DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY OF ARTS

NATONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

Course Guide for PHL 342 Early Modern Philosophy

Course Code	PHL 342
Course Title	Early Modern Philosophy
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PHL 342 – EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Module 1

Unit 1: Cultural Context: Renaissance, Reformation and the Rise of Modern Science

Unit 2: Nicolaus Copernicus

Unit 3: Gordiano Bruno

Unit 4: Galileo Galilei

Module 1: Unit 1: Cultural Context: Renaissance, Reformation and the Rise of Modern Science

Contents

1.0. Introduction

The modern period of Philosophy is marked by the declining authority of the church and the increasing authority of reason and science. During this period, philosophy ceased to be a handmaid of theology and started enjoying the freedom of reason that characterizes the discipline. And because of the new found freedom of reason, the period witnessed an unprecedented development in scientific discoveries

and inventions. Hence, the modern period is often described as the period of the unfolding world of science.

Modern philosophy has its origin in seventeenth century Western Europe (Darty and Uduigwomen, 2016: 2). However, Bertrand Russell in his, The History of Western Philosophy (1945), summarizes the rise of modern philosophy thus:

> The period of history which is called "modern" has a mental outlook which differs from that of the medieval period in many ways. Of these, two are the most important: the diminishing authority of the church, and the increasing authority of science. With these two, others are connected. The culture of modern times is more lay than clerical. States increasingly replace the church as the government authority that controls culture (p. 491).

From the above excerpts, it is clear that the rise of the modern period marked the decline of the authority of the church, thereby ushering in a new culture, the liberal culture. This liberal culture brought with it a form of individualism. Hence, modern philosophy has retained for the most part "an individualistic and subjective character" (Russel 1945: 493). This unit, therefore, discusses the cultural context of the modern period. In this unit, you will learn the role of the renaissance, Reformation and the rise of modern science to the modern period.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1.Outline the three major events that led to the emergence of the modern period

2. Explain the role of each of the cultural context to the rise of modern philosophy

3.0. Main Content

3.1. The Renaissance

The modern period as opposed to the medieval outlook began in Italy with the movement called the Renaissance (Russell, 1945: 495). The term Renaissance literarily means "rebirth." The Renaissance, therefore, was a time of rebirth and renewal; a time of release and discovery. It was a rebirth of learning in the letters,

humanism and philosophy (Essien, 2011: 184). During this period, men began, once again, to emphasize the natural abilities of the human person to reason independently of faith. The Renaissance marked the age of humanism-the focus on man.

The Renaissance began in Italy in the fourteen century and spread to other parts of the world. The period started with the Italian artists and intellectuals who felt that they had broken with the glory and civilization of the past, of the erstwhile Roman Empire. Motivated by this mindset, they sought for a rebirth of civilization. For them, the Dark Ages, that is the medieval time, and all its concomitant theocentricism, did not bring much progress. Hence, the Italian intellectuals sought a rebirth of ideas, after the intellectual and cultural stagnation of the middle age (Essien, 2011: 185). They, therefore, turned to ancient Greece and Rome for inspiration.

An outstanding conviction of the Renaissance movement was that the ancient literatures had an invaluable source of knowledge which the modern should turn, such as better answers to the questions of the nature of man, of the question of how to achieve happiness and also of the question of the relationship between man and God. Because of this idea, a foundation was laid not only for a culture of scholarship that was centred on ancient texts and their interpretations, but also encourages an approach to textual interpretation aimed at harmonizing and reconciling different philosophical views. Against the dominance enjoyed by the philosophy of Aristotle, which was the major philosophy of most medieval thoughts, the Renaissance period widened the philosophical horizon through reviewed interests in Neo-Platonism, Stoicism, Epicureanism and so on (Darty and Uduigwomen, 2016: 9).

However, it should be noted that the Renaissance thinkers "who studied and analyzed classical philosophy did so for scientific and secular reasons, with no direct interest in religion or theological questions" (Darty and Uduigwomen, 2016: 9). Once again, like in the ancient period, the Renaissance thinkers sought natural explanations to natural occurrences as against the supernatural (religious) explanations offered by the medieval period. The Renaissance thinkers in their projects, became interested in the Revival of natural philosophy, methodology and theory of knowledge.

The Renaissance was characterized by humanism, and it was these humanists that called for a radical change in philosophy. Because of the focus on human fulfilment, there was an attendant emphasis on the optimistic assessment of human nature. Essien (2011: 186), maintains the opinion that humanism and optimism in human nature were significant during this time. Humanists valued grammar, philology, and rhetoric more highly than the technical philosophical studies that had preoccupied scholars during the Middle Ages. They despised the Latin that had been the lingua franca of medieval universities, far removed in style from the works of Cicero and Livy (Kenny 2006). Hence, new schools sprang up in most Italian city-states in response to the demand of humanistic learning. The Renaissance paved way for thinkers to challenge the orthodoxy of the medieval ideas by raising serious questions and seeking answers independent of faith, and this gave rise to such ideas being challenged where they were found wanting and this encouraged the rise of new philosophies or nature.

3.2. The Reformation

The Reformation or Protestant Reformation, was another important wave that played a significant role in the rise of modern philosophy. The Protestant Reformation, spearheaded by a young Austinian monk, Martin Luther (1483-1546), started in Germany. The reformation started as a form of rebellion against the authority of the Pope and the Catholic Church which was the seat of Christianity in Europe. This rebellion arose as a result of the political and spiritual decline of the church's influence. Political battles in the church brought about the Great Schism (division), which lasted between 1378 to 1417. This led to the division of the church into two opposing factions with each having its own Pope and college of Cardinals. As noted by Lawhead (2002: 204), secular rulers seized the opportunity to jump into the battle, supporting whichever side that would serve their interests, thereby resulting in massive corruption in the church.

Martin Luther became concerned about the condition of the church. Of major concern to him was a controversial fund-raising technique of the church which was the sale of "Papal indulgences" by a Dominican Friar, Tetzel, to church goers. The central claim of the Papal indulgences was that for a fee, a person could gain relief from both the guilt and penalties of his/her sins in dead, thereby granting the person

entrance to heaven. Convinced that corruption and alien doctrine has set into the church, Luther posted his famous "Ninety-Five Theses," a document attacking the corruption and abuses that was ongoing in the church, to the door of Wittenberg Castle church in 1517. When the story of the rebellion finally reached Rome, Luther was excommunicated from the church. His excommunication resulted in the Protestant Reformation and the widespread religious, intellectual, cultural and political changes that it brought in its wake (Lawhead, 2002: 205). The Reformation was welcomed in most part of Europe, which led to the waning influence of the church in France, Holland, Scotland and England.

During the medieval period, the church had maintained a strict censorship of books and ideas of scholars. Ideas that contradicted the doctrine of the church and the philosophy of Aristotle which was the official philosophy of the church, were considered heretic and such scholars punished even to death. However, the Protestant Reformation, according to Fieser (2015), loosened the grip of medieval church on European intellectual thought. Because of this, the Reformation opened up the weaknesses of the church herself, thereby creating a favourable atmosphere to the rise of modern philosophy since it created an intellectual movement outside the centralized control and authority of the church (Darty and Uduigwomen, 2016: 12). The Reformation, therefore, elicited a general reaction against all intellectual conventions.

3.3. The Rise of Modern Science

According to Stumpf and Fieser (2012), there are two distinct components to the rise of modern scientific revolution. First is the the new scientific discoveries and (2) new methods of conducting scientific inquiry. As to new discoveries, to enhance the exactness of their observations, scientists invented various scientific instruments. In 1590 the first compound microscope was created. In 1608 the telescope was invented. The principle of the barometer was discovered by Evangelista Torricelli (1608-1647). Otto von Guericke (1602-1686) invented the air pump, which was so important in creating a vacuum for the experiment that proved that all bodies, regardless of their weight or size, fall at the same rate when there is no air resistance. With the use of instruments and imaginative hypotheses, fresh knowledge began to unfold. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) discovered the moons

around Jupiter; and Anton Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) discovered spermatozoa, protozoa, and bacteria, and William Harvey (1578-1657) discovered the circulation of the blood. William Gilbert (1540-1603) wrote a major work on the magnet, and Robert Boyle (1627-1691), the father of chemistry, formulated his famous law concerning the relation of temperature, volume, and pressure of gases.

Among the more dramatic discoveries of the time were new conceptions of astronomy; Medieval astronomers believed that human beings were the focus of God's creative activity; and thus, God placed us quite literally in the center of the universe. Renaissance astronomers shattered this conception. The Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) formulated a new hypothesis in his Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres (1543), which said that the sun is at the center of the universe and that the earth rotates daily and revolves around the sun annually. Copernicus was a faithful son of the church and had no thought of contradicting any traditional biblical doctrines. His work expressed rather his irrepressible desire to develop a theory of the heavens that would conform to the available evidence. Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) made additional and corrective observations, and his young associate Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) formulated three important laws of planetary motion in which he added mathematical equations to support mere observation. It was Galileo, though, who provided the greatest theoretical precision to the new astronomy and, in the course of this endeavor, formulated his important laws of acceleration and dynamics.

The second contribution of the scientific revolution involved the development of new scientific methods. Medieval approaches to science were grounded in Aristotle's system of deductive logic. Several Renaissance and early modem scientists proposed alternative systems, often quite different from each other. The scientific methods that we follow today; though, are in many respects the direct descendants of these early theories, particularly those of Francis Bacon (1561-1626), which stress the importance of observation and inductive reasoning. Scientific methodology made further progress as new fields of mathematics were opened. Copernicus had employed a twofold method: first, the observation of moving bodies, and, second, the mathematical calculation of the motion of bodies in space.

Bertrand Russell (1945: 525), tells us that "almost everything that distinguishes the modern world from earlier centuries is attributable to science, which achieved its most spectacular triumphs in the seventeenth century." As the thinkers of the Renaissance laid more emphasis on man, matter and reason, the belief in Aristotle's speculations about motion of bodies in the universe waned. These thinkers also countered faith with reason, dogma with skepticism, and divine intervention with natural law. The early modern thinkers made mathematics their pillar in the search of truth. For them, mathematics was at the centre of knowing, and this was a bend towards Plato and Pythagoras. Emphasis, therefore, moved from reading classical texts to observation and formulation of hypothesis which led to the introduction of the scientific method. Thus, this period witnessed many scientific inventions like the invention of the telescope by Tippershey and Galileo, invention of the printing press by Guttenberg and so on.

Accordingly, the scientific wave influences philosophy in two ways. First, it challenged the Aristotelian view that everything conforms to a mechanical model. According to this model, every event including human behaviour is determined and not a product of free will. Second, it brought about a new role of man in the universe. The mechanical view of events was given impetus by the geocentric theory of Aristotle and the astronomic model of Claudius Ptolemy.

However, with the opposing theories of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton, the Aristotelian model and the Ptolemic theory were laid to rest. The new conception that science introduced greatly influenced modern philosophy, for as Stumpf (1994: 226) observed, "The whole drift of the new scientific method was towards new conception of man, of nature and of the whole mechanism of human knowledge."

4.0. Conclusion

In this chapter, you have learnt the cultural context of early modern philosophy. The unit stated that the modern period arose as a result of dissatisfaction in the theocentric model of the medieval period. Therefore, the emergence of modern philosophy came as a result of the declining authority of the church and a rebirth of knowledge based on human reason.

5.0. Summary

The following are what you have learnt in this unit:

1. The rise of the renaissance and its focus on humanism as a precursor to modern philosophy.
2. The Protestant Reformation led to the decline of church power thereby creating an intellectual movement outside the centralized control and authority of the church.
3. The new scientific model brought with it, a new conception of man, of nature and the whole mechanism of human knowledge.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What is the focus of the Renaissance period?

What is the contribution of scientific revolution?

Discuss how the Reformation influenced the rise of modern philosophy.

6.0. References/Further Readings

Darty, E. D. and Uduigwomen, A. F. (2016). "Cultural context: renaissance, reformation, modern science and the rise of modern philosophy." In A.F. Uduigwomen, M.E. Uka and E. C. Uduma. (Eds.). A critical history of philosophy, vol. 2. Ultimate index books. Pp 2-25.

Essien, E. S. (2011). Summa philosophica: an introduction to philosophy and logic. Lulu press.

Fieser, J. (2015). The history of philosophy: a short survey. www.utm.edu

Lawhead, W. F. (2002). The voyage of discovery: a historical introduction to philosophy, 2nd Ed. Thomson and Wadsworth

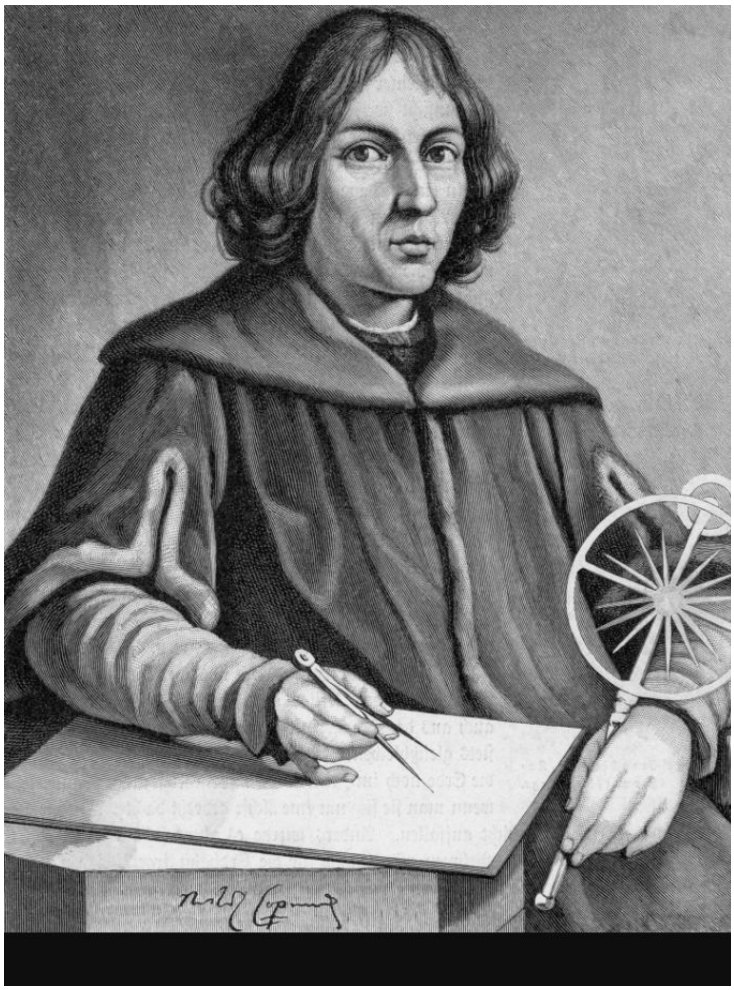
Russell, B. (1945). The history of Western philosophy. Simon and Schuster

Stumpf, E. S. (I994). Philosophy: history and problems. McGraw Hill Inc.

Tutor Marked Assignment

What was the renaissance movement's reaction to ancient literatures?

