‘perishing’ of absoluteness is the attainment of ‘objective immortality’” (PR 60).

The germs of Whitehead’s philosophy of becoming can be traced back to his earlier writing. From the very beginning Whitehead expressed his opposition to the static outlook on nature. This is clear from the terms he used such as ‘passage of nature’ in the earlier writings and ‘process’, ‘creative advance’, in his later works (PNK 61). “All things are involved in the creative advance of the Universe, that is, in the general temporality which affects all things, even if at all times they remain self identical” (AI 143). However, only at a later stage does he use the term process to denote the fundamental nature of reality.

The Fundamental Principle of Becoming

Whitehead’s philosophy of becoming argues against certain principles that traditional philosophy held as very fundamental. Whitehead, again and again, expresses his opposition to the static notion of nature and reality. For him, “the foundation of all understanding of sociological theory ... is that no static maintenance of perfection is possible. This axiom is rooted in the nature of things. Advance or Decadence are the only choices offered to mankind. The pure conservative is fighting against the essence of the universe” (AI 274). This statement as such needs further clarification. Three metaphysical principles come to our aid.

First, “the very essence of real actuality – that is, of the completely real – is process” (AI 274). Therefore, one can understand any actuality only in terms of its becoming and perishing. The second metaphysical principle is the principle of individuality. It concerns the doctrine of harmony. Whitehead identifies this individual endurance with what Descartes has designated by *realitas objectiva*. Whitehead is arguing against the Aristotelian doctrine of primary substances: “no individual primary substance can enter into the complex of objects observed in any occasion of experience. The qualifications of the soul are thus confined to universals” (AI 280). For Whitehead, this is a misconception of reality.

The individual, real facts of the past lie at the base of our immediate experience in the present. They are reality from which the occasion springs, the reality from which it derives its source of emotion, from which it inherits its purposes, to which it directs its passions. At the base of experience there is a welter of feeling, derived from individual realities or directed towards them. Thus for strength of experience we require to discriminate the component factors, each as an individual ‘It’ with its own significance (AI 280).

Whitehead’s point about individuality recalls another characteristic of the metaphysics of becoming. For Whitehead, the “ultimate metaphysical truth is atomism. The creature is atomic” (PR 35). It is a natural corollary of Whitehead’s position that there is no continuity of becoming but only becoming of continuity. We have already seen that becoming is the becoming of each actual entity and what constitutes extensive continuity is their succession. Here the point is that the continuously extensive world is not itself an actual entity, but is a multiplicity of actual entities, which by their succession constitute a unity. Therefore, continuous extensiveness is not a metaphysical feature of an actual entity (Leclerc 75).

Thirdly, Whitehead’s philosophy of organism is based on the fundamental unity of being, which his principle of relativity explicates. Furthermore, Whitehead’s idea of universal relatedness is developed in defiance of Aristotle’s above cited dictum that ‘a substance is not present in another subject’. On the other hand, the principle of relativity in clear-cut terms states that ‘an actual entity is present in other actual entities’ (PR 50). Whitehead maintains that the philosophy of organism is devoted to elucidate the notion of “being present in another entity” (PR 50). These three fundamental principles of becoming do not stand isolated, but rather form an integral unity. The first principle which emphasizes becoming goes very well with the second that underscores infinite possibilities and their unity that is stressed in the third principle. It is the principle of becoming and the inter-dependent nature of the individual actualities that make the metaphysics of becoming. Therefore, it is right to say that each actual occasion exemplifies an identity of being and becoming (Canevi 186). Nevertheless, since we are attuned to a metaphysics of being it is hard to comprehend a metaphysics of becoming. In fact, becoming itself is enigmatic.

3.5 FUNDAMENTAL REALITY IN WHITEHEAD

It is equivalent to ‘what is the fundamental substratum of the universe’? What is remarkable here is that it is the same question as that of the “to be”, that the philosophers asked from the very

beginning. The philosophy of organism is distinctive by the following fundamental notions: actual occasion, prehension, nexus and the ontological principle.

Actual Occasion: the Dynamic Subject

Whitehead's theory of actual occasion is the foundation stone of his attempt to "construct a system of ideas which brings the aesthetic, moral, and the religious interests into relation with those concepts of the world" (PR xii). His aim was a speculative philosophy which he defined as "the endeavour to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted" (PR 3). In the preface to his *Process and Reality*, Whitehead tells us what he means by an actual entity: "An actual entity is a 'res vera' in the Cartesian sense of that term; it is a 'Cartesian substance,' not an Aristotelian primary substance" (PR xiii). Therefore, by the term actual entity Whitehead means what we understand by subject or self. He uses the terms subject and actual entity synonymously (PR 122; Johnson 17). For Whitehead, actual entities "are the final real things of which the world is made up. There is no going behind actual entities to find anything more real" (PR 18). In its primary sense actual occasion signifies the general metaphysical category of 'that which is' (Leclerc 1958, 53). In the tradition of philosophy, it is the equivalent of *ousia* in Aristotle, substance in Descartes, monad in Leibniz, etc. Whitehead's theory of actual entity stresses "change, permanence, the interaction of creative individuals, God and value" (Johnson 12). All actual entities are having two poles: a physical pole and a mental pole. In his view God is also an actual entity, having two poles. And God cannot be made an exemption to metaphysical principles.