Answer: The Renaissance movement had an outstanding conviction that the ancient literatures had an invaluable source of knowledge which the modern should turn, such as better answers to the question of the nature of man, of the question of how to achieve happiness, and also of the question of the relationship between man and God.



Nicholas Copernicus

Module 1: Unit 2: Nicolaus Copernicus

Contents

4.0. Conclusion

5.0. Summary

6.0. References/Further Readings

1.0. Introduction

In unit 1, you have learnt about the cultural context of modern philosophy and how each of these cultures influenced the rise of modern philosophy. In this unit, you will be learning about the thought of Nicolaus Copernicus and how his idea contributed in shaping the modern period.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Articulate Copernicus contribution to the rise of modern science.
2. Explain the Copernican Revolution in Astronomy.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Nicolaus Copernicus

Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) was a Polish Catholic priest and scientist of unimpeachable theological orthodoxy. During his youthful days, he traveled in Italy, and became exposed to the atmosphere of the Renaissance. In 1500, he took up a job as a mathematics lecturer in Rome. However, he quit the position in 1503 and returned to his native land, where he became a Canon of Fraeunberg. Copernicus took interest in Astronomy as his pastime which later resulted in the publication of his major work, *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* (The Revolution of the Heavenly Bodies), in 1543, where his ideas are recorded.

3.2. Nicolaus Copernicus' Contribution to the Rise of Modern Science

Nicolaus Copernicus, all scientists, truly produced a revolution in science. Prior to Copernicus man believed himself to be in the center of the universe with all that implied. While some had proposed otherwise, it was Copernicus’ theory for a heliocentric universe that changed our perceptions forever. This change took

upwards of 150 years to be fully realized with the work of Newton and much later for ultimate proof with the first measurement of stellar parallax. If anyone's work both put science on edge and required such a long period of acceptance it was Copernicus (Cusick, 2007). Before Copernicus, a great system of scientific and religious thought" had been built up to explain an earth centered view. Copernicus, therefore, was a product of his time and the belief structures of that place. He had to overcome these beliefs to propose his alternate view. By examining the ancient views on the universe, we can see how far he traveled in thought to arrive at his theory.

Copernicus' contribution to modern science was his confrontation of the popular orthodoxy in Astronomy. Adopting the newly found methods of mathematics and observation, Copernicus brought a revolution to the field of astronomy with his theory of heliocentricism. This theory maintains that the sun is at the centre of the universe and that the earth, like other planets revolves on its axis while also revolving around the sun (Lawhead, 2002: 206). The sun-centred theory of Copernicus was a direct attack on the earth-as-centre (geocentric) model adopted by the church. It should be noted here that this earth-at-the-centre model was conceived and put forward by Claudius Ptolemy and firmly established by Aristotle. Ptolemy believed that the earth was static, resting at the centre of universe, with the sun, moon and stars rotating around it. Ptolemaic system was in harmony with Aristotelian physics. These two systems, therefore, provided a scientific worldview that was reconciled with the perceived theology of the time. However, Copernicus replaced this idea by placing the sun at the centre of the Heavenly bodies.

Copernicus essentially proposed more than discovered the following facts, that:

▪ The Earth is a rotating planet (diurnal rotation);

▪ The Earth revolves around a fixed sun (annual revolution);

▪ Also, that there was a motion of declination (tilted axis);

▪ That the Planets also revolve around sun, Mercury and Venus inside the earth's orbit and the rest outside the earth's orbit;

▪ And to nearly correctly calculate the distance of the planets from the sun as ratios of earth-sun distance (Cusick 2007).

Bertrand Russell (1945), points out that apart from the revolutionary impact on how we imagine the cosmos, the new astronomy came with two great advantages. First, the recognition that what had been believed since ancient times might be false. Second, that the test of scientific truth is patient collection of facts, combining with bold guessing as to laws binding the facts together (p. 528). Nevertheless, Copernicus' astronomy generated a serious controversy in the Church. Because of this, the Church rejected the new science and stood with the earth-centred model because the earth is man's home and cannot be rotating as it may provide contrasting position. For instance, following the new model, a stone thrown up will end up falling elsewhere, since the rotation of the earth must have taken it to a different place. According to Darty and Uduigwomen, the conflict generated by the new astronomy was simply a "conflict between faith and science" (2016: 17). Hence, fearing what would be his fate, Copernicus withheld publication of his book until few days before his death in 1543.

4.0. Conclusion

In this unit, you have learnt that Nicolaus Copernicus started a revolution in astronomy by offering a new way of understanding the motion of the cosmos and the entire heavenly bodies. This position was not favourable to the Church as it challenged the divine authority that governs the cosmos.

5.0. Summary

The following are what you have learnt in this unit:

1. Before Copernicus, it was accepted that the earth is at the centre of the universe, the sun, stars and other planetary bodies revolve around it.
2. Copernicus revolutionized astronomy by maintaining instead that it is the sun that is at the centre while the earth and other planetary bodies revolve around it.
3. The sun-at-the-centre model is called heliocentricism, whereas the earth-at-the-centre model is called geocentricism.

4. The change from geocentric model to heliocentric model is termed the Copernican Revolution in Astronomy.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Explain a brief biography of Nicolaus Copernicus

Explain what you understand by Copernican Revolution.

Explain Copernicus contribution to modern science

6.0. References/Further Readings

Darty, E. D. and Uduigwomen, A. F. (2016). "Cultural context: renaissance, reformation, modern science and the rise of modern philosophy." In A.F. Uduigwomen, M.E. Uka and E. C. Uduma. (Eds.). A critical history of philosophy, vol. 2. Ultimate index books. Pp 2-25.

Lawhead, W. F. (2002). The voyage of discovery: a historical introduction to philosophy, 2nd Ed. Thomson and Wadsworth.

Russell, B. (1945). The history of Western philosophy. Simon and Schuster

Tutor Marked Assignment

What do you understand by heliocentric model or theory?

Answer: The heliocentric theory is simply the view that the sun is at the centre of the universe and the earth, like other planets, revolves on its axis while also revolving around the sun.

Gordiano Bruno

Module 1: Unit 3: Gordiano Bruno

Contents

1.0. Introduction

In the last unit, you learnt about how Copernicus revolutionized the science of Astronomy. His position became a reference point to other scholars after him. In this unit, therefore, you shall be learning about another philosopher and his contribution to the development of early science.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Know the thought of Bruno
2. Outline Bruno's contribution to the rise of early science
3. Discuss his metaphysics

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Gordiano Bruno

Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), was an Italian philosopher, astronomer, occultist and mathematician. He was born near Naples and became converted to the Dominican order in 1565. In 1572, Bruno was ordained a priest. However, because of his teachings that were against the orthodoxy, he was suspected of heresy and later expelled from the order in 1576. Bruno fled Italy to Geneva, but he encountered hostility there too because his position were against that of the Calvinists, the popular system in Geneva. In 1583, Bruno moved to England and visited Oxford, where he gave some lectures on his ideas.

He is known for his system of mnemonics based on organized knowledge, his ideas on extrasolar planets and extraterrestrial life, and his support of Nicolaus Copernicus's heliocentric model of the solar system. Like other early thinkers

seeking a more reasonable view of the universe, Bruno adopted a model of the world comprising some aspects that have been incorporated into the modern scientific model and others, such as his animistic cosmology and disdain for mathematics, which are inconsistent with the modern scientific model. Expressing his ideas freely, Bruno accepted an invitation from the Doge of Venice and later found himself in the prison of the local Inquisition in 1592. One year after, he was transferred on to the Roman Inquisition, and after a trial that lasted a period of seven years, he was burned as heretic in the Campo de Fiori in 1600 (Kenny, 2006: 21). His major works are On the Shadows of Ideas (1582), Art of Remembering (1583), Cause, Principle and One (1584-1585), Supper on Ash Wednesday (1584), On the Infinite Universe and Words (1591), Heroic Frenzies (1585), Expulsion of the Triumphant Beasts (n.d) (Copenhaver, 1998: 319), among others.

3.2. Gordiano Bruno and the Rise of Modern Science

There are two basic features of Bruno's ideas that have caught the attention of scientists and philosophers. The first was his adoption of the Copernican model of heliocentricism and his postulation of multiple universes (Kenny, 2006: 21). In agreement with Copernicus, Bruno maintained that it is the sun that is at the centre of the universe while the earth move round the sun and not the sun that moved round the earth. According to him, the earth is not the centre of the universe, and the sun too is not. Bruno first developed the thesis that the sun too is just a star among others. The space, for him, is boundless, therefore, in boundless space, there are many solar systems. Hence, no sun or star can be called the centre of the universe, because all positions are relative (Kenny, 2006: 21).

Bruno believed that the Earth revolves and that the apparent diurnal rotation of the heavens is an illusion caused by the rotation of the Earth around its axis. He also saw no reason to believe that the stellar region was finite, or that all stars were equidistant from a single center of the universe. In 1584 Bruno published two important philosophical dialogues, in which he argued against the planetary spheres. Bruno's infinite universe was filled with a substance—a "pure air," *aether*, or *spiritus*—that offered no resistance to the heavenly bodies which, in Bruno's view, rather than being fixed, moved under their own impetus. Most dramatically, he completely abandoned the idea of a hierarchical universe. The Earth was just one

more heavenly body, as was the Sun. God had no particular relation to one part of the infinite universe more than any other. God, according to Bruno, was as present on Earth as in the Heavens, an immanent God rather than a remote heavenly deity.

Bruno also affirmed that the universe was homogeneous, made up everywhere of the four elements (water, earth, fire, and air), rather than having the stars be composed of a separate quintessence. Essentially, the same physical laws would operate everywhere. Space and time were both conceived as infinite. Under this model, the Sun was simply one more star, and the stars all suns, each with its own planets. Bruno saw a solar system of a sun/star with planets as the fundamental unit of the universe. According to Bruno, an infinite God necessarily created an infinite universe that is formed of an infinite number of solar systems separated by vast regions full of *aether*, because empty space could not exist (New world encyclopedia, n.d).

Bruno argued that the earth and the whole solar system do not enjoy any special privilege because just as there is life on earth, there is also a possibility of intelligent life at other times and places within the universe. Bruno contended that the things we observe in the world are the effects of a world-soul which animates nature and makes it a single organism. He saw the physical world as infinite; however, the world's infinity, for him, is not the same as God's infinity because the world has infinite parts, but God is a whole. Bruno's mysticism and his theory of multiple worlds challenged the orthodoxy of God's incarnation and Christianity as a religion based on divine revelation.

Bruno's cosmology is marked by infinitude, homogeneity, and isotropy, with planetary systems distributed evenly throughout. Matter follows an active animistic principle: it is intelligent and discontinuous in structure, made up of discrete atoms. The cosmos and its components act independently with characteristics of living creatures.

3.3 Metaphysics of Gordiano Bruno

Bruno began his study on Metaphysics with the rearrangement of philosophical terminology and concepts. In his works, *De la causa*, he reflected on the traditional philosophy of cause and effect, matter and form, substance and accident, and also one and many. The Aristotelian metaphysics prioritizes finality over causality as the dominating force. Again, Christian thought, that had been identified with God who governs the world. Bruno, however, correlated universal finality with the internal living power and controlling reason in all things. He argued that if God is usually understood as beyond the world and now identified as the internal principle, then there is no need to try to draw a distinction between internal and external causation. Bruno uncovers the conceptual problems of Aristotelian causality, which includes matter and form as two of the principles: if they are only descriptors of things, they are not real, but if they are supposed to be real, they need to be matching to the extent that there is no matter without form, no form without matter, and both are co-extensive (Internet encyclopedia of philosophy). For him, what is logically necessary to be kept distinct, such as forms and matter or the whole and its parts, is metaphysically one and also as infinite as all potentialities. Bruno closes his dialogue on Cause, Principle, and the One with an encomium of the One. Being, act, potency, maximum, minimum, matter and body, form and soul – all are one. However, Bruno's use of the one shows the Platonian theme in his metaphysics.

4.0. Conclusion

In this unit, you have learnt that Bruno accepted the sun-centred position of Copernicus and even moved further to postulate the many worlds thesis. Bruno, through careful investigation, arrived at the position that the earth is just a planet among other planets.

5.0. Summary

The following are what you have learnt in this unit:

1. Giordano Bruno advanced the heliocentric model.
2. He postulated plurality of worlds.
3. The sun, for him is also a star
4. The physical world is infinite because the world has infinite parts.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Outline the two basic features of Bruno's ideas that was of interest to scientists and philosophers.

Briefly discuss the metaphysics of Gordiano Bruno

Briefly discuss Gordiano Bruno and the rise of modern science

What was Bruno's belief about the things we observe in the world

6.0. References/Further Readings

Copenhaver, B. P. (1998). "Doubt and innovation." Popkin, R. H. (Ed.). The Columbia history of western philosophy. Columbia university press.

Kenny, A. (2006). The rise of modern philosophy. Clarendon press.

Tutor Marked Assignment

What was Bruno's belief about the things we observe in the world?

Answer: Bruno believed that the things we observe in the world are the effects of a world-soul which animates nature and makes it a single organism.

Galileo Galilei

Module 1: Unit 4: Galileo Galilei

Contents

1.0. Introduction

In units 2 and 3, we learnt about the developments of scientific ideas in Copernicus and Bruno. However, their postulations were not based on experiment but basically on observation. With Galileo, an experimental background was provided to these thoughts. Galileo, therefore, began a second phase of early modern science where theories were backed by experiment. In this unit, you shall be learning about the exploits of Galileo to the new scientific age.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the Galileo's project.
2. Outline his contribution to early science.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Galileo Galilei

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), was an Italian philosopher mad scientist. He was a younger contemporary of Bruno. Born in Pisa, Galileo studied mathematics at the University of Pisa. In 1589, he was appointed a professor of mathematics in the same University, and later a professor in the University of Padua. In 1633, Galileo faced the Roman Inquisition. He was later found guilty by the Inquisition and condemned to life imprisonment because of scientific position, especially in astronomy of which he offered an experimental shield to heliocentricism. Galileo died while under house arrest in 1642. However, Pope John Paul II offered a public apology on behalf of the Catholic Church for the injustice that the Church had meted on Galileo, 350 years

later after his death. His major works are, A messenger from the stars (1610), Dialogue on the two chief world systems (1632), and Discourses and mathematical demonstrations concerning two new sciences (1638) among others.

3.2. Galileo Galilei's Contribution to the Rise of Modern Science

Bertrand Russell refers to Galileo as the greatest of the founders of modern science, with the exception of Newton. He marked a second phase of scientific development in the history of renaissance science. The second phase was marked not by speculative science that preceded it, but by experimental science. Accordingly, Galileo was not only an important astronomer, but also a founder of dynamics. He first discovered the importance of acceleration in dynamics. 'Acceleration' means change of velocity, whether in magnitude or direction; thus a body moving uniformly in a circle has at all times an acceleration towards the centre of the circle. In the language that had been customary before this time, we might say that he treated uniform motion in a straight line as alone 'natural', whether on earth or in the heavens. It had been thought 'natural' for heavenly bodies to move in circles, and for terrestrial bodies to move in straight lines; but moving terrestrial bodies, it was thought, would gradually cease to move if they were let alone. Galileo held, as against this view, that every body, if left alone, will continue to move in a straight line with uniform velocity; any change, either in the rapidity or the direction of motion, requires to be explained as due to the action of some 'force'. This principle was enunciated by Newton as the 'first law of motion'. It is also called the law of inertia. I shall return to its purport later, but first something must be said as to the detail of Galileo's discoveries (Russell, 1946)

Galileo was the first to establish the law of falling bodies. This law, given the concept of 'acceleration', is of the utmost simplicity. It says that, when a body is falling freely, its acceleration is constant, except in so far as the resistance of the air may interfere; further, the acceleration is the same for all bodies, heavy or light, great or small. The complete proof of this law was not possible until the air pump had been invented, which was about 1654. After this, it was possible to observe bodies falling in what was practically a vacuum, and it was found that feathers fell as fast as lead. What Galileo proved was that there is no measurable difference between large and small lumps of the same substance. Until his time it had been supposed

that a large lump of lead would fall much quicker than a small one, but Galileo proved by experiment that this is not the case. Measurement, in his day, was not such an accurate business as it has since become; nevertheless he arrived at the true law of falling bodies. If a body is falling freely in a vacuum, its velocity increases at a constant rate (Russell, 1946).

Galileo also studied projectiles, a subject of importance to his employer, the duke of Tuscany. It had been thought that a projectile fired horizontally will move horizontally for a while, and then suddenly begin to fall vertically. Galileo showed that, apart from the resistance of the air, the horizontal velocity would remain constant, in accordance with the law of inertia, but a vertical velocity would be added, which would grow according to the law of falling bodies. To find out how the projectile will move during some short time, say a second, after it has been in flight for some time, we proceed as follows: First, if it were not falling, it would cover a certain horizontal distance, equal to that which it covered in the first second of its flight. Second, if it were not moving horizontally, but merely falling, it would fall vertically with a velocity proportional to the time since the flight began. In fact, its change of place is what it would be if it first moved horizontally for a second with the initial velocity, and then fell vertically for a second with a velocity proportional to the time during which it has been in flight. A simple calculation shows that its consequent course is a parabola, and this is confirmed by observation except in so far as the resistance of the air interferes (Russell, 1946).

The above gives a simple instance of a principle which proved immensely fruitful in dynamics, the principle that, when several forces act simultaneously, the effect is as if each acted in turn. This is part of a more general principle called the parallelogram law. Suppose, for example, that you are on the deck of a moving ship, and you walk across the deck. While you are walking the ship has moved on, so that, in relation to the water, you have moved both forward and across the direction of the ship’s motion. If you want to know where you will have got to in relation to the water, you may suppose that first you stood still while the ship moved, and then, for an equal time, the ship stood still while you walked across it. The same principle applies to forces. This makes it possible to work out the total effect of a number of forces, and makes it feasible to analyse physical phenomena, discovering the

separate laws of the several forces to which moving bodies are subject. It was Galileo who introduced this immensely fruitful method (Russell, 1946).

The law of inertia explained a puzzle which, before Galileo, the Copernican system had been unable to explain. As observed above, if you drop a stone from the top of a tower, it will fall at the foot of the tower, not somewhat to the west of it; yet, if the earth is rotating, it ought to have slipped away a certain distance during the fall of the stone. The reason this does not happen is that the stone retains the velocity of rotation which, before being dropped, it shared with everything else on the earth's surface. In fact, if the tower were high enough, there would be the opposite effect to that expected by the opponents of Copernicus. The top of the tower, being further from the centre of the earth than the bottom, is moving faster, and therefore the stone should fall slightly to the east of the foot of the tower. This effect, however, would be too slight to be measurable.

In the exact words of Cushman, "Galileo gave to all future thought a wisely formulated method of dealing with the new materials of the nature world" (1911: 36). From his observatory result, Galileo commenced his project by criticizing the still dominant physics of Aristotle. The Aristotelian physics maintained the position that nothing moves unless there is an external motion that it acts upon. As against Aristotle's physics, Galileo formulated a new theory of motion through his newly discovered laws of projectiles, falling bodies and the pendulum. The reformulated theory maintains that a body in motion will continue to move unless there is an equal contrary force such as friction.

Galileo gave an open acceptance to the Copernican revolution in 1610 when he invented a telescope (Cushman, 1911: 36). Using this newly invented instrument, he observed four moons of Jupiter, which he named "Medicean Stars" in honour of Grand Duke of Cosimo II of Tuscany (Kenny, 2006: 23). Further observations also led him to observed that the planet Venus moved in phases similar to that of the moon. Accordingly, he concluded that the only plausible explanation to these phenomena is only possible if Venus was orbiting the sun and not the earth. This position provided a strong argument that favoured the Copernican hypothesis (Kenny, 2006: 23). Again, following the discovery of the moons that revolved around Jupiter, one of the strongest arguments against heliocentricism was put to

rest, the argument that the moon would only be able to orbit the earth if the earth itself was static.

Galileo stressed the importance of direct observation and avoided secondhand information based simply on tradition and opposing conjectures contained in books. This led to his discovery of the satellites around the planet Jupiter. He writes, "To demonstrate to my opponents the truth of my conclusions, I have been forced to prove them by a variety of experiments" (cited in Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 189). In a letter to Kepler, he reflects on the stubborn attitudes of old-school astronomers of his time: "My dear Kepler; what would you say of the learned here, who, filled with the stubbornness of a venomous snake, have steadfastly refused to cast a glance through the telescope? What shall we make of all this? Shall we laugh or shall we cry?" In addition to his emphasis on observation, Galileo sought to give astronomy the precision of geometry. By using the model of geometry for his reasoning about astronomy; he assumed that he could demonstrate the accuracy of his conclusions if he could, as one does in geometry, produce basic axioms from which to deduce his conclusions. Moreover, he assumed that empirical facts correspond to geometric axioms, or that the axioms that the mind formulates correspond to the actual characteristics of observable moving bodies. To think in terms of geometry is to know how things actually behave. Specifically; Galileo formulated, for the first time, a geometric representation of the motion of bodies and their acceleration (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 189).

Galileo was condemned by the Inquisition, first privately in 1616, and then publicly in 1633, on which latter occasion he recanted, and promised never again to maintain that the earth rotates or revolves. The Inquisition was successful in putting an end to science in Italy, which did not revive there for centuries. But it failed to prevent men of science from adopting the heliocentric theory, and did considerable damage to the Church. Fortunately there were Protestant countries, where the clergy, however anxious to do harm to science, were unable to gain control of the State. Galileo died defending his ideas. Nevertheless, his ideas became very important to the revolution of modern science, especially the field of astronomy and modern physics.

4.0. Conclusion

In this unit, you have learnt that Galileo Galilei began a new phase of renaissance science based on observation and experimentation as against the speculative method adopted by others before him. As a result, he was able to provide a practical demonstration of the new theory of heliocentricism and also discovered other planets and their motions, thereby putting to rest the geocentric argument that the moon would only be able to orbit the earth if the earth itself was stationary.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, the following are what you have learnt:

1. The invention of the telescope by Galileo provided a practical proof to the theory of heliocentricism.
2. Through the use of the telescope, Jupiter and Venus were discovered and the motion of stars and moons were clearly explained.
3. Galileo's polarization of the heliocentric theory and the discovery of other planets, their motions, stars and moons, were based on experimentation.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Briefly explain what you understand by Aristotelian physics.

Briefly explain Galileo Galilei's contribution to the rise of modern science

In what way did Galileo put to rest the argument that the moon would only be able to orbit the earth if the earth was static?

In what way did Galileo put to rest the argument that the moon would only be able to orbit the earth if the earth was static?

6.0. References/Further Readings

Cushman, H. E. (1911). A beginner’s history of philosophy: modern philosophy, vol. II. The Riverside press.

Kenny, A. (2006). The rise of modern philosophy. Clarendon press.

Lawhead, W. F. (2002). The voyage of discovery: a historical introduction to philosophy, 2nd ed. Wadsworth and Thomson.

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Tutor Marked Assignment

In what way did Galileo put to rest the argument that the moon would only be able to orbit the earth if the earth was static?

Answer: Galileo was able to put this argument to rest through his discovery of the moons that revolved around Jupiter.

Francis Bacon

Module 2: Unit 1: Francis Bacon and Early Empiricism

Contents

5.0. Summary

6.0. References/Further Readings

1.0. Introduction

In module 1, you learnt about the transition from medieval synthesis to the reawakening of reason in search of knowledge. You also learnt how scientific innovations contributed to the decline of the medieval thoughts. As science gained dominance, the modern philosophers saw the need to provide a logical ground through which we come to know what we claim to know. The aim of this, we could assume, was to enable them establish a proper method of science and philosophy. As science thrives in observation and experimentation, the call for experience as the source of knowledge gained prominence. In this unit, you shall be learning the empiricism of Francis Bacon, one of the earliest advocates of scientific method.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the empirical idea in Bacon's thought.
2. Outline the four idols according to Bacon, that hinder knowledge.
3. Understand induction as a method in science and philosophy.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Francis Bacon

Francis Bacon (1561-1626), was born in London and received his University education at Cambridge where he studied law. At an early age, he joined the English diplomatic service, but later returned to London to practice law. When he was twenty-three, Bacon was elected into the British parliament. He rose to the position of a legal adviser to the Crown aged forty-three. Bacon later became the Lord Chancellor. However, all did not go well for him as he was accused and convicted of corruption charges, this forced him to abandon public life. His major works are, *Instauratio Magna (The Great Instauration), Novum Organon* and New Atlantis.

3.2. Bacon's Empiricism

Bacon's goal as expressed in his work, Great Instauration, was to attain a "total reconstruction of sciences, arts, and all human knowledge raised upon the proper foundations" (Bacon, 1980). Bacon saw the medieval thoughts as complicated and unable to be used to conquer nature. His reason for holding such position against the medieval thoughts, according to Lawhead, was because their thought had no ties to observable facts (2002: 213). Hence, Bacon set out to secularize philosophy by making it the same as science, and on the process, appealed to knowledge that are observable. Any claim to knowledge that is based on observation or experience is called empiricism.

Bacon's popular dictum is that "knowledge is power" (Bacon, 1939). This as explained by Cushman (1911:43), implies that knowledge is the only kind of permanent power, and man can master the world when he gives up verbal discussions and belief in magic. To gain the power of knowledge, then, has to do with man gaining a positive insight into nature.

3.3. Theory of Knowledge: Reconstructing the Human Mind

In his theory of knowledge, Bacon maintains, as his principal objective, the total reconstruction of the sciences, arts and all human knowledge and he called this his great instauration or restoration. But before he could proceed with his creative task, he level some fierce criticisms against the institutions of learning of his time, and also against the reigning schools of philosophy, denouncing them for their slavish attachment to the past. He thus sounded the call for a break with the lingering influence of Aristotle.

The Distempers of Learning

In his theory of knowledge, Bacon attacked past ways of thinking, calling them "distempers of learning" to which he offered a cure. These distempers of learning are: fantastical learning, contentious learning, and delicate learning.

Fantastical learning is a practice in intellectualism which emphasizes the use of high flown languages that are in themselves ambiguous. In fantastical learning, people concern themselves with words, emphasizing texts, languages, and style, and

hunt more after words than matter, and more after choiceness of phrase than after the weight of matter.

Contentious learning, according to him, is worse because it begins with the fixed positions or points of view taken by earlier thinkers, and these views are used as the starting point in contentious argumentation.

Delicate learning, the last of Bacon's distempers, is a condition wherein earlier authors, who claim more knowledge than can be proved, are accepted by readers as knowing as much as they claim. This accounts for the acceptance of Aristotle, for example, as the authority of science. These three diseases, according to Bacon, must be cured if we are to relieve the mind of the errors they create.

The Four Idols

Bacon believed that the human mind has been corrupted by dogmas such that it affects our ability to acquire knowledge. He refers to these dogmas as "idols." To restore the mind to its original position, therefore, the mind must be purged from these "idols" that corrupts its natural powers. According to Bacon there are four idols that hinder the mind from acquiring knowledge. These are:

The Idols of the Tribe

These are the false beliefs systems that are inherent in human nature. It is the habit of expecting more order in natural phenomena than is actually to be found (Russell, 1945: 544). Bacon traces the origin of this idol to the the false assertion that the sense of man is the measure of things. Here Bacon wanted to make the point that simply looking at things is no guarantee that we will see them as they really are, because we all bring our hopes and fears, prejudices, and impatience to things and thereby affect our understanding of them (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012).

The Idols of the Cave

These are individual prejudices which arise within the mind of an investigator. The idol of the cave is derived from Plato's allegory. Accordingly, the human mind is presumed to be caved in our prejudices and biases so that our knowledge reflects the pattern of our experience more than that of reality.

The Idols of the Theatre

The Idols of the Theatre are the grand systematic dogmas of long philosophical treatises. These represent "worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion" (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 193). Bacon includes here not only whole systems but all principles or axioms in science that by tradition, credibility and negligence have come to be received. Idols of the theatre, therefore, have to do with uncritical reception of the various dogmatic systems of thoughts, notably Plato, Aristotle, and the scholastics. According to Lawhead (2002:215), Bacon believed that all the received systems are but so many stage-plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion.

The Idols of the Marketplace

These are frequently used language or expressions that affect the pursuit of truth because of the influence such languages wield. Bacon calls this idol thus since it stands for the words people use in the commerce of daily life, words that are common coin in daily conversation. In spite of their usefulness, words can weaken knowledge because they are not created with care or precision but rather are framed so that the common person will understand their use. Even philosophers, according to Bacon, are diverted by these Idols, for they often give names to things that exist only in their imaginations. In addition, they fashion names for mere abstractions, such as "element" of fire, or the "qualities" of heaviness, rareness, or denseness

3.4. Bacon's Inductive Method

Bacon was the first of the long line of scientifically minded philosophers who have emphasized the importance of induction as opposed to deduction. Like most of his successors, he tried to find some better kind of induction than what is called ‘induction by simple enumeration’. Induction by simple enumeration may be illustrated by a parable (Russell, 1945: 498).

Bacon believed that once the mind has been purged from the “idols” to acknowledge, we need to establish a method that will help us to discover the workings of nature, thereby leading to true and certain knowledge. Following from this, Bacon rejected the classical deductive logic of Aristotle and the medieval thinkers. This is because the deductive logic starts with given premises which are symbols of concepts.

However, if our original concepts are confused and not adequately grounded in the facts, then the whole structure of reasoning will simply fix and give stability to original errors (Lawhead, 2002: 215). Hence, “Our only hope,” according to Bacon, “lies in a true induction” (Bacon, 1939).

The method of induction proceeds from the particular facts given in observation and then rises cautiously to the level of generalizations (Lawhead, 2002: 215). As against the previous notions of induction which simply consisted of collection of multiple observation and then jumping into conclusions, Bacon argued that such method is not capable of providing us with scientific knowledge because of its hasty and inaccurate generalizations. Following his criticism of the previous notions of induction, Bacon believed that:

> Induction could be made something better than this. He wished, for example, to discover the nature of heat, which he supposed (rightly) to consist of rapid irregular motions of the small parts of bodies. His method was to make lists of hot bodies, lists of cold bodies, and lists of bodies of varying degrees of heat. He hoped that these lists would show some characteristic always present in hot bodies and absent in cold bodies, and present in varying degrees in bodies of different degrees of heat. By this method he expected to arrive at general laws, having, in the first instance, the lowest degree of generality. From a number of such laws he hoped to reach laws of the second degree of generality, and so on. A suggested law should be tested by being applied in new circumstances; if it worked in these circumstances it was to that extent confirmed. Some instances are specially valuable because they enable us to decide between two theories, each possible so far as previous observations are concerned; such instances are called "prerogative" instances (Russell, 1945: 543).