The Theory of Concrecence

The word concrecence literally means a 'growing together'. In using this word Whitehead's primary purpose was to analyze the coming to be of each moment of human experience. He wanted to explain the structure of becoming. How does each moment of our experience come into existence and constitute the fundamental reality, i.e., the actual occasion? The theory of concrecence explains the internal constitution of an actual entity. Each actual occasion is a process in the Whiteheadian perspective and the theory of concrecence exposes the "beingness" of this process. Concrecence is defined by Whitehead as "the name for the process in which the universe of many things acquires an individual unity in a determinate relegation of each item of the 'many' to its subordination in the constitution of the novel 'one'" (PR 211). This definition in a nutshell elucidates the whole philosophy of organism. It is observed that the theory of concrecence "constitutes his ontology, his theory of nature, essential properties, and relations of any actual entity" (Hosinski 46).

Whitehead has used the notion of 'concrecence' in order to signify the unity of both physical and conceptual prehensions. "The integration of the physical and mental side into a unity of experience is a self-formation which is a process of concrecence, and which by the principle of objective immortality characterises the creativity which transcends it" (PR 108). Further analysis of the theory of concrecence can only be done in light of the theory of prehension, which is a necessary correlative of the former.

The Concept of Prehension

The principle of prehension is the foundational basis for the Whiteheadian philosophy of process. It is the theory that substantiates his claim that "the nature is a structure of evolving processes.

The reality is the process” (SMW 72). The word prehension comes from the root ‘*prehendere*’ meaning ‘grasp or seize’ (Hosinski 59). In the concrescence of an actuality what occurs is the prehension of the data. In other words, in the growing together of an actuality (concrescence) what is actualised is the seizing or grasping (prehension) of data. Thus, it can be said that any explication of the becoming or the formation of the actual occasion must take into account these two concepts together. The importance of the concepts of concrescence and prehension can be elucidated from the statement Whitehead makes in the categories of explanation. “[T]he first analysis of an actual entity, into its most concrete elements, discloses it to be a concrescence of prehensions, which have originated in its process of becoming. All further analysis is an analysis of prehensions” (PR 23). Theories of concrescence and prehension account for the constitution of an actual occasion. One may also say that prehension is a process of unifying. In itself an actual occasion is whole and undivided. However, Whitehead does admit that for the purpose of rational analysis we have to distinguish several phases of this becoming, namely the receptive, the responsive, and the integrative, which happen in a logically successive sequence.

Satisfaction

The notion of “satisfaction” has to do with an entity’s moment of receiving individuality. It can be observed that the moment of satisfaction is not merely a component factor in the process of concrescence but it is the final and sublime moment in the process of ‘concrescence’. In other words, all the process of concrescence was just in view of this moment of ‘satisfaction’. Whitehead writes, that each actual entity “is a process of ‘feeling’ the many data, so as to absorb them into the unity of one individual satisfaction” (PR 40). It is the moment where a ‘concrete actuality’ is formed out of the process of concrescence. It is the end result of concrescence and where the process of concrescence ceases with regard to that particular actuality. It is the outcome of the process. Whitehead writes: “An actual entity is a process in the course of which many operations with incomplete subjective unity terminate in a completed unity of operations, termed the ‘satisfaction’. This satisfaction is the contentment of the creative urge by the fulfilment of its categoreal demands” (PR 219). In ‘satisfaction’ the process of concrescence reaches its completion and as such it is the terminal point of concrescence.

The Eternal Objects: Pure Potentials for Actual Occasion

The eternal object is one of the three formative elements in the constitution of an actual occasion, and the other two remain Creativity and God. For Whitehead, “[a]ny entity whose conceptual recognition does not involve a necessary reference to any definite actual entities of the temporal world is called an ‘eternal object’” (PR 44). He continues that “[a]n eternal object is always a potentiality for actual entities; but in itself, as conceptually felt, it is neutral as to the fact of its physical ingression in any particular actual entity of the temporal world. Potentiality is the correlative of the givenness” (PR 44). The first question to be discussed is why are they called eternal objects? It is because they are not subject to becoming and change and are objects in the sense that they are given (Leclerc 1985, 306). Moreover, Whitehead calls them ‘eternal objects’ to differentiate them from their historical presuppositions. Eternal objects or these transcendent entities (ideals) are called ‘universals’ in traditional philosophy. Eternal objects are the “pure potentials” (PR 23) of the universe and on account of the realization of these pure potentials actual entities differ from each other.

Creativity: the Metaphysical Ultimate in Whitehead

Every philosophical system needs an ultimate as the final reference point in its foundation and thus to avoid infinite regress. “In all philosophic theory there is an ultimate which is actual in virtue of its accidents. It is only then capable of characterisation through its accidental embodiments and apart from these accidents is devoid of actuality. In the philosophy of organism this ultimate is termed ‘creativity’” (PR 7).

The ultimate is that without which one cannot think anything at all. No creativity means no reality. What one cannot think away is creativity. Creativity is described as the most general characteristic feature that all actualities have in common. In the categoreal scheme of Whitehead it is described as the “universal of universals characterizing ultimate matter of fact” (PR 21). What does it mean? Here “characterising” shall not be taken in the sense of creativity as an eternal object, not even the “thinnest” or “most abstract” of all eternal objects.