Bacon introduced the inductive method as the new method of acquiring knowledge. His inductive method involved enumeration of instances of the data of experience, observation and experiment. This version of induction advocated for by Bacon gave rise to the development of the scientific method. However, his inductive method has been criticized of failing to provide sufficient emphasis on hypothesis. Again, Lawhead and Stumpf criticized Bacon’s induction for his use of Aristotelian

and scholastic terminologies like “form,” and “essence” (Lawhead, 2002: 215; Stumpf, 1994: 224).

4.0. Conclusion

Bacon advocated for a method of induction different from the logic of Aristotle. His position is that induction should begin with observation and followed by experiment. In this unit, also considered his theory of knowledge. Accordingly, Bacon believes that human beings can attain knowledge using the new method of induction. But he observes that there are certain “idols" that hinders knowledge. To attain knowledge, therefore, he advocates the need to free one’s mind from these idols. The call to free our mind is a call for freedom to explore the corridors of knowledge. However, although science was what interested Bacon, and although his general outlook was scientific, he missed most of what was being done in science in his day. He rejected the Copernican theory, which was excusable so far as Copernicus himself was concerned, since he did not advance any very solid arguments. Again, Bacon’s inductive method is faulty through insufficient emphasis on hypothesis. He hoped that mere orderly arrangement of data would make the right hypothesis obvious, but this is seldom the case. As a rule, the framing of hypotheses is the most difficult part of scientific work, and the part where great ability is indispensable. So far, no method has been found which would make it possible to invent hypotheses by rule. Usually some hypothesis is a necessary preliminary to the collection of facts, since the selection of facts demands some way of determining relevance. Without something of this kind, the mere multiplicity of facts is baffling.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. Bacon was an empiricist because he advocated for experience as the source of knowledge.
2. There are idols that hinder the human mind from attaining knowledge and until the mind is free from this idols, it becomes difficult to have knowledge of reality.
3. Bacon modified the theory of induction through advocacy for induction method based on observation and experimentation.

4. Bacon's method of induction marked the beginning of scientific method. Hence, he is often referred to as one of the fathers of science,

Self-Assessment Exercise

What goal did Bacon set to achieve in his philosophy?

According to Bacon there are four idols that hinder the mind from acquiring knowledge briefly discuss?

Briefly discuss Francis Bacon's theory of knowledge: reconstructing the human mind?

6.0. References/Further Readings

Lawhead, W. F. (2002). The voyage of discovery: a historical introduction to philosophy, 2nd ed. Wadsworth and Thomson.

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Russell, B. (1945). The history of Western philosophy. Simon and Schuster

Tutor Marked Assignment

What do you understand by Bacon's idol of the cave?

Answer: Idols of the cave are individual prejudices which arise within the mind of an investigator. The idol of the cave is derived from Plato's allegory. Accordingly, the human mind is presumed to be caved in our prejudices and biases so that our knowledge reflects the pattern of our experience more than that of reality.

Thomas Hobbes

Module 2: Unit 2: Thomas Hobbes and Early Empiricism

Contents

1.0. Introduction

Thomas Hobbes is a philosopher whom it is difficult to classify (Russell, 1945: 546). He belongs to the empiricist tradition. However, unlike other empiricists like Locke, Berkeley and Hume, Hobbes admired the methods of mathematics. He is more relevant in his political philosophy important ideas which, of course, is the centerpiece of his philosophical endeavor. In this unit, you shall be learning about some of his important ideas, not limited to his view on empiricism as a method, but his thought on metaphysics, morality, society and politics.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Identify the empirical tradition in Thomas Hobbes philosophy.
2. Have an insight into his thought on the nature of reality.
3. Pinpoint his position on morality.
4. Have knowledge of Hobbes' political thoughts, especially his social contract theory.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was born in England to an uneducated vicar. He was brought up by his uncle when the father finally lost his job. Hobbes acquired a good knowledge of classics at a tender age, and at just fourteen, he translated the ancient classic of Euripides, The Medea, into Latin. Hobbes attended Oxford university at age fifteen. He would later confess that he profited little in his years at Oxford, in 1610, aged twenty-two years old, he became a personal tutor to Lord Hardwick, the second Earl of Devonshire. While in France, Mersenne introduced him into the philosophical and scientific circles. In 1636, Hobbes travelled to Italy where he visited Galileo Galilei in Florence.

Following the build-up to the Civil War in England in 1640, Hobbes feared that his safety was not guaranteed in England because of his royalist convictions, so he travelled to Paris. While in France, he served as the tutor to the Prince of Wales was in exile. He returned to England after the Restoration and made peace with the commonwealth in 1652. Hobbes died in the winter of 1679 aged Ninety-one years. His major works are, The Elements of Law, Natural and politic (1640), Leviathan (1651), Form and power of Commonwealth (1651), De Corpore (1655), De Homine (1658), among others.

3.2. Hobbes Empiricism/Theory of Knowledge

In the introduction, you learnt that Hobbes belongs to the empiricist, but he admired the way of mathematics. Thomas Hobbes assumed that empirical facts correspond to geometric axioms, or that the axioms that the mind formulates correspond to the actual characteristics of observable moving bodies (Essien, 2011: 195). As an empiricist, Hobbes begins his philosophy with the given, with sense-impressions made on us by external bodies, and with our memories of such impressions (Coplestone, 1994: 3). For him, therefore, philosophy is knowledge of effects or appearances as we acquire by true ratiocination from the knowledge we have first of their causes or generation.

Hobbes divided knowledge into two kinds. The first is knowledge of facts and the second is the knowledge of consequence. Knowledge of fact is when one sees something done or remember seeing it done, then such knowledge is knowledge of

fact. Knowledge of fact is an absolute knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge that a witness offers in a court of law. On the other hand, knowledge of consequence is a conditional or hypothetical knowledge. It is knowledge of relations or cause and effects, example, if A is true, then B will be true. Hobbes maintained that knowledge of consequence is scientific knowledge, the kind of knowledge which is required of a philosopher, who, according to him, only pretends to reason (Coplestone, 1994: 4). Hobbes described scientific or philosophical knowledge as knowledge of consequence because he considered them to be conditional or hypothetical. They are concerned with the causes and properties of bodies in motion. He is a materialist who maintains that philosophy only takes account of bodies. For him, authentic knowledge is knowledge of facts.

3.3. Metaphysics

Hobbes' metaphysics is seen in his materialism. For him, reality is simply bodies in motion. The goal of philosophy, according to him, is the discovery of causes. But what does Hobbes mean by causes? A cause, for him, is the sum or aggregate of all accidents. His metaphysics is concerned with causal explanation. And by causal explanation, Hobbes has in mind, an account of the generative process by which some effect comes into being (Coplestone, 1994: 5). This implies that whatever that fails to come into existence through generative process cannot be part of the subject matter of metaphysics.

For him, therefore, metaphysics is concerned with the causes and properties of bodies. However, all motions, according to him, is determined, which also follows that human actions and behaviours are determined. But how does Hobbes account for our internal actions? He accounts for it by maintaining that motions are of two kinds; vital and voluntary motions. Vital motions are such automatic activities as the circulation of blood, breathing, digestion etc. while voluntary motions are the aspects of our behaviours that show freewill (Lawhead, 2002: 220). Voluntary motions begin with our individual endeavours such as desire or aversion. Hobbes' vital motions have no problems at all, but the problem rests on the voluntary motions. He maintains that voluntary motions correlate with our experiences either as pleasurable or painful. However, if we take Hobbes materialism too far, the result will be the mechanical outcome of forces acting on every reality.

3.4. Ethics

Hobbes' moral philosophy is enshrined in his theory of motion and also in his political philosophy. According to Asukwo (2016: 39), his moral and ethical perception hinges on the human nature which manifests in man's interaction in a political society; it is also in line with the law of nature, which is the natural law. Hobbes conceived of the goal of morality as justice in the society. Justice for him, then, is "keeping of covenant which is a rule of reason, by which we are forbidden anything destructive to our life and consequently a law of nature" (Hobbes, 1988: 374).

Hobbes contended that the society rules are ordered by natural law, the law of reason, which also governs the state. He ascribed "good" to the object of desire, whereas evil is the object of aversion. Hence, like the Epicureans, he conceived of good and evil as terms derived from pleasure and pain (Lawhead, 2002: 220). However, since good and evil are subjective, Hobbes believes that we are guided by subjective pursuit of pleasure. This position depicts both psychological hedonism and psychological egoism. On the critical perspective, Hobbes sees good as what gives an individual pleasure. The implication of this is that morality. But how can we can control people's pleasure in the face of subjectivity? This became the central task of his political thought which we shall explore in the next section.

3.5. Socio-Political Philosophy

Thomas Hobbes had experienced a turbulent period in English history following the civil war of 1642. From this experience, he came to the conclusion that chaos is inevitable where there is no stable government to prevent it. He also believes that for any government to control chaos, it must possess an absolute power. With these conclusions, Hobbes set out to solve the problem of political society where, as exemplified in his moral theory, he presents the political states also as moving bodies.

Thomas Hobbes political theory is also his theory of social contract. Hobbes began with a hypothetical position of men before the formation of the civil state. According to him, people had lived in a natural state or state of nature prior to the formation of a civil state. The word, right, in the bare state of nature is a person's

freedom "to do what he would, and against whom he thought fit, and to possess, use and enjoy all that he would, or could get." The driving force in a person is the will to survive, and the psychological attitude pervading all people is fear—the fear of death, and particularly violent death. In the state of nature all people are relentlessly pursuing whatever acts they think will secure their safety. The picture we get of this state of nature is of people moving against each other, bodies in motion, or the anarchic condition Hobbes called the war of all against all (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 200).

Hobbes analyzes human motivation by saying that everyone possesses a twofold drive, namely; appetite and aversion. These two drives account for our motions to and from other people or objects, and they have the same meanings as the words love and hate. People are attracted to what they think will help them survive, and they hate whatever they judge to be a threat to them. The words good and evil have whatever meaning each individual gives them, and people call good whatever they love and evil whatever they hate, there being nothing simply and absolutely so." We are fundamentally egotistical in that we are concerned chiefly with our own survival, and we identify goodness with our own appetites. It would appear; therefore, that in the state of nature there is no obligation for people to respect others and there is no morality in the traditional sense of goodness and justice (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012).

In the state of nature, there was no government and no laws to guide the activities of people. However, there was a law of nature or the natural law which directed man to choose between good and evil. Recall that in his moral theory Hobbes had suggested that we are guided by subjective pursuit of pleasure. Because of this, there was bound to be crises in the state of nature. Hence, he presents the state of nature as a state of chaos. Because of this, the condition life in the state of nature was poor, solitary, nasty, brutish and short. People became wolves unto themselves and everyone lived in a state of perpetual fear because even the strongest where also weak.

However, the natural law, which is the law of reason suggested to people that they should create for themselves a fearful being (The Leviathan) and hand over all their power to it. This being will then control the people, wielding all the powers to

punish, protect and adjudicate laws. This is how the civil state came into existence. For Locke, the state is more powerful than the individual and exist to control the affairs of people. For the state to be able to perform its function, Hobbes advocates for an absolute state. Hence, the objective morality of the state supersedes the subjective morality of individuals. The state, for him, therefore, is an instrument of control which limit the power of people.

4.0. Conclusion

In the introduction, you learnt that Thomas Hobbes belong to the empiricist tradition, although he admired the method of mathematics. Thomas Hobbes assumed that empirical facts correspond to geometric axioms, or that the axioms that the mind formulates correspond to the actual characterization of observable moving bodies (Essien, 2011: 195). As an empiricist, Hobbes began his philosophy with the given, with sense-impressions made on us by external bodies, and with our memories of such impressions (Coplestone, 1994:3). For him, therefore, philosophy is a knowledge of effects or appearances that we acquire by true ratiocination from the knowledge we have first of their causes or generation.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. Hobbes begins his philosophy with the given, with sense-impressions made on us by external bodies, and with our memories of such impressions
2. He divided knowledge into two kinds. The first is knowledge of facts and the second is the knowledge of consequence.
3. A cause, for him, is the sum or aggregate of all accidents.
4. Hobbes conceived of the goal of morality as justice in the society.
5. Metaphysics is concerned with the causes and properties of bodies.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What makes Hobbes an empiricist philosopher?

Hobbes divides knowledge into two list and briefly explain?

Briefly explain Hobbes Metaphysics and Ethics?

6.0. References/Further Readings

Asukwo, O. O. (2016). “Thomas Hobbes” in A.F. Uduigwomen, M.E. Uka and E. C. Uduma. (Eds.). A Critical History of Philosophy, Vol. 2. Ultimate index books. Pp 289-303

Coplestone, F. (1994). A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, The British Philosophers from Hobbes to Hume. Volume V. Image books.

Essien, E. S. (2011). Summa philosophica: an introduction to philosophy and logic. Lulu press.

Lawhead, W. F. (2002). The voyage of discovery: a historical introduction to philosophy, 2nd ed. Wadsworth and Thomson.

Tutor Marked Assignment

What is the difference between knowledge of facts and knowledge of consequence, according to Hobbes?

Answer: Knowledge of fact is when one sees something done or remember seeing it done, then such knowledge is knowledge of fact. Knowledge of fact is an absolute knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge that a witness offers in a court of law. On the other hand, knowledge of consequence is a conditional or hypothetical knowledge. It is knowledge of relations or cause and effects, example, if A is true, then B will be true.

John Locke

Module 2: Unit 3: John Locke and the Rise of Modern Empiricism

Contents

1.0. Introduction

This unit discusses Locke's empiricism. It adopts a step-by-step analysis of Locke's process of knowledge acquisition. Accordingly, it is worthy of note that Locke has written on many areas of philosophy. But in this unit, we are more committed to his empiricism and how he attempted to challenge the position of the rationalists

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the process of knowledge acquisition in Locke's empiricism
2. Differentiate between simple and complex ideas
3. Discuss the various degrees of knowledge in Locke
4. Discuss the social relevance of Locke's philosophy

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of John Locke

John Locke was born in 1632 into a Puritan home. His father was a lawyer of somewhat meager means. Locke studied theology, natural science, philosophy, and medicine at Oxford University. After his graduation, Locke stayed at Oxford for a while to lecture in Greek and rhetoric. However, he became occupied by public life instead of academics for the majority of his life. During the years 1667–1683 he was the personal physician and adviser to Lord Ashley (later to become the Earl of Shaftesbury). Before doing any work in political philosophy, Locke acquired a good

deal of practical, political experience through his association with Shaftesbury. In addition to holding a number of political positions, Locke helped draft a constitution for the American Carolinas in 1669 (Lawhead, 2015: 301). Faced with recurring health challenges, he retired from public life in 1691. Locke died quietly in 1704. His major works are, Two Treatises on Government and An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, (both published in 1690), Letters Concerning Toleration (1689–1692). Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1693) and The Reasonableness of Christianity (1695).

3.2. Locke's Empiricism/Theory of Knowledge

In his philosophy, John Locke set out the central task of his project as that of enquiring into the origin, certainty, and extent of human knowledge. Locke believed that if he could describe what knowledge consists of and how it is obtained, he could determine the limits of knowledge and decide what constitutes intellectual certainty. His believe was that knowledge is restricted to ideas and not the innate ideas of the rationalists but ideas that are developed by things we experience. According to Locke, all our ideas come from some kind of experience. This implies that we are all born without knowledge; and that each person's mind at birth is like a blank slate upon which experience alone can subsequently write knowledge. But to inquire into the limit of human knowledge, Locke thought it was necessary for him to first of all, dismantle the theory of innate ideas, a position, as earlier discussed, which holds that we all come into the world with some sort of ideas that are already built into the mind from birth.

3.3. A Rejection of Innate Ideas

One of the major doctrines of the rationalists is the theory of innatism or innate ideas (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 231). Accordingly, this theory claims that some kinds of ideas, principles, or knowledge are not acquired through experience, but are built into the mind itself (Lawhead, 2015: 303). Locke rejected this position. According to him, knowledge arises from the senses, that a child at birth is born empty and it is experience that writes knowledge into the child as he grows. Locke also claimed that knowledge emanates from ideas which are promoted by experience. For him, an idea is that object which forms the raw material which understanding is concerned with while thinking (Ekanem, 2016: 195).

3.4. Simple and Complex Ideas

Locke believes that knowledge could be explained if we discover the raw materials out of which it was made. According to him, experience provides us with two sources of ideas, sensation and reflection. Locke maintains that all the ideas we have can be traced either to sensation or to reflection, and these ideas in turn are either simple or complex (Stumpf and Fieser 232).

Simple Ideas

Simple ideas constitute the chief source of the raw materials out of which our knowledge is made (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 232). These ideas are received passively by the mind through the senses. Simple ideas, according to Locke, come from sensation. But he also believes that some are derived from reflection. Just as our senses grasp the object, our minds also become aware of the object when we reflect on them. In relation to the ideas received through the senses, our minds can develop other simple ideas by reasoning and judging (Stumpf and Fieser,2012: 232).

Complex Ideas

Complex ideas, on the other hand, are not received passively but rather are put together by our minds as a compound of simple ideas. In other words, when Locke talks about Complex ideas, he is simply talking about the collection of simple ideas such that it presents us with an idea of a whole. Complex ideas deal with the workings of the minds with we are presented with multiple simple senses. For Locke, ideas are produced by objects of experience, therefore, all knowledge is derived from sense experience.

3.5. Primary and Secondary Qualities

Locke introduced the term "quality" to refer to the ability of matter to produce ideas in our mind. Locke here makes an important distinction between two different kinds of qualities in order to answer the question of how ideas are related to objects. He terms these qualities primary and secondary. Primary qualities are those that really do exist in the bodies themselves (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 233). It has to do with qualities that belong to objects such as, solidity; extension, figure, motion or rest, and number. Thus, our ideas which are caused by primary qualities resemble

exactly those qualities that belong inseparably to the object. Locke, however, says that secondary qualities, such as colors, sounds, tastes, and odors, do not belong to or constitute bodies except as powers to produce these ideas in us. According to Stumpf and Fieser the importance of Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities is just an attempt to distinguish between appearance and reality (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 234).

3.6. Degrees of Knowledge

In the process of acquiring knowledge, Locke is of the view that our ideas fit or do not fit. What we then call knowledge is that with proper related ideas. He classified knowledge into three degrees, depending on its method of acquisition. These are intuitive, demonstrative and sensitive knowledge. By intuitive knowledge, he refers that form of idea which is immediate, leaves no doubt, and is the clearest and most certain that human frailty is capable. Demonstrative knowledge occurs when our minds try to discover the agreement or disagreement of ideas by calling attention to still other ideas ((Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 235).

Locke cautions that each step of the demonstration must have intuitive certainty. This is particularly the case in mathematics, but again, Locke thought that demonstration is a type of perception that leads the mind to knowledge of some form of existing reality. Thus, man knows, by an intuitive certainty; that bare nothing can no more produce any real being than can be equal to two right angles. However, sensitive knowledge, the last degree of knowledge, according to him, is not knowledge in the strict sense of the term; it only passes under the name of knowledge. But sensitive knowledge does not give us certainty, nor does it extend very far. In particular, sensitive knowledge does not assure us that qualities that seem to be related are in fact necessarily connected. We simply sense things as they are, and as we never sense substance, we never know from sensation how things are really connected (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 236).

3.7. Socio-Political Theory

Locke begins his political theory like Hobbes did with a treatment of the state of nature. However, unlike Hobbesian state which was characterized by chaos, Locke's state of nature was peaceful, for according to him, there was the law of

nature that guided the actions of people. But though there was the law of nature to regulate the affairs of men, there was no universal legislator. Everybody, he noted, has rights that are natural to him/her. But as there was no government, everyone was an umpire unto his/herself in the state of nature.

Locke held in high esteem, our rights to the work of our hand. This is the right to private property. I have a right to the product of my own labour when I turn virgin soil into farmland. And everyone has a right in his or her own person to freedom from assault or other interference (Rogers, 1998: 388). Unfortunately, the continuance of these rights without a power to mediate whenever conflict arises led to the formation of a civil society, and so people agree to give up the freedom of the state of nature by entering into compact with others to accept the authority of political society. Power is then given to the government (the sovereign) to protect the natural rights of those who enter into the contract. When government fails to protect the individual's natural rights, then political society ceases to exist and executive action returns to the individual and under such conditions, government forfeits its right to rule and rebellion is justified.

4.0. Conclusion

In the beginning of his philosophical journey, John Locke maintained that his major mission was to set out the grounds of knowledge, ethics, politics, and religion. In tackling this set of problems, he took on a task of immense proportions that he had inherited from the rationalists. His philosophical optimism is indicated by the fact that he hoped to accomplish this mission with the modest and humble tools of empiricism. The outcome is that he ended up in an attempt to steer a path between dogmatism and skepticism.

In this unit, therefore, we made a case for Locke's empiricism and his rejection of the innate ideas thesis. The unit discussed the process of knowledge acquisition in his philosophy beginning with ideas as the raw material through which human knowledge is possible. Substance then, becomes nothing but object of sensitive knowledge.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

1. Experiences provides us with two sources of ideas, namely, sensation and reflection.
2. There is no innate idea because the human mind is born empty and it experience that write knowledge on it.
3. In knowledge acquisition, there primary and secondary qualities
4. Ideas are either simple or complex.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What arguments does Locke raise against the doctrine of innate ideas?

Briefly explain simple and complex ideas according to Locke?

Briefly explain primary and secondary qualities according to John Locke?

6.0. References/Further Readings

Ekanem, S. A. (2016). "John Locke" in A.F. Uduigwomen, M.E. Uka and E. C. Uduma. (Eds.). A critical history of philosophy, vol. 2. Ultimate index books.

Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J. (2012). Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy. McGraw-Hill Education.

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Tutor Marked Assignment

How does Locke define "idea"?

Answer: According to Locke, an idea is that object which forms the raw material which understanding is concerned with while thinking

George Berkeley

Module 2: Unit 4: George Berkeley

Contents

1.0. Introduction

In unit 3, you learnt about the empiricism of Locke and how he limits the data of knowledge to ideas. Locke sees substance as the objects of our ideas. In this unit, you shall be introduced into the thought of George Berkeley and how it led to idealism. You shall also learn about his conception of matter and substance and the disparity between his thought and that of other British empiricists.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss Berkeley's empiricism and the nature of reality.
2. Discuss his notion matter and substance and how it differs from that of Locke.
3. Explain his notion of God and the existence of things.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of George Berkeley

George Berkeley was born in Ireland in 1685. At the age of 15, he entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he studied mathematics, logic, languages, and philosophy. He became a Fellow of the College a few years after he earned his B.A. degree and was also ordained a clergyman in the Church of England, becoming a bishop in 1734. George Berkeley died in 1753 and was buried in Christ Church Chapel in Oxford. His major works includes, Essay Towards a New Theory of

Vision (1709), A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge (1710), and Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonus (1713).

3.2. The Nature of Existence

Influenced by Locke, George Berkeley began his philosophy by denying the existence of matter. His philosophy is summed up by the popular dictum accredited him, "to be is to be perceived." Clearly, this would mean that if something were not perceived, it would not exist. Berkeley speaks of sensible things as collections or combinations of 'sensations or ideas' and draws the conclusion that they 'cannot exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving them'. In his New Theory of Vision, he argues that all our knowledge depends on actual vision and other sensory experiences. In particular, he argues that we never sense space or magnitude; we only have different visions or perceptions of things when we see them from different perspectives. According to him, all that we ever see are the qualities of an object that our faculty of vision is capable of sensing (Stumpf and Fieser, 240). We do not see the closeness of an object; we only have a different vision of it when we move toward or away from it. The more Berkeley considered the workings of his own mind and wondered how his ideas were related to objects outside of his mind, the more certain he was that he could never discover any object independent of his ideas (Stumpf and Fieser, 240).

3.3. Matter and Substance

Berkeley denies the independent existence of things other than that which is given by perception in the mind. Berkeley's contention, therefore, is that to say of a sensible thing or body that it exists is to say that it is perceived or perceivable: in his opinion, there is nothing else that it can mean. This analysis, he maintains, does not affect the reality of things. 'Existence is percipi or percipere (Coplestone, 1994: 219). He described matter as an unthinking substance. Going further, Berkeley says that If, then, I try to describe or interpret reality in terms of my experience, I first come to the conclusion that there are other people like myself who have minds. From this it can be assumed that, just as I have ideas, other people likewise have ideas.

Apart from my finite mind and the finite minds of others, there is a greater Mind analogous to mine, and this is God's Mind (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 243).

God's ideas constitute the regular order of nature. The ideas that exist in our minds are God's ideas, which he communicates to us so that the objects or things that we perceive in daily experience are caused not by matter or substance but by God. It is God, too, who coordinates all experiences of finite minds, assuring regularity and dependability in experience, which in turn enables us to think in terms of the "laws of nature." Thus, the orderly arrangement of ideas in God's Mind is communicated to the finite minds or spirits of people, with allowance made for the differences in competence between the divine and finite minds. The ultimate reality, then, is spiritual (God) and not material, and the continued existence of objects when we are not perceiving them is explained by God's continuous perception of them (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 244).

3.4. God and the Existence of Things

Berkeley claims that every individual mind exist exterior to other minds. And so also, human minds are diverted from things. There is therefore some other mind wherein they exist, during the intervals between the time of our perceiving them. And because all human minds are intermittently diverted from things, "there is an omnipresent eternal Mind, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view in such a manner and according to such rules as he himself has ordained, and are by us termed the Laws of Nature" (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 243). Berkeley, therefore, concluded that the existence of things depends on the existence of God, and God is the cause of the orderliness of things in nature

4.0. Conclusion

In this unit, we discussed the empiricism of George. We noticed that Berkeley gave us an empiricist impression which holds that reality consists of perception. However, he landed himself in contradiction when he claimed that whatever exists is either an idea in the mind or perceiving mind. This is an idealist position, which is a theory in Metaphysics. His philosophy, therefore, is criticized of mixing up perception with being.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

1. The crux of Berkeley's empiricism is perception.
2. There is no independent existence other than that which is given by the perception of the mind.
3. God is the cause of the orderliness of things in nature.
4. The ultimate reality is spiritual and not material.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What does Berkeley mean when he says "to be is to be perceived"?

What does matter and substance mean to Berkeley?

Briefly discuss God and the existence of things by George Berkeley?

6.0. References/Further Readings

Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J. (2012). Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy. McGraw-Hill Education.

Coplestone, F. (1994). A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, The British Philosophers from Hobbes to Hume. Volume V. Image books.

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Russell, B. (1945). The History of Western Philosophy. Simon and Schuster

Tutor Marked Assignment

What is Berkeley's argument for the existence of God?

Answer: Berkeley's argument for the existence of God is that all human minds are intermittently diverted from things, therefore, there is an omnipresent eternal Mind, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view in such a manner and according to such rules as he himself has ordained, and are by us termed the Laws of Nature. The existence of things, therefore, depends on the existence of God, and God is the cause of the orderliness of things in nature.

David Hume

Module 2: Unit 5: David Hume

Contents

1.0. Introduction

David Hume took the genuinely empirical elements in the philosophy of Locke and Berkeley, purged them from the lingering metaphysics in their thought, and gave empiricism its clearest and most rigorous formulation. In fact, he has been described as the most consistent of the British empiricists. In his skepticism, Hume denied the idea of substance and causality for lack of impressions producing them. In this unit, therefore, you shall be learning about the skepticism of Hume. We shall discuss his theory of knowledge, view on causality and also his denial of metaphysical realities.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss the empirical thought in Hume's Philosophy.
2. Differentiate between impressions and ideas
3. Give reason(s) for Hume's rejection of causality and metaphysics

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of David Hume

David Hume was born in 1711 in Edinburgh, Scotland, into a Calvinist family of modest means. He attended Edinburgh University, where he studied Classics, Mathematics, Science, and Philosophy. In 1763 he went to Paris to serve as an assistant to the English ambassador. His reputation as a historian and man of letters preceded him, and his three years in France were spent living the life of a celebrity and being the idol of all the leading social circles. He lived out the last years of his

life in his hometown of Edinburgh where he was the leading light in Scottish intellectual and literary circles. Hume died in 1776. His major works are, A Treatise of Human Nature, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Natural History of Religion and Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.

3.2. Theory of Knowledge: Impressions and Ideas as the Origin of Our Knowledge

Hume begins his philosophy with an analysis of our perceptions. By Perceptions, he simply means the contents of consciousness (Lawhead, 2015: 336). Consequently, Hume divides perceptions into impressions and ideas. Impressions and ideas make up the total content of the mind. The original stuff of thought is an impression (a sensation or feeling), and an idea is merely a copy of an impression. According to Hume, the difference between an impression and an idea is only the degree of their vividness. The original perception is an impression, as when we hear, see, feel, love, hate, desire, or will. These impressions are "lively" and clear when we have them. When we reflect on these impressions, we have ideas of them, and those ideas are less lively versions of the original impressions. To feel pain is an impression, whereas the memory of this sensation is an idea. In every particular, impressions and their corresponding ideas are alike, differing only in their degree of vividness with which they strike upon the mind and make their way into our thoughts or consciousness (Coplestone, 1994: 265).

Besides distinguishing between impressions and ideas, Hume argues that without impressions there can be no ideas. This is because if a particular idea is simply a copy of an impression, it means for every idea there must be a prior impression. Nevertheless, it is not every idea, however, that reflects an exact corresponding impression, for instance when we talk about a flying horse or a golden mountain even though we have ideas of them. But Hume explains such ideas as being the product of the mind's "faculty of compounding, transposing, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses and experience"(Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 247).