Creativity is the ultimate in the sense that without creativity there is no reality at all. This points to the complexity as well as the primordial role that creativity plays in the metaphysical system. At the same time, it recalls also the limitation it bears as the Ultimate of the system that it alone cannot account for the “complete fact”, but is in need of another principle, namely God. Creativity is the dynamic principle which is active in the self-creative process of an actual occasion. This underlying and substantial activity has no existence of its own, for existence presupposes determination. In the Whiteheadian system this role is assigned to God. Creativity is beyond all temporal determinations and characterisations, being foundational to the metaphysical system. By being the ultimate descriptive notion, describing the nature of things, it is also the ultimate explanatory principle.

If one understands creativity in Thomistic terms, it accounts only for the preservice of the world in the sense of why the world continues to exist. However, it does not account for the existence itself; creativity has no existence apart from actual entities. In the same way “actual entities cannot exist except as instances of creativity; they cannot be meaningfully separated from the ultimate metaphysical principle” (Garland 370).

3.6 GOD AND THE METAPHYSICS OF BECOMING

Another sphere of philosophizing where one observes the originality of Process Philosophy is Whitehead’s understanding of God. He was critical of both mechanistic and anthropomorphic views of God, which primarily expressed a static outlook of God, thereby making a way for his metaphysics of becoming in the philosophy of God. Whitehead deals with the question of God, and on rational grounds. It is also emphasized that Whitehead’s system is incomplete without a proper philosophy of God.

God and the Metaphysical Principles

Whitehead identifies three conceptions of God that gained a wider acceptance and exerted considerable influence. “God in the image of an imperial ruler, God in the image of a personification of moral energy, [and] God in the image of an ultimate philosophical principle” (PR 342). He associates these three strains of thought respectively with the Roman Caesars, the Hebrew prophets, and Aristotle. In Whitehead, the Aristotelian view of God as “unmoved mover” is replaced by a God who is very much involved in the world; in fact, for him, God becomes a “Moved Mover” (Oomen 108) and “a fellow sufferer” (PR 351).

Whitehead criticizes both Descartes and Leibniz for introducing God arbitrarily into their system. Referring to Descartes' conception of bodily substances he says: "Descartes tells us that they are sustained by God, but fails to give any reason why God should care to do so" (FR 24). Coming to Leibniz we see that the monads are windowless, however, this isolated nature of monads is mitigated in their relation to God (AI 133). Whitehead comments that "no reason can be given why the supreme monad, God, is exempted from the common fate of isolation. Monads, according to this doctrine, are windowless for each other. Why do the monads have windows towards God, and why has God windows towards them?" (AI 134) For Whitehead, God is no exception "to all metaphysical principles, invoked to save their collapse. He is their chief exemplification" (PR 343).

Whitehead's concept of God is based on the fundamental assumption that there is uniformity in the fundamental laws of the universe. Therefore, the same structure must be applicable to God. Whitehead maintained that God's existence is not generically different from other actual entities. God is an actual entity, but he is "primordial." Actual means having 'existence' in the fullest sense. On the grounds of his principle that God cannot be made an exception to metaphysical principles, Whitehead applies to God many of the categories that apply to actual occasions.

The Primordial Nature of God

The Primordial nature of God corresponds to the mental or conceptual pole of any actual entity. It "is abstracted from his commerce with particulars, and is therefore devoid of those impure intellectual cogitations which involve propositions. It is God in abstraction, alone with himself. As such it is a mere factor in God, deficient in actuality" (PR 34). Moreover, Whitehead defines the primordial nature of God as "the non-temporal act of all-inclusive unfettered valuation" (PR 31). God in his primordial nature is deficient in actuality. His primordial nature "shows forth God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of Nature and of a Finite Spirit". In the primordial nature God is 'bodiless' and as the first creature of creativity God is locked in his conceptual aloneness (Kraus 170).

The Consequent Nature of God

Whitehead's conception of God was not fully worked out, in his early works. It receives a more detailed explication in PR. Whitehead finds that God's nature is not exhausted by the primordial nature. Moreover, a notion of God limited to his primordial nature alone will not do justice to his basic contention that God is an actual entity. Thus, Whitehead recognises in God a consequent nature, which corresponds to the physical pole of any actual entity. God, being an actual entity, bears and expresses all the characteristics of an actual entity. Thus, with every actual entity God is endowed with a conceptual as well as a physical prehension (consequent nature). "Analogously to all actual entities, the nature of God is dipolar. He has a primordial nature and a consequent nature. The consequent nature of God is conscious; and it is the realisation of the actual world in the unity of his nature, and through the transformation of his wisdom. The primordial nature is conceptual, and the consequent nature is the weaving of God's physical feelings upon his primordial concepts (PR 345)."

Following are the chief characteristics of the Consequent Nature of God:

1. God's consciousness and knowledge: "the consequent nature of God is conscious ..." (PR 345).

2. The finitude of the consequent nature: "One side of God's nature is constituted by ... Conceptual experience can be infinite, but it belongs to the nature of physical experience that it is finite" (PR 345).
3. The consequent nature as everlasting: "The primordial nature of God is eternal, but the consequent nature is everlasting." Everlasting in the Whiteheadian sense means "the property of combining creative advance with the retention of mutual immediacy" (PR 346). Here 'everlasting' means involving a creative advance that the earlier elements are not lost while at the same time new ones are added which remain with God forever (Cobb 1971, 223).

Moreover, Whitehead understands God as the Principle of Limitation in the sense that it is God who gives structure and order to the universe. In the Whiteheadian understanding God is the source of potentiality and source of novelty and the wisdom that permeates the universe. Whatever position one may take with regard to Whitehead's understanding of God it is true that Whitehead has presented a way to think the God question anew. He has brought out some relevant insights concerning God and religion. Nevertheless, it highlights the tension between the classical view of God and the one Whitehead drew up. In this context only, one can see some of the criticism raised against Whitehead or process theodicy. Whitehead wanted to make God relevant in the modern world, but in his attempt to make God relevant, by a vision of God that is more attuned to modern world and science and metaphysics, the identity of the notion "God" is attenuated, in light of the classical perspective. The point is that he does not pay adequate attention to the religious sensitivity and the milieu in which the meaning of the term God originated. Nevertheless, whatever his critics might say, it is deemed necessary to add that one cannot conclude that Whitehead's notion of God is a failure.

3.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit our attempt was to introduce Process Philosophy. For this we focused primarily on the context which necessitated a shift in the way of philosophizing. Moreover, we try to explain fundamental concepts of Whiteheadian metaphysics of becoming or Process Philosophy. Whitehead himself does not call his philosophy Process, but this name was given to his philosophy by others. Now there is a trend in theology which is known as Process theology which is developed from having insights from process philosophy. For Process philosophy what is primary is process or becoming rather than being. This same view he applies in the case of God as well, which has invited much criticism.

3.8 KEY WORDS

Philosophy of Organism: It is an attempt to combine philosophy and modern science into a "speculative synthesis." It attempts to formulate a comprehensive vision of the world "harmonising the thoroughness and universality of philosophical questioning with the state of knowledge attained by modern science"

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UNIT 4 PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Contents

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this Unit is to introduce the Linguistic Turn in Contemporary Philosophy (this title suits better than ‘Philosophy of Language’) through its leading figures, Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein. By the end of this Unit you should be able:

- To have a basic knowledge of and the relation between logical, linguistic and analytical turns in twentieth century western philosophy;
 - To be familiar with the life and works of Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein;
 - To have a critical view of Wittgenstein’s earlier philosophy as in the *Tractatus*;
 - To understand the key concepts as given in the *Philosophical Investigations*;
 - To have a critical understanding of Wittgenstein’s earlier and later thoughts
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4.1 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy in the Twentieth Century, at least in the English speaking world, is characterised by linguistic and logical turns. Due to the enormous success of science and technology in the 20th century, it was felt that science had taken over much of the territory formerly occupied by philosophy. Since the task of acquiring knowledge about the world has been taken over by science, the only task that remained for philosophy was to clarify meaning. As Moritz Schlick, put it, “Science should be defined as the ‘pursuit of truth’ and Philosophy as the ‘pursuit of meaning.’” Moreover, new and more powerful methods of logic had been developed in the twentieth century that promised to solve or dissolve some of the perennial philosophical problems, through logical analysis of language. In spite of the differences linguistic philosophers shared the following convictions: (1) philosophical problems are not problems about the world, but what we say about the world; they are logical and not empirical; (2) they are to be first be clarified and then solved or dissolved through a process of logical analysis of language; and (3) the rest of the problems are pseudo-problems and are not worth worrying about.

4.2 GOTTLOB FREGE

Life and Works

Gottlob Frege, (1848-1925) a German philosopher and mathematician, is the father of modern logic and one of the founding figures of analytic and linguistic philosophy. He taught at the University of Jena, in Germany. Frege's goal was to show that most of mathematics could be reduced to logic, in the sense that the full content of all mathematical truths could be expressed using only logical notions and that the truths so expressed could be deduced from logical first principles using only logical means of inference. He tried to articulate an experience and intuition independent conception of reason. He held that what justifies mathematical statements is reason alone; their justification proceeds without the benefit or need of either perceptual experience or intuition.

His important works are:

1. *Begriffsschrift* (Conceptual Notation) (1879) presents his logic;
2. *Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik* (The Foundations of Arithmetic) (1884), outlines the strategy he is going to employ in reducing arithmetic to logic and then goes on to provide the reduction with a philosophical rationale and justification;
3. *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik* (Basic Laws of Arithmetic) (volumes 1, 1893, and 2, 1903), seeks to carry out the programme in detail.

Essays: *Funktion und Begriff* ('Function and Concept') 1891, *Über Sinn und Bedeutung* ('On Sense and Reference') 1892, *Über Begriff und Gegenstand* ('On Concept and Object') 1892 and *Der Gedanke: eine logische Untersuchung* ('Thoughts: A Logical Investigation') 1918.

Language and Logic

To ground his views about the relationship of logic and mathematics, Frege conceived a comprehensive philosophy of language. He translated central philosophical problems into problems about language; for example, faced with the epistemological question of how we are able to have knowledge of objects which we can neither observe nor intuit, such as numbers, Frege replaces it with the question of how we are able to talk about those objects using language and philosophy becomes linguistic. Instead of asking questions such as "What is number or time?" we should better ask "How the word number or time is used?" Arguing for the Primacy of Sentences, he held that meaning of a word can be found only in the context of a proposition. According to him, it is the operation of sentences that is primary: the explanation of the functioning of all parts of speech is to be in terms of their contribution to the meanings of the whole sentence. In philosophical analysis of language, the logical is to be separated from the psychological. We should not confuse explanations with psychological accounts of the mental states of speakers, unshareable aspects of individual experience.