3.3. Association of Ideas.

Hume argues that it is not by mere chance that our ideas are related to each other. There must be, Hume says, some bond of union, some associating quality; by which one idea naturally introduces another. His explanation was that, whenever there are certain qualities in ideas, these ideas are associated with each other (Stumpf and Fieser 247). These qualities are, resemblance, contiguity in time or place, and cause and effect. As resemblance, Hume says that when we see a picture, our attention is often drawn to the original. Contiguity with time or place has to do with an idea that a part indicates a whole, like when we mention a room and someone thinks about other parts and the building as a whole. Finally, the quality of cause and effects has to do with succession of events, where when one event is preceded by another.

3.4. On Causality

Hume's most original and influential ideas deal with the problem of causality (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 247). For Hume the very idea of causality cannot be proven. But Hume intend to investigate it a little, so he asked "What is the origin of the idea of causality?" Since ideas are copies of impressions, Hume asks what impression gives us the idea of causality. His answer is that there is no impression corresponding to this idea. How, then, does the idea of causality arise in the mind? His response is that the idea of causality is a wrong idea that has no corresponding impressions but only arises in the mind when we experience certain relations between objects. For him, when we speak of cause and effect, we mean to say that A Causes B. But what kind of a relation does this show between A and B? in his response, Hume claims that in our experience, we are being furnished by two relations, namely, (1) contiguity, for A and B are always close together, and (2) priority in time, where event A (cause) always precedes B, the effect. But how do we tell if at very point A happens that B will follow? Hume argued that there is no such necessary connection. According to him, while we do have impressions of contiguity in space and priority in time, we do not have any impression of necessary connection. Thus, causality is not a quality in the objects we observe but is rather a mental habit of association" produced by the repetition of instances A and B (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 248).

3.5. Rejection of Metaphysics

Hume denied that substance in any form exists or has any coherent meaning. If what is meant by the self is some form of substance, Hume argued that no such substance can be derived from our impressions of sensation (Stumpf and Fieser, 249). Hume, therefore, submit that notions like substance, reality, mind, matter, etc, are actually meaningless and unintelligible. He also says that questions that metaphysicians seek to answer, like what is the nature of reality, what is the cause of the world, what is the relationship between matter and mind, etc, are all meaningless. They are meaningless because when we analyze these questions in terms of our empirical meaning criteria, these questions dissolve into nothingness (Essien, 2011: 231). For him, any material containing metaphysical knowledge of realities should be discarded as containing sophistry and illusion. He asserts:

When we run over libraries, persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume, of divinity or school of metaphysics, for instance; let us ask: "Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity and number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matters of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to flames, for it can contain nothing but Sophistry and illusion (Hume, 1748: 132)

Hume also denied the existence of self. He questions if we have any one impression that is invariably associated with our idea of self. Finding none, he argues that the human mind is a kind of theatre where several perceptions successively make their appearance and then disappear. Hume denies the existence of a continuous self-identity and sees the self as nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions.

3.6. the Notion of God

Hume emphasizes that the order of the universe is simply an empirical fact and that we cannot infer from it the existence of God. He points out that from a finite effect you cannot conclude an infinite cause (Lawhead, 2015: 349). However, this is not purely indicative that Hume denied the existence of God.

4.0. Conclusion

Hume's philosophy leads to skepticism. However, no skeptical thought remains unchallenged for; little wonder that his skepticism awoke Kant from his dogmatic slumber, who responded with his critical philosophy as we shall see later

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

1. Hume was the most consistent of the empiricists.
2. He denied the existence of matter and substance.
3. He denied causality.
4. Impressions and ideas are the origin of our knowledge.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What are the three ways in which one idea becomes associated with another idea?

Briefly discuss the notion of causality according to Hume's?

How is David Hume an empiricist?

6.0. References/Further Readings

Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J. (2012). Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy. McGraw-Hill Education.

Coplestone, F. (1994). A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, The British Philosophers from Hobbes to Hume. Volume V. Image books.

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Tutor Marked Assignment

What is the distinction Hume makes between impressions and ideas?

Answer: The original stuff of thought is an impression (a sensation or feeling), and an idea is merely a copy of an impression. According to Hume, the difference between an impression and an idea is only the degree of their vividness.

Module 3

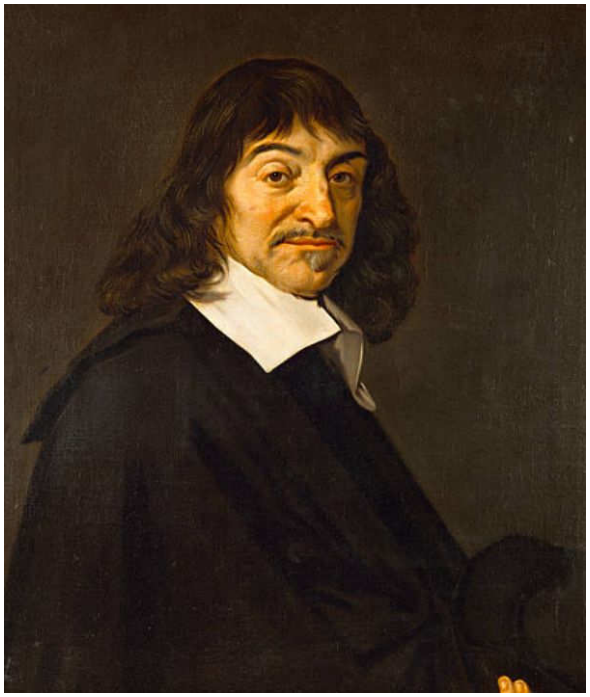
Module 3: Unit 1: Rene Descartes and the Foundation of Modern Philosophy

Module 3: Unit 2: Benedict Spinoza

Module 3: Unit 3: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

Module 3: Unit 4: Blaise Pascal

Module 3: Unit 5: Nicholas Malebranche



Rene Descartes

Module 3: Unit 1: Rene Descartes and the Foundation of Modern Philosophy

Contents

1.0 Introduction

In module 2, we studied about the empiricists who affirmed the power of the senses as the source of our knowledge. However, standing in opposition to the empiricists are the rationalists who maintain that our source of knowledge is reason. Rationalism, headed by Descartes, was the most powerful doctrine of the 17th century. In this unit, we shall discuss the ideas of Descartes, its founder.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss Descartes method of investigation
2. Explain how he arrived at the cogito
3. Understand his metaphysics vis-a-vis his notion of substance and God
4. Discuss his mind-body dualism and the problem associated with it

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Rene Descartes

Rene Descartes was born in Touraine in 1596. His father was a councilor of the Parliament of Brittany. From 1604 to 1612 Descartes studied in the Jesuit college of La Fleche, where his curriculum included mathematics, logic, and philosophy. He was most impressed during these years with the certainty and precision of mathematics, as compared with traditional philosophy; which invariably produced doubts and disputes. After traveling widely throughout Europe, he decided, in 1628, to settle in Holland, and it was here that Descartes wrote his principal philosophical works, including his Discourse on Method (1637), Meditations on First Philosophy (1641), Principles of Philosophy (1644), and The Passions of the Soul (1649). He went to Sweden in 1649 at the invitation of Queen Christina, who wanted Descartes to instruct her in his philosophy. As the queen could see him only at five o'clock in the morning, this unaccustomed encounter with the bitter cold at that hour made him easy prey to illness. Within a few months he suffered an attack of pneumonia and in February 1650, at the age of 54, he died.

3.2. Theory of knowledge: The quest for certainty

Descartes assumes that everyone is familiar with the phenomenon of being deceived by his senses. One may see something at which turns out to be quite otherwise when seen close up, or see things when they are in water from when they are out of it, example, when one is rowing, the oar appears to be bent. Since this sometimes happens, Descartes suggests we cannot really be certain that we are not always mistaken (Popkin and Stroll, 1996: 215). If one grants this is sometimes the case, but objects that in most cases we can be quite certain that our senses are not deceiving us, then Descartes presses:

> But perhaps, even though the senses do sometimes deceive us when it is a question of very small and distant things, still there are many other matters concerning which one simply cannot doubt, even though they are derived from the very same senses: for example, that I am sitting here next to the fire, wearing my winter dressing gown, that I am holding this sheet of paper in my hands, and the like. But on what grounds could one deny that these hands and this entire body are mine? Unless perhaps I were to liken myself to the insane, whose brains are impaired by such an unrelenting vapor of black bile that they steadfastly insist that they are kings when they are utter paupers, or that they

> are arrayed in purple robes when they are naked, or that they have heads made of clay, or that they are gourds, or that they are made of glass. But such people are mad, and I would appear no less mad, were I to take their behavior as an example for myself (Descartes, 1998: 60).

Descartes, therefore, begins to question the knowledge of whatever is given to us by experience. In fact, he raises another more troubling problem when he reflects:

> This would all be well and good, were I not a man who is accustomed to sleeping at night, and to experiencing in my dreams the very same things, or now and then even less plausible ones, as these insane people do when they are awake. How often does my evening slumber persuade me of such ordinary things as these: that I am here, clothed in my dressing gown, seated next to the fireplace - when in fact I am lying undressed in bed! But right now my eyes are certainly wide awake when I gaze upon this sheet of paper. This head which I am shaking is not heavy with sleep. I extend this hand consciously and deliberately, and I feel it. Such things would not be so distinct for someone who is asleep. As if I did not recall having been deceived on other occasions even by similar thoughts in my dreams! As I consider these matters more carefully, I see so plainly that there are no definitive signs by which to distinguish being awake from being asleep (1998: 60).

The fundamental aim of Descartes was, obviously enough, to attain philosophical truth by the use of reason (Coplestone, 1994: 66). Descartes was chiefly concerned with the problem of intellectual certainty. So he sought to construct the system of true knowledge upon the capacities of human reason alone. Descartes broke with the past and gave philosophy a fresh start. In particular, since his system of truth would have to be derived from his own rational capacities, he would no longer rely on previous philosophers for his ideas, now would he accept any idea as true simply because it was expressed by someone with authority (Stumpf and Fieser, 2002: 207). He therefore gave philosophy a fresh start by using only those truths he could know through his own powers as the foundation for all other knowledge.

3.3. A Search for Method

Descartes's method consists of harnessing the abilities of the mind with a special set of rules. He insisted on the necessity of method and on systematic and orderly thinking. Descartes looked to mathematics for the best example of clear and precise thinking. Indeed, he wanted to make all knowledge a sort of universal mathematics. He was convinced that mathematical certainty and self-evidence of it reasoning are results of a special way of thinking (Lawhead, 2002: 208). Descartes, therefore, thought that if he could discover this way, he would have a method for discovering true knowledge. In mathematics Descartes discovered something fundamental about mental operations.

Descartes held on to the mind's ability to apprehend directly and clearly certain basic truths. He placed the whole edifice of knowledge on the foundation of intuition and deduction, and he believed that these two methods are the most certain routes to knowledge adding that any other approach should be rejected as suspect of error and dangerous. In a nutshell, intuition gives us foundational concepts, and deduction draws more information from our intuitions (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 207). Descartes describes intuition as an intellectual activity or vision of such clarity that it leaves no doubt in the mind. Descartes describes deduction as “all necessary inference from facts that are known with certainty”. What makes intuition and deduction similar is that both involve truth. By intuition we grasp a simple truth completely and immediately, whereas by deduction we arrive at a truth by a process, a continuous and uninterrupted action of the mind.

3.4. Methodic Doubt

Descartes used the method of doubt in order to find an absolutely certain starting point for building up our knowledge. Two arguments persuaded Descartes that he could doubt virtually all his normal beliefs. The first is the argument from dreaming. I believe that I am sitting by the fire with a piece of paper in my hand. Why? Because my senses tell me so. But could I not be dreaming? In dreams my senses present me with information of the same kind as I receive waking. So how do I know that I am not dreaming now? Having set out in his Rules that we should never accept anything about which we can entertain any doubt, he now tries to doubt everything. His intention is clear; for he wants to sweep away all his former opinions,

"so that they might later on be replaced, either by others which were better, or by the same, when I had made them conform to the uniformity of a rational scheme" (Stumpf and Fieser 2012:207). By this method of doubt, Descartes shows how uncertain our knowledge is, even of what seems most obvious to us. While Descartes was doubting everything, there was one thing which he could not doubt, and that is the fact that he was doubting. In discovering this, Descartes makes his point as expressed by Stumpf and Fieser thus:

> But I was persuaded that there was nothing in all the world, that there was no heaven, no earth, that there were no minds, nor any bodies: was not then likewise persuaded that I did not exist? Not at all; of a surety I myself did exist since I persuaded myself of something. But there is some deceiver or other, very powerful and very cunning, whoever employs his ingenuity in deceiving me. Then without doubt I exist also if he deceives me, and let him deceive me as much as he will, he can never cause me to be nothing so long as I think that I am something (2012: 211).

According to Descartes, even if God is deceiving him in every possible way; he knows that he exists since; in the very mental act of doubting, he is affirming his own existence. Descartes, therefore expresses this his popular dictum "I think, therefore I am" (cogito ergo sum). Thought (reason) becomes the instrument of which Descartes intend to use as the foundation of knowledge.

3.5. Metaphysics: The Existence of God and Eternal Things

The kind of ideas that Descartes believed must be innate are those of mathematical objects, like the idea of a circle, and also, and most important, the idea of a perfect being, God. These ideas have properties that do not appear in our experience. No circle that we see is perfectly round. But the one that we can think about, is. We ourselves are not perfect enough, Descartes claimed, to invent the sort of perfection that appears in some of our ideas, especially that of God (Popkin and Stroll, 1993: 236). We are merely finite, temporal creatures, and yet we have an idea of an infinite and eternal God. How then, Descartes asked, can we create concepts of properties, which we neither discover in our experience, nor in ourselves? From such reasoning, he concluded that mathematical ideas and the idea of God must be

of a special category, called ‘innate’, which must be implanted in us by some agency other than ourselves and other than the events of our lives.

Developing the concept of a perfect being, Descartes concluded that this idea can only be caused by something that had at least the same perfections as the idea itself exhibited. The idea is that of ‘a substance that is infinite, eternal, immutable, independent, all-knowing, all-powerful, and by which 1myself and everything else, if anything else does exist, have been created’. I do not have properties like these to make use of in inventing an idea, and in my experience I never see anything with such perfection (Popkin and Stroll, 1993: 237). Therefore, the idea of a perfect being must come from something that is at least as perfect as the idea. Hence, Descartes reasoned, there must be a God, who has created me, and who has implanted in me the idea of a perfect being (Popkin and Stroll, 1993: 237).

3.6. Substance: Mind-Body Relation

Descartes defines substance as a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for its existence (Lawhead, 2002: 237). Descartes definition of substance would only fit God’s description, since everything else depends on him. According to Descartes there are two main categories of substances: mental substances and physical substances. This implies that the mind and body are two completely different entities. You will recall that Descartes started out by being sure of his own mental existence but in doubt as to whether or not his body existed. This led him to conclude that the mind is a separate substance from the body because it does not need the body in order to exist or to be understood.