Sense and Reference

In his essay 'On Sense and Reference' (1892), Frege considered whether the 'sense' of an expression - what it is that we know when we understand the expression - is simply identical to what it designates (the 'reference'). In the case of a singular term its reference is the object denoted by the term, whereas its sense is determined by the way that object is presented through the expression. Frege was motivated to introduce the sense-reference distinction to solve certain puzzles: (1) the apparent impossibility of informative identity statements and (2) the apparent failure of substitution in contexts of propositional attitudes. As for (1), the statements 'the morning star is the evening star' and the 'morning star is the morning star' differ in cognitive value, which would be impossible if the object designated constituted the only meaning of a

singular term. The sense-reference distinction allows one to attribute different cognitive values to these identity statements if the senses of the terms flanking the identity sign differ, while still allowing the objects denoted to be one and the same. Regarding (2), the sentences ‘John believes that the morning star is a body illuminated the by the Sun’ and ‘John believes that the evening star is a body illuminated by the Sun’ may have different truth values, although the one is obtained from the other by substitution of a co-referential terms.

4.3 BERTRAND RUSSELL

Life and Works

Bertrand Arthur William Russell (1872 - 1970) was a British philosopher, logician, essayist, and social critic, best known for his work in mathematical logic and analytic philosophy. Russell’s various contributions were also unified by his views concerning both the centrality of scientific knowledge and the importance of an underlying scientific methodology that is common to both philosophy and science. In the case of philosophy, this methodology expressed itself through Russell’s use of logical analysis. Russell often claimed that he had more confidence in his methodology than in any particular philosophical conclusion. He made significant contributions, not just to logic and philosophy, but to a broad range of other subjects including education, history, political theory and religious studies. In addition, many of his writings on a wide variety of topics in both the sciences and the humanities have influenced generations of general readers. After a life marked by controversy, including dismissals from both Trinity College, Cambridge and City College, New York, Russell was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950. In addition to numerous articles, he wrote over ninety books, both technical and popular, on a wide range of topics. Also noted for his many spirited anti-war and anti-nuclear protests, Russell remained a prominent public figure until his death at the age of 97.

Russell’s most important writings include “On Denoting”(1905), “Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description”(1910), “The Philosophy of Logical Atomism”(1918, 1919), “Logical Atomism”(1924), *The Analysis of Mind* (1921), and *The Analysis of Matter* (1927). Two of his best selling works are *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912) and *A History of Western Philosophy* (1945).

Logical and Linguistic Turn

According to Russell, “every philosophical problem, when it is subjected to the necessary analysis and purification, is found either to be not really philosophical at all, or else to be, in the sense in which [I am] using the word, logical.” (“Logic as the Essence of Philosophy,” 1914). Russell’s central assumption through most of his life was that there was a necessary link between the nature of language and the truths of metaphysics. Since language is capable of describing the world and expressing true propositions about it, then there must be, he argued, some correspondence between the logical structure of language and the necessary structure of reality. Although the later analysts would be decidedly anti-metaphysical, Russell enthusiastically believed that the new, powerful tools of modern logic he had developed would let us put metaphysics on a sound foundation at last.

In his view, the philosopher’s job is to discover a logically ideal language that will exhibit the true nature of the world in such a way that the speaker will not be misled by the surface structure

of natural language. According to him, the primary function of language is to represent facts. It was Russell's belief that by using the new logic of his day, philosophers would be able to exhibit the underlying "logical form" of natural language statements. A statement's logical form, in turn, would help philosophers resolve problems of reference associated with the ambiguity and vagueness of natural language. A proposition will be true if it corresponds to a fact and false if it doesn't. What is needed is a logical language where this correspondence can be set out clearly. "In a logically perfect language the words in a proposition would correspond one by one with components of the corresponding fact, with the exception of such words as 'or', 'not', 'if', 'then', which have a different function." This correspondence is revealed by the parallel activities of analyzing complex propositions down to their simplest components (called "atomic propositions") and likewise analyzing facts down to their simplest components (which he called "atomic facts").

While the logical structure of language provides us with the logical form of the world, a metaphysics of this sort cannot tell us what particular things exist. This can only be accomplished by an appeal to experience. The more Russell tried to get clear on the sort of facts we can actually know, his position became increasingly difficult to hold.

Knowledge by Acquaintance and Description

According to Russell one can distinguish the two kinds of knowledge in terms of their respective objects. One has knowledge by acquaintance of things, and by description of propositions. Knowledge by acquaintance is neither true nor false and knowledge by description is either true or false. According to Russell, all knowledge of truths ultimately rests on knowledge by acquaintance. Although I can know one truth by inferring it from something else I know, not everything I know can be inferred in this way. We can avoid a regress of knowledge by holding that at least some truths are known as a result of acquaintance with those aspects of the world that make the corresponding propositions true. When one knows a particular shade of colour by acquaintance, for example, the colour is directly and immediately 'before' one's consciousness. There is nothing 'between' the colour and oneself. By contrast, one might know truths about Gandhiji but one's access to such truths is only through inference from other things one knows about the contents of history books and the like. There is a spatio-temporal gap between us and Gandhiji.