Furthermore, the mind and the body are separate substances because they have completely different attributes. Minds are capable of conscious acts such as thinking, doubting, and willing. Bodies are not conscious and are simply moved by mechanical forces acting on them. Minds are not extended and so do not take up space. They are a kind of nonphysical or spiritual reality. Because they are not extended, they are not made up of parts and cannot be divided. Bodies, of course, are extended, occupy space, and can be divided into more elementary particles (Lawhead, 2015: 256).

However, the problem so generated by this position is if the spiritual can influence the physical, and if yes, where do they interact? While he tried to locate the mind in the pineal gland, the technical problem of interaction remains. If there is interaction, there would have to be contact, and so mind would have to be extended. On this problem, his rules of method did not lead him to any clear and distinct conclusion (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 215).

4.0 Conclusion

Descartes is the father of modern philosophy. Unlike the early modern philosophers who did not develop any new system in their philosophy, Descartes introduced the cogito (reason), as the foundation of human knowledge. His central task was to establish science and philosophy in an unshakable foundation using the method of mathematics. As a mathematician, Descartes discovered that the knowledge of mathematics is certain, distinct and indubitable. So he devoted his time into creating a new foundation for philosophy as the foundation of other sciences. However, Descartes did not succeed in his quest as he found himself drown in mind-body dualism. Notwithstanding the problem he later encountered, Descartes projects truly opened up a new vista of investigating the nature of reality in philosophy. He is the undisputed leader of the 17th century rationalist movement, a school of thought which emphasizes the power of reason and not experience, as the foundation of knowledge.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. Knowledge, for Descartes, come from the faculty of reasoning and not experience.
2. The method he adopted to carry out his investigation is the methodic doubt.
3. Human beings are born with some ideas or knowledge that are innate.
4. Descartes introduced the mind-body problem into philosophy and the problem so generated is the problem of interaction between the mind and the body.
5. The idea of God is innate and cannot be known by experience.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss Descartes Methodic Doubt?

Discuss Descartes mind body relationship?

Discuss the existence of God and external things according to Descartes?

6.0. References/Further Studies

Coplestone, F. (1994). A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy: From Descartes to Leibniz Volume IV. Image books.

Lawhead, W. F. (2002). The voyage of discovery: a historical introduction to philosophy, 2nd ed. Wadsworth and Thomson.

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Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J. (2012). Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy. McGraw-Hill Education.

Tutor Marked Assignment

What is Descartes definition of substance?

Answer: Descartes defines substance as a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for its existence

Benedict Spinoza

Module 3: Unit 2: Benedict Spinoza

Contents

2.0 Introduction

In our previous unit, we noted how Descartes attempt to establish knowledge on a firm foundation led him into creating a problem of dualism. In this unit, we shall consider Benedict Spinoza, another rationalist, and how he solved the problem of dualism that was started by Descartes as well as his idea on the source and nature of knowledge.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss the pantheism of Spinoza.
2. Discuss his theory of knowledge.
3. Outline and distinguish the three levels of cognition
4. Discus his metaphysics vis-à-vis the notion of substance and God as different from Descartes

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Benedict Spinoza

Baruch Spinoza (or Espinosa) was born in Amsterdam in 1632. He was among the greatest of Jewish philosophers. His originality of mind is suggested by his expulsion from the Synagogue of Amsterdam for his unorthodox views. His refusal to accept the chair of philosophy at Heidelberg was further evidence of his desire to

preserve his freedom to pursue his ideas wherever the search for truth might lead him. Though he was content to live in simplicity, to earn a modest living grinding lenses, his fame as a thinker spread abroad and inspired both admiration and condemnation. Spinoza was born in Amsterdam in 1632 in a family of Portuguese Jews who had fled from persecution in Spain. He was trained in the study of the Old Testament and the Talmud and was familiar with the writings of the Jewish philosopher Maimonides. Forced to leave Amsterdam, in 1663 he went to The Hague, where he carried on his literary career, of which his Ethics is the crowning work. Spinoza died in 1677 aged of 45.

3.2. Theory of Knowledge

Spinoza's theory of knowledge is based on the principle of logical necessity. In other words, Spinoza believes that the fabric of the universe is woven from the warp and woof of logical necessity. “In Nature there is nothing contingent, but all things are determined from the necessity of the divine nature to exist and act in a certain manner” (Lawhead, 2015: 265). Why, then, do some events seem contingent to us? Spinoza replies that “a thing cannot be called contingent unless with reference to a deficiency in our knowledge.” When we fail to see that everything is necessary, it is “because the order of causes is concealed from us” (qtd in Lawhead 2005: 265). Hence, while we can deduce some truths apriori, only someone with the exhaustive knowledge of the divine mind could deduce the existence and behavior of any particular thing. The important point is that all truths are capable of demonstration, though not for the human intellect.

3.3. Levels of Cognition

Spinoza holds that all human ideas fall into three categories, which range from the most inadequate and confused to the highest possible level of human knowledge. These categories are classified into:

1. Opinion or imagination: This is the source of inadequate ideas and false beliefs. The most inadequate form of information is mere secondhand opinion (for example, my belief that I was born on such and such a day). It also includes perception arising from signs, such as the ideas and images I get from hearing or reading certain words.

The most common form of this low-grade cognition is what I receive from vague experience.

2. Reason: This is the second level of cognition. Reason goes beyond fleeting sense experience and searches out the underlying chain of reasons or causes that make something what it is. it is of the nature of reason to perceive things under a certain form of eternity

3. Intuition: The third and highest level of knowledge is intuition. Spinoza is not as clear about this as we would like, for he describes its beneficial effects more than he does its nature. It is best seen as an integrated vision of the whole that arises out of the level of reason (Lawhead, 2015: 264-265).

3.4. Metaphysics: Substance, God and Attribute

Spinoza's metaphysics revolves around his position that there is only one substance, "God or Nature" (Russell, 1945: 571). Spinoza offered a strikingly unique conception of God, in which he identified God with the whole cosmos, a view that we now call pantheism. His famous formula was "God or Nature" (Deus sive Natura), as if to say that these two words are interchangeable (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 216). The clue to Spinoza's unique conception of God is found in his definition: God I understand to be a being absolutely infinite, that is, a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 216). Spinoza's special thoughts revolve around the ideas of substance and its attributes and for him, there is only one single substance with infinite attributes.

An attribute, Spinoza says, is that which an intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance. Since God is defined as a substance consisting of infinite attributes, God thus possesses an infinite number of aspects to his essence. However, as we examine God from our limited human perspective, we can comprehend only two attributes of God's substance: thought and extension, that is, God's mind and God's body. Descartes thought that these two attributes showed the existence of two distinct substances, thereby leading him to affirm the dualism of mind and body. Spinoza, though, saw these two attributes as different ways of expressing the activity of a single substance. God is therefore substance perceived as infinite thought and infinite extension. Being infinite, God contains everything (Stumpf and Fieser,2012:

217). Through an intricate sequence of arguments, Spinoza arrives at the conclusion that the ultimate nature of reality is a single substance. He defines substance as "that which is in itself and is conceived through itself: I mean that the conception of which does not depend on the conception of another thing from which it must be formed."

Everything, according to Spinoza, is ruled by an absolute logical necessity. There is no such thing as free will in the mental sphere or chance in the physical world. Everything that happens is a manifestation of God's inscrutable nature, and it is logically impossible that events should be other than they are (Russell, 1945: 571). If God is infinite, Spinoza reasoned, it must follow that there cannot be anything that is not God. If you discover something in the universe that is not God, then God can't be infinite, because God could have in principle been that thing as well as everything else. We are all parts of God, but so are stones, ants, blades of grass, and windows. All of it. It all fits together into an incredibly complex whole, but ultimately everything that exists is part of this one thing: God (Warburton, 1962: 78).

3.5. Ethics

In his treatment of human behaviour, Spinoza believed that people are an integral part of nature. His point is that human behavior can be explained just as precisely in terms of causes, effects, and mathematics as any other natural phenomenon. Spinoza argued for the unity of all Nature, with people as an intrinsic part of it, he develops a naturalistic ethics whereby all human actions, both mental and physical, are said to be determined by prior causes. All people possess as a part of their nature the drive to continue or persist in their own being, and this drive Spinoza calls conatus, that is, innate striving. When this conatus refers to the mind and body; it is called appetite, and insofar as appetite is conscious, it is called desire. As we become conscious of higher degrees of self-preservation and perfection, we experience pleasure, and with a reduction of such perfection, we experience pain. Our ideas of good and evil are related to our conceptions of pleasure and pain. He cautions that we must study not only our emotions but the whole order of Nature, for is only from the perspective of eternity that we can really understand our own particular lives, for then we see all events through the idea of God as cause ((Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 220-221). According to him, Passions enslave us only when we lack knowledge.

3.6. Mind-Body Problem

Contrary to Descartes's dualism, Spinoza replies that "the mind and the body are one and the same thing, conceived at one time under the attribute of thought, and at another under that of extension (Lawhead, 2015: 269). Spinoza's solution to the problem of mind and body is ingenious, though complex to assimilate. The mind and the body are one and the same thing, which is conceived now under the attribute of thought, now under the attribute of extension.' The theory of the attributes implies not only that the one substance can be known in two ways, but that the same two ways of knowing apply also to the modes of that substance.

4.0 Conclusion

In this unit, we have discussed that Spinoza accepted pantheism where he sees God and nature as opposites sides of the same coin. For him, everything is a manifestation of God, hence, all things are determined from the necessity of the divine nature to exist and act in a certain manner. We have also noticed in his thought, the mind-body problem is a pseudo-problem

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. There is only one substance and it is either God or nature.
2. There are three levels of cognition and the highest level is intuition.
3. All things are determined from the necessity of the divine nature to exist and act in a certain manner
4. The mind and the body and one and the same thing.

Self-Assessment Exercise

According to Spinoza, what are the three levels of cognition?

Discuss the theory of knowledge according to Spinoza?

Discuss the mind-body problem according to Spinoza?

6.0. References/Further Studies

Russell, B. (1945). The History of Western Philosophy. Simon and Schuster.

Warburton, N. (2011). A Little History of Philosophy. Yale university press

Lawhead, W. F. (2015). the Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy. Fourth edition. Cengage learning.

Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J. (2012). Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy. McGraw-Hill Education.

Tutor Marked Assignment

How would Spinoza respond to Descartes's view that the mind and body are completely separate?

Answer: Spinoza would respond by claiming that he mind is a finite mode of the infinite substance conceived as thought; the body is a finite mode of the infinite substance conceived as extension, and these two finite modes are in fact one and the same. Hence, the mind is the idea of the body.

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

Module 3: Unit 3: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

Contents

1.0 Introduction

Dissatisfied with the thoughts of Descartes and Spinoza, Leibniz came up with his theory of deterministic monism. In this unit, we shall discuss his notion of substance his solution to the mind-body dichotomy of Descartes and also his theory of knowledge.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will learn the following:

1. Leinbniz's conception of reality
2. His theory of pre-established harmony as a solution to Descartes dichotomy
3. His theory of knowledge as necessity and contingency
4. The difference between truth of reason and truth of facts
5. Explain his philosophy as centred on his theory of monadology

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Gottfried Leibniz

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz was born in 1646 in Leipzig, Germany. His father was a professor of moral philosophy at the University of Leipzig. Leibniz was considered an intellectual genius. As a young boy, he learned to read the Greek and Latin classics in their original languages. At the age fifteen, Leibniz was admitted into the University of Leipzig and graduated at age seventeen. After a brief stint at Jena, where he studied mathematics, he returned to Leipzig to study for a degree in law. However, academic politics intervened and a committee of faculty and students

voted against giving him a doctorate, a situation which been attributed to his young age. This painful experience drove him to the University of Altdorf, near Nuremberg, where he was readily accepted (Lawhead, 2015: 277-278). At the completion of his dissertation there, he not only received his doctoral degree in law at twenty-one years of age, but was also offered a professorship. Although Leibniz had enjoyed a fruitful public life, his popularity declined at the end of his life and he died in obscurity in 1716 at the age of seventy (Minimah, 2016: 104). His major works are Discourse on Metaphysics (1690), Monadology (1714), New System of Nature (1695), On Individuation (1663), among others.

3.2. The nature of substance: monads

Leibniz was not satisfied with Descartes and Spinoza's description of the nature of substance, because for him, their view of substance affects our understanding of human nature, the nature of freedom, and God. He considered the explanations inadequate and sets out to offer a more useful explanation. Whether he succeeded or not is a case for philosophical ratiocination. But first, what does he think of substance?

Descartes assumed that extension referred to a material substance that is extended in space and is not divisible into something more primary. For Spinoza, extension was an irreducible material attribute of God or nature. However, Leibniz maintained that extension are aggregates of compounds, composing of simple substances called monads (Essien, 2011: 205). Monads are simple substances, but unlike the atoms of Democritus and Epicurus which were inert and only derive their motions from something external to them, Leibniz's monads were described as dynamic force capable of action. Every individual monad is different from the others, and possesses its own force which is the principle of action. For Leibniz, substance must contain life or force.

3.3. The Principle of Pre-Established Harmony

Monads introduced the principle of established harmony to describe how monads interacts in nature. For him, the fact that underlies the appearance of universal interaction between finite substances is that the total state of each monad at each moment is infinitely complex and each different factor in it represents the

contemporary total state of a different one of the remaining monads (Essien, 2011: 216). In other words, every organism possesses a 'dominant monad', distinct by the clarity of its perceptions of all the others; and this dominant monad is the source of the unity within the organism (Scruton, 1984: 73). This means that the universe is well ordered in a way so as to avoid interference

3.4. Theory of Knowledge

Leibniz's deterministic conception of reality also reflected in this theory of knowledge. Leibniz believes that some ideas (such as those we find in logic and mathematics) could not be derived from the senses. He argues for the weakness of sense experience to lead us to truths that are certain and necessary. Leibniz claims that if some items of our knowledge possess these qualities of necessity and certainty, then they must be innate ideas that the mind discovers within itself (Lawhead, 2015: 279).

Central to his theory of knowledge is his approach to the notion of truth. Leibniz distinguished between truths of reason and truths of fact. According to him, truths of reasoning are necessary and their opposite is impossible. Because they are knowable only by reason, Leibniz says that they are necessary, analytic and self-evident truths. Their denial will lead to a contradiction and it is the principle of sufficient reason that attests to their facts. He expresses this thus:

> When truth is necessary, the reason for it can be found by analysis, that is by resolving it into simpler ideas and truths until the primary ones are reached. It is in this way that mathematics, speculative theorems and practical canons are reduced by analysis to definitions, axioms and postulates (Leibniz, 1956: 184).

Truths of reason, therefore are tautologies such that they cannot be denied without one getting into self-contradiction. These truths need no empirical proof. For instance, the assertion "A bachelor is an unmarried man" is a truth of reason and it is not possible for it to be denied without one getting into self-contradiction. A truth of reason, therefore, is a necessary truth because the very meaning of the terms used and the type of human understanding require that certain things be true (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 228). If the truth of reason are necessary truths, truths of facts, therefore, are contingent truth and can be denied without one engaging in self-

contradiction. Truth of facts are not known apriori but aposteriori, and unlike the truth of reason, their subjects are not contained in their predicates.