According to Russell, all knowledge by description ultimately depends upon knowledge by acquaintance. But if knowledge by acquaintance does not involve the possibility of error because it does not have as its object something that can be true or false, how can it give us first truths? How can it give us premises (which by their very nature must be true or false) from which to infer other truths? Either knowledge by acquaintance does not involve the application of concepts and cannot therefore give premises for inference, or it does involve the application of concepts and cannot be distinguished from knowledge by description. There are no facts that are independent of conceptual frameworks, some philosophers argue. The world is not divided into things, their properties and relations. Indeed the only distinctions that exist are distinctions that we make out of the world with our concepts and categories. Referring to a fact is just another way of talking about a proposition's being true. To say that the world contains the fact, grass being green, is just another way of saying that it is true that grass is green. Only a structured reality could make propositions true and only acquaintance with such structure would be a plausible candidate for the source of foundational knowledge. Many contemporary philosophers

argue that the very nature of justification precludes the possibility of having justification for believing empirical propositions that eliminates the possibility of error.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) What is the significance of the relation between sense and reference, according to Frege?

2) Do you agree with Russell's distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description?

4.4 LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN

Life and Works

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) played a significant role in the development of various contemporary philosophical traditions like Analytic Philosophy, Logical Positivism, and Ordinary Language Philosophy. He continues to influence the Hermeneutic and Postmodern trends in philosophy today. His works are immensely challenging, and he raises fundamental questions about the nature of philosophy and philosophizing.

The *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus* was the only book published during his lifetime. Throughout his life Wittgenstein wrote down his thoughts in notebooks, returning to the same topics repeatedly for conceptual clarity. He was never fully content with any of the arrangements of the remarks and thoughts in his notebooks and left to his literary editors to publish from his manuscripts. The *Notebooks* are preliminary versions of ideas which was later crystallised in the *Tractatus*. *Philosophical Remarks* contains his thoughts in 1930 and *Philosophical Grammar* is a collection of his remarks from 1932-34. The *Blue and Brown Books* were prepared so as to help his students in 1932 and 1933. From 1936 onwards he worked on various versions of what we now know as the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), which he hoped would provide a definitive presentation of his thought. *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (1956) contain ideas he worked on from 1937 to 1944. From 1944 onwards he worked mainly on philosophical psychology: *Zettel*, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology I* and *II* and *Last Writings on Philosophical Psychology I* and *II* are from these years. From 1950 to 1951 we also have *On Certainty* and *Remarks on Colour*. Another source for his views is records of his conversations and lectures taken by friends and pupils.

The Early Wittgenstein

Coming out of the *Notebooks*, written in 1914-16, and showing Schopenhauerian and other cultural influences, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is a continuation of and reaction to Frege and Russell's conceptions of logic and language. *Tractatus* consists of a series of short, numbered statements and its structure purports to show its internal essence. It is constructed around seven basic propositions, numbered by the natural numbers 1-7, with the rest of the text numbered by decimal figures as numbers of separate propositions indicating the logical importance of the propositions. Wittgenstein was setting the limits of thought and language, in this work. The book can be summed up, in his words: 'What can be said at all can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent' (*T* Preface).

Picture Theory of Meaning

The *Tractatus* addresses the problems of philosophy dealing with the relation between the world, thought and language, and presents a logical solution. The world, thought, and proposition share the same logical form and hence the world is represented by thought, which is expressed in proposition. The world consists of facts and not of things (*T* 1.1). Facts are existent states of affairs (*T* 2), which are combinations of objects. Objects have various properties and combine with one another according to their internal properties. The states of affairs are complex by nature which can be analysed into constituent simple objects. The totality of the actual and possible states of affairs makes up the whole of reality and the world is totality of the actual states of affairs.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein presents a picture theory of thought and language. Pictures are models of reality (*T* 2.12) and are made up of elements that represent objects, and the combination of objects in the picture represents the combination of objects in the state of affairs. The logical structure of the picture, whether in thought or in language, is isomorphic with the logical structure of the state of affairs which it pictures. The possibility of this structure being shared by the picture (the thought, the proposition) and the state of affairs is the pictorial form. The function of language is to represent states of affairs in the world. 'A proposition is a picture of reality. A proposition is a model of reality as we imagine it' (*T* 4.01). The logical relationships among the elements of a proposition represent the logical relationships among the objects in the world. A proposition has a sense if it describes a possible state of affairs; otherwise, it is meaningless. Thus, the only meaningful language is the fact-stating language of the natural sciences. 'The totality of true propositions is the whole of natural science' (*T* 4.11). Logic is based on the idea that every proposition is either true or false. This bi-polarity of propositions enables the composition of more complex propositions from atomic ones by using truth-functional operators (*T* 5). Wittgenstein supplies, in the *Tractatus*, the first presentation of Frege's logic in the form of what has become known as 'truth-tables'. This provides the means to analyze all propositions into their atomic parts. He also provides the general form of a proposition (*T* 6), showing that any proposition is the result of successive applications of logical operations to elementary propositions.

Wittgenstein's Silence

Wittgenstein's views on values are radically different from that of logical atomism and logical positivism. According to the *Tractatus*, there are only propositions of science within the boundary of

meaningful language. For the positivists there is nothing to be silent about. Wittgenstein, however, believed that 'There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical' (T 6.522). The propositions of the *Tractatus* themselves are also to be included in the class of the inexpressible, as they are not propositions of science.

Ethical and spiritual values also are in the realm of the mystical. Wittgenstein says we will not find values among the facts of the world, for everything is what it is (T 6.41). Therefore, the sense of the world, what constitutes its value, must lie outside the world. It cannot be one more fact among the scientifically observable facts in the world. Consequently he held that 'ethics cannot be put into words. Ethics is transcendental' (T 6.421). 'How things are in the world is a matter of complete indifference for what is higher. God does not reveal himself in the world' (T 6.432). Wittgenstein closes his discussion of the mystical and ends the *Tractatus* with his final, oracular statement: 'What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence' (T 7). The *Tractatus*, on this reading, is part of the ineffable, and should be recognized as such.

The Later Wittgenstein: *Philosophical Investigations*

The complex edifice of the *Tractatus* is built on the assumption that the task of logical analysis was to discover the elementary propositions, whose form was not yet known. What is 'hidden' in our ordinary language could be 'completely clarified' by a final 'analysis' into 'a single completely resolved form of every expression', which would bring to the goal of 'complete exactness'. Wittgenstein recognizes this as an illusion in the *Investigations*. Rejecting this dogmatism, he moves from the realm of logic to that of ordinary language as the centre of philosophical investigations; from an emphasis on definition and analysis to 'family resemblance' and 'language-games'; and from systematic philosophical writing to a collection of interrelated remarks. With the rejection of the assumption that all representations must share a common logical form, the conception of the unsayable disappeared; what remains are language-games of conversation and collaboration in the stream of life. 'What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use' (PI 116). The picture theory of meaning is replaced by a tool-use model of language.

Tool-Use Model of Language

The *Investigations* begins with a quote from Augustine's *Confessions* which gives 'a particular picture of the essence of human language,' based on the idea that 'individual words in language name objects,' and that 'sentences are combinations of such names' (PI 1). This picture of language is at the base of the mainstream philosophy, including the *Tractatus* and Wittgenstein in *PI* replaces this name-reference picture with a tool-use model: 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language' (PI 43). We learn the meaning of words by learning how to use them, just as we learn to play chess, not by associating the pieces with objects, but by learning how they can be moved.

A sign becomes a meaningful word not because it is associated with a reference, but because it has a function in the stream of life. One can elucidate the meaning of a word by describing how it is used in a variety of situations, showing the similarities and differences of the uses. Wittgenstein compares words to tools, each having distinctive functions: 'The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects' (PI 11). For example, 'pain' and 'pen' are both nouns and 'to speak' and 'to think' are both verbs; the difference between these words, however, are

revealed by looking at their various uses as a hammer is distinguished by a chisel by the way it is used. One and the same word can have different meanings: To know the height of Mount Everest is different from knowing how a mango tastes. The former, but not the latter, can be expressed in a proposition (*PI* 78). This is simply because the word 'to know' functions in different ways. The meaning of a word is not fixed forever; there are variety of uses and similarities and differences in the meaning. Wittgenstein explains this dimension of language with the analogies of family resemblance and language-games.

Language-games

In order to address the variety of language uses, and their being 'part of an activity', Wittgenstein introduces an investigational tool, 'language-game'. Wittgenstein's choice of 'game' is based on the over-all analogy between language and game. As he was watching a game, he thought that in language we are using words in a variety of ways. Similar to the diversity of games, our multiple ways of language use do not conform to a single model. In contrast to the one-dimensional picture theory of name-object of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein gives a list of language uses such as giving orders, and obeying them; describing the appearance of an object; speculating about an event; making a joke; translating from one language into another; asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying (*PI* 23). Just as we cannot give a definition of 'game', we cannot find 'what is common to all these activities and what makes them into language or parts of language' (*PI* 65).

A second reason why Wittgenstein compares the use of language to games is to emphasize that language use is an activity: "... the term 'language-game' is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life" (*PI* 23). Words and deeds are interwoven in the stream of life: 'the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, [is] the language-game' (*PI* 7). The problem with the name-object theory of language is not only that there are other uses of language besides referring to objects, but also that the act of referring to objects plays no role unless it is an activity within the context of a particular language-game (*PI* 49).

Wittgenstein used the notion of language-games also to illustrate that we run into philosophical confusions when we do not pay attention to the fact that the function of words vary from one language-game to another. The logical positivists treated scientific discourse as the only meaningful discourse and judged all other ways of speaking (aesthetic, religious and ethical discourses) to be meaningless. According to Wittgenstein, language-uses (like basketball and football) must be judged on their own terms, by their own standards. Not paying attention to the differences in the governing rules in different language-games is the cause of many traditional philosophical problems. Wittgenstein thinks the proper role of the philosopher is not to propose new theories but to remove 'misunderstandings concerning the use of words, caused, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of language' (*PI* 90).

Rule-following

The analogy of language-game also points to the fact that both language and games are rule-governed activities. Like games, language has constitutive rules; they determine what is normative in a language/game. A rule is not an abstract entity, transcending all of its particular applications; knowing the rule is not grasping that abstract entity and thereby knowing how to use it. His investigations free one from the bewitchment of Platonic, Augustinian and Cartesian

picture of language use. He wants to show that we need not posit any sort of external or internal authority beyond the actual applications of the rule. Wittgenstein's formulation of the problem was wrongly interpreted as a sceptical problem concerning meaning, understanding and using of a language.

According to Wittgenstein, 'Obeying a rule' is a practice' (PI 202) and involves objectivity, regularity and normativity. First of all, rule-following is something that an agent actually does, not merely something that seems so to the agent. It is only in the actual use of a rule, that is, in the actual practice, a rule is revealed, understood and followed. Secondly, rule-following is a repeatable procedure. It is repeatable over time and across persons. It can be taught and learned. Thirdly, there is normativity; i.e., regularity is subject to standards of correctness. The distinction between is and ought is kept; there is a correct way of following a rule. Rule-following actions are not just regularities of behaviour but regularities that have normative force, ways one ought to act. 'Following a rule is analogous to obeying an order. We are trained to do so; we react to an order in a particular way' (PI 206). As a practice there is no gap between a rule and an action following a rule; they are distinct but inseparable.

Private Language

The rule-following remarks are followed by the so called "the private-language argument", one of the most discussed among the Wittgensteinian themes. A private-language is something in which 'individual words ... are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations' (PI 243). Wittgenstein has shown that if sensations are metaphysically (only I can have it) and epistemologically (only I know it) private, one cannot have a language about sensations. A language in principle unintelligible to anyone but its user would necessarily be unintelligible to the user also, because no meanings could be established objectively and normatively for its signs. The proposed language is not a useful language; for words can only be correctly or incorrectly applied if there are objective criteria for using them correctly. Rules of grammar determine whether a particular language use is correct or not. Private linguist cannot build up grammar for a private language. The signs in language can only function when there is a possibility of judging the correctness of their use, 'so the use of [a] word stands in need of a justification which everybody understands' (PI 261). Even apparently the most self-guaranteeing of all sensations, pain, derives its identity from a practice of expression, reaction and use of language. Agreement in human behaviour is fundamental to language use. The common behaviour of human beings and the very general facts of nature make particular concepts and customs, including those about sensations, possible and useful. Like any practice, language use must have objective and normative standards.

Family Resemblance

To illustrate the relationship of language-games to one another, Wittgenstein uses the concept of 'family resemblances' (PI 67). The members of a family share many similar features, such as eye colour, temperament, hair, facial structure, and build. However, there will be no one particular feature that they all share in common. With this analogy, Wittgenstein is attacking the theory of essentialism, which is the Platonic thesis that for things to be classed together they must share some essence. According to Wittgenstein our modes of discourse are examples of language, and the fact that they belong to the same category does not imply there is a single essence they all possess. Instead, the different language-games 'are related to one another in many different ways' (PI 65).

Instead of general explanations, and definitions based on sufficient and necessary conditions, there are ‘family resemblances’ among the various uses of a word and language games. The meaning of a word is not located in the logical form which is common to all uses of that word, but in the ‘complicated network of similarities, overlapping and criss-crossing’ (PI 66). ‘The strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres’ (PI 67). The mistake of the *Tractatus* was to impose on language the standards of ‘the crystalline purity of logic’ as though human language were some sort of calculus (PI 107). Family resemblance, thus, serves to exhibit the variety as well as vagueness that characterize different uses of the same concept. It is neither Platonic Idea nor the logical form of the *Tractatus* that govern the various uses of words; they are interwoven in the form/stream of life.

Form/Stream of Life

According to the *Tractatus* language is an autonomous, abstract system of symbols in which the role of the human subject is insignificant. In striking contrast, for later Wittgenstein, language is something living and growing. Language use is an activity that takes place within the stream of life. The notion of ‘form/web/stream of life’ captures this insight: ‘To imagine a language means to imagine a form of life’ (PI 19). Our ways of speaking are not bound by logically necessary structure but are intimately tied into the common human practices, the hurly-burly of our everyday actual life. He is emphatic: ‘Only in the stream of life words have meaning’.

Philosophers often held that a philosophical justification had to be given for every belief we have. This is, however, a hopeless and useless task. There is simply a point where justifications come to an end: ‘If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: “This is simply what I do.”’ (PI 217) ‘What has to be accepted, the given is—so one could say—forms of life.’ (PI p. 226). There can be no justification for our most basic concepts and ways of viewing the world because ‘what people accept as a justification—is shown by how they think and live’ (PI 325). Forms of life can be understood as changing and contingent, dependent on culture, context, history, etc. It is also the form of life, “the common behaviour of mankind” which is “the system of reference by means of which we interpret an unknown language” (PI 206), giving a shape and continuity to the stream of life.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) Critically evaluate: ‘What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence’

2) Critically evaluate *Tractatus*’ view of philosophy and the correct method in philosophy, in the light of *Philosophical Investigations*.

4.5 LET US SUM UP

The linguistic turn in twentieth century philosophy makes philosophy predominantly analysis and description of language. Language is not only a medium of philosophizing but the primary subject matter of philosophical investigations. Despite their differences in style and content, Frege, Russell and early Wittgenstein share the goals of (1) repudiating traditional metaphysics, (2) reducing language to a series of elementary propositions that would represent facts, and (3) developing a theory of language that would establish the boundaries of meaning. The later Wittgenstein links language and philosophy with activity and firmly places philosophizing in the stream of life. His analogies of language games, family resemblance and form/stream of life has shown new ways of doing philosophical therapy and the remarks on rule-following and private language have initiated philosophical discussions and debates in many branches of philosophy.

4.6 KEY WORDS

Linguistic Turn, Analytic Philosophy, Sense and Reference, Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description, Picture Theory of Meaning, Language-games, Family Resemblance, Rule-following, Private Language and Form of Life.

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