We live in the world of facts, because of this, knowledge requires that we verify what is given to us by the senses. Accordingly, Leibniz made a distinction of two ways by which we derive knowledge from facts. These are perception and apperception. Perception is the sense data while apperception is the workings of consciousness or the internal workings of the mind on the data. Through this reflective acts, the principal objects of our reasoning is being furnished (Copleston, 1994: 312). To derive knowledge from truth of fact, therefore, calls for our synthetic faculty.

4.0 Conclusion

Our investigation into Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz (the rationalists) reveal that knowledge is based on the rational capacity of human minds to arrive at certain systems of truths which are innate in them. Though they all believe in reason as the source of knowledge, they however, differ as to what constitute the nature of reality. Descartes conceives of it as thought and extension. For Spinoza, it is God or nature. For Leibniz, reality consists of just one substance. This means that among the rationalists, we have a dualist, a pantheist and a monist.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

Leibniz conceives of substance as an aggregate force capable of actions.

Extension are aggregates of compounds, composing of simple substances called monads.

There is necessity and contingency in knowledge.

The universe is well ordered in a way so as to avoid interference.

Every individual monad is different from the others, and possesses its own force which is the principle of action.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What does Leibniz mean by “pre-established harmony”? What problems is he trying to solve with this notion?

What does theory of knowledge mean according to Leibniz?

What does the nature of substance mean according to Leibniz?

6.0. References/Further Studies

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Tutor Marked Assignment

What is Leibniz’s distinction between truths of fact and truths of reason?

Answer: Truths of reasoning are necessary and their opposite is impossible. Because they are knowable only by reason, Leibniz says that they are necessary, analytic and self-evident truths. Their denial will lead to a contradiction and it is the principle of

sufficient reason that attests to their facts. Truths of facts, on the other hand, are contingent truth and can be denied without one engaging in self-contradiction.

Module 3: Unit 4: Blaise Pascal

Contents

1.0 Introduction

The modern period became a period of unrestricted quest for knowledge. The outcome was a gradual decline in the belief in Christian God and human beings were more dependent on their abilities to manipulate nature to their own advantage. This new found religion and its new god, the god of science, worried Pascal, himself a scientist. Despite his scientific background, Pascal turned to the defence of Christianity as the only hope of man. In this unit, you will learn about his thought.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will learn the following:

1. Pascal’s conception of God, nature and grace.
2. Explain Pascal wager.
3. Understand Pascal’s argument for the misery of man.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Blaise Pascal

Blaise Pascal was born June 19, 1623 in Clermont, France. He was the third of Étienne Pascal's children and his only son. Blaise's mother died when he was only three years old. In 1632 the Pascal family, Étienne and his four children, left Clermont and settled in Paris. In 1632 the Pascal family, Étienne and his four children, left Clermont and settled in Paris. Blaise Pascal's father had unorthodox educational views and decided to teach his son himself. Étienne Pascal decided that Blaise was not to study mathematics before the age of 15 and all mathematics texts were removed from their house. Blaise however, his curiosity raised by this, started

to work on geometry himself at the age of 12. In December 1639 the Pascal family left Paris to live in Rouen where Étienne had been appointed as a tax collector for Upper Normandy. Pascal invented the first digital calculator to help his father with his work collecting taxes. He worked on it for three years between 1642 and 1645. The device, called the Pascaline, resembled a mechanical calculator of the 1940s (MacTutor-online). Pascal died on August 19, 1662 aged 39 in intense pain after a malignant growth in his stomach spread to the brain. He published many books which include: The Generation of Conic Sections (1648), Treatise on the Equilibrium of Liquids (1653), New Experiments Concerning Vacuum (1647), among others.

3.2. Pascal's Conception of God, Nature and Grace

Blaise Pascal was a scientist an inventor, and an intelligent mathematician. His most original mathematical ideas were about probability. However, he is best remembered as a religious philosopher, although he did not consider himself a philosopher, following from his assumption that philosophers know little. Instead, Pascal considered himself a theologian. Warburton describes Pascal's journey into faith with the following clear expressions:

> Pascal switched from work in mathematics and science to writing about religion as a young man after he had been converted to a controversial religious sect known as Jansenism. The Jansenists believed in predestination, the idea that we don't have free will, and that only a few people had already been pre-selected by God to go to heaven. They also believed in a very strict way of life (2011: 69).

For him, belief in God is about the heart and faith. He was not persuaded by the sorts of reasoning about God's existence that philosophers generally use. He was not, for example, convinced that you could see evidence of God's hand in nature (Warburton, 2011: 67). For him, it is the the heart, not the brain, shows us the way to God.

Pascal integrated his mathematical ingenuity into his message. In his work, Pensées, Pascal came up with a clever argument to persuade those ponder on the existence or non-existence of God to simply believe in God, an argument that has

come to be known as Pascal's Wager. Pascal Wager's argument shows his knowledge of probability which he had earlier developed. This argument goes thus: If you are a rational gambler, rather than just an addict, you will want to have the best chance of winning a big prize, but you will also want to minimize your losses wherever possible. Gamblers calculate odds and, in principle, bet accordingly. So what does that mean when it comes to betting on God's existence? Assuming you aren't sure whether or not God exists, there are a number of options. You can choose to live your life as if God definitely doesn't exist. If you are right, then you will have lived without any illusion about a possible afterlife, and so you will have avoided agonizing about the possibility that you are too much of a sinner to end up in heaven. You also won't have wasted time in church praying to a non-existent being. But that approach, though it has some obvious benefits, carries with it a huge risk. If you don't believe in God, but God does actually turn out to exist, not only might you lose your chance of bliss in heaven, but you might end up in hell where you will be tortured for the whole of eternity. That is the worst imaginable outcome for anybody (Warburton, 2011: 72; Ukah, 2016: 122).

Coplestone in his History of Western Philosophy points out that as Pascal is concerned simply with knowledge of God as the supernatural end of man, with God as revealed in Christ, mediator and redeemer, he excludes natural religion and philosophical theism to all intents and purposes (Coplestone,1994:161). If philosophy is unable to establish the existence of God, at least if it is unable to establish the existence in the only sense in which it is worth while doing so, it is also incapable of revealing to man where lies true happiness (162). Pascal argues also that reason is too limited to establish the science of humanity. For without the light of the Christian religion it is not possible for human beings to know themselves.

3.3. The Misery of Man Without God

Pascal argues that without God, our condition is essentially characterized by anxiety, alienation, loneliness and ennui (Ukah, 2016: 123). Human beings are, therefore, nothing without God. For him, humans are nothing in comparison to God. They are unable to know the greater things of nature and even the smallest of them. We conceal our true conditions from ourselves through self-deception. And in our bid to get ourselves distracted, we involve ourselves in acts that are not morally

justifiable. We are filled with an unsatisfied desire for happiness, and this desire in turn brings us unhappiness. In the face of our predicaments, Pascal describes us as only a reed, the frailest thing in nature (Coplestone, 1994: 172). Pascal holds that our gulf can only be filled by God Himself.

However, Pascal has been described by some scholars, especially Voltaire, as a Christian apologetics. He argues against his position that human condition is that of anxiety and wretchedness by saying that we are neither as wicked not as miserable as Pascal thought (Voltaire, cited in Ukah, 2016: 125).

4.0 Conclusion

In this unit, we discussed Pascal's defence of Christianity. We also noticed how he described the situation of man without God. However, for people to go to God, the need faith and believe and not heir reason.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. The believe in God is all about heart and faith
2. Reason is too limited to proof the existence of God.
3. Our gulf can only be filled by God Himself.
4. Human beings are nothing without God.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss Pascal's conception of God, nature and grace.

Discuss Pascal's conception of the misery of man without God?

Briefly discuss Blaise Pascal biography

6.0. References/Further Studies

Coplestone, F. (1994). A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, The British Philosophers from Hobbes to Hume. Volume V. Image books

MacTutor. Blaise Pascal. www.athshistory.st-andrews.ac.uk

Ukah, M. E. (2016). "Blaise Pascal" in A.F. Uduigwomen, M.E. Uka and E. C. Uduma. (Eds.). A Critical History of Philosophy, Vol. 2. Ultimate index books.

Warburton, N. (2011). A Little History of Philosophy. Yale university press

Tutor Marked Assignment

Discuss Pascal Wager's arguments

Answer: This argument goes thus: If you are a rational gambler, rather than just an addict, you will want to have the best chance of winning a big prize, but you will also want to minimize your losses wherever possible. Gamblers calculate odds and, in principle, bet accordingly. So what does that mean when it comes to betting on God's existence? Assuming you aren't sure whether or not God exists, there are a number of options. You can choose to live your life as if God definitely doesn't exist. If you are right, then you will have lived without any illusion about a possible afterlife, and so you will have avoided agonizing about the possibility that you are too much of a sinner to end up in heaven. You also won't have wasted time in church praying to a non-existent being. But that approach, though it has some obvious benefits, carries with it a huge risk. If you don't believe in God, but God does actually turn out to exist, not only might you lose your chance of bliss in heaven, but you might end up in hell where you will be tortured for the whole of eternity. That is the worst imaginable outcome for anybody

Nicholas Malebranche

Module 3: Unit 5: Nicholas Malebranche

Contents

6.0. References/Further Studies

1.0 Introduction

Descartes mind-body bifurcation created a division among the rationalists. However, there were others who agreed with him about the nature of the two substances, but differ in terms of their relationship. Malebranche was one of such disciples who believed in the dualism of Descartes. However, he did not agree with the nature of interaction as described by Descartes. This unit assess Malebranche's response to interactionsm of Descartes.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Differentiate between the nature of interaction in Descartes and Malebranche.
2. Know the different attribute of both substances in his philosophy

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Nicholas Malebranche

Malebranche was born on August 6, 1638 in Paris. He was a student at the Collège de la Marche, and after graduating he went to study theology at the Sorbonne. His education left him with a distaste for a scholasticism that focused on the work of Aristotle. Thus, in 1660 he decided to leave the universities and to enter the Oratory, a religious congregation founded in 1611 by the Augustinian theologian Pierre Bérulle. At the Oratory in Paris, Malebranche studied ecclesiastical history, linguistics, and the Bible, and with his fellow students also immersed himself in the work of Augustine. He was ordained a priest on September 14, 1664 (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Malebranche died on October 13, 1715. He published many books which include, De la Recheche Del Verde (1674), Traite de la Nature et de la Grace (1680), Traite de Morale (1684), among others.

3.2. The philosophy of Malebranche

Malebranche was a disciple of Rene Descartes. His theory, which is called occasionalism, insists on the Cartesian distinction between mind and matter and how they interact. Malebranche was dissatisfied with Descartes's refusal to explicate the relationship between mind and body. He argued that one cannot dismiss the mind-body question simply by saying that experience plainly shows that the body and the mind act on each other (Radner, 1993: 320). As an attempt to tackle this problem, he came up with his philosophy of occasionalism. Malebranche maintains that there is no interaction between the mind and the body since they both possess different attribute. Instead, the relationship is occasioned by God so that both the mind and the body moves simultaneously in unity. Moreover, he believes that it cannot be part of the explanation that the mind and the body become capable of the same sorts of modifications. Daisie Radner quotes Malebranche thus:

> Each substance remains what it is, and as the soul is incapable of extension and movement, so the body is incapable of sensation and inclinations. The only alliance of mind and body known to us consists in a natural and mutual correspondence of the soul's thoughts with the brain traces, and of the soul's emotions with the movements of the animal spirits (Radner, 1993: 331).

This means that the relationship between the mind and the body are mutual. Malebranche initiated two types of argument against the causal efficacy of bodies. First, there is an argument of material substance as passive by nature. The only kinds of properties that pertain to extension are figure and motion. As extended things, bodies have the passive faculty of receiving such modes, but they lack the active faculty of producing them. The second type of argument has the form of reductio ad absurdum. Suppose that bodies had a power to act or to bring about change. The exercise of this power would involve some state of affairs that is incompatible with the Cartesian ontology. Malebranche uses this form of argument against the human body as cause of sensations in the mind, and also against one body as cause of another body's motion (Popkin and Stroll, 1996: 130).

Malebranche insisted if the mind and body are so distinct, then there cannot be any interaction or connection between them. What actually happens, according to Malebranche, is that although mental events have nothing to do with physical ones, whenever anything happens in one realm, God makes something corresponding to

occur in the other (Popkin and Stroll, 1996: 131). Therefore, the relationship that occur between the mind and the body are occasions created by God. Malebranche associated human act of imagination as the production of images in the ordinary sense (Coplestone, 1994:186). Thus, even our imaginations are parallel to the senses but weaker than what is given in actual existence.

4.0 Conclusion

This unit presented Malebranche's argument against Descartes nature of interaction. In his thought, the mind is superior to the body, though equally distinct their nature, hence, interaction between them is not possible.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. Although mental events have nothing to do with physical ones, whenever anything happens in one realm, God makes something corresponding to occur in the other.
2. This position is called occasionalism'
3. The relationship that occur between the mind and the body are occasions created by God.
4. He denied Descartes theory of mind-body interaction.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What is the difference between interactionism and occasionalism?

What is the similarity between interactionism and occasionalism?

Does the mind and body interact?

6.0. References/Further Studies

Coplestone, F. (1994). A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy: From Descartes to Leibniz Volume IV. Image books.

Popkin, R H. and Stroll, A. (1996). Philosophy. Third edition. Made simple books.

Radner, D. (1993). "Occasionalism" in G.H.R.Parkinson (ed.). Routledge History of Philosophy: the renaissance and 17th century rationalism. Volume IV. Routledge. Pp 320-352.

Tutor Marked Assignment

What is Malebranche's argument against Descartes nature of interaction?

Answer: Malebranche initiated two types of argument against the causal efficacy of bodies. First, there is an argument of material substance as passive by nature. The only kinds of properties that pertain to extension are figure and motion. As extended things, bodies have the passive faculty of receiving such modes, but they lack the active faculty of producing them. The second type of argument has the form of reductio ad absurdum. Suppose that bodies had a power to act or to bring about change. The exercise of this power would involve some state of affairs that is incompatible with the Cartesian ontology.

Module 4

Module 4: Unit 1: Immanuel Kant: Synthesizing Rationalism and Empiricism

Module 4: Unit 2: Isaac Newton and the Age of Enlightenment

Module 4: Unit 3: Robert Boyle: The Father of Chemistry

Immanuel Kant

Module 4: Unit 1: Immanuel Kant: Synthesizing Rationalism and Empiricism

Contents

1.0 Introduction

The debate between the empiricists and the rationalists and their response to the nature and source of human knowledge provided the ground through which the thought of Kant flourished. While the empiricists rooted for experience as the nature and source of human knowledge, the rationalists were of the claim that knowledge comes from reason and that the human mind is crowned with ideas that are innate to their existence. Immanuel Kant toed the middle ground by attempting a reconciliation between these two opposing traditions. This gave birth to a revolution in epistemology in the same manner that Copernicus did in Astronomy. In this unit, you will learn about Kant's attempt at synthesizing rationalism and empiricism.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain Kant's Copernican Revolution in epistemology.
2. Differentiate between the two types of judgment.
3. Differentiate between the noumena and the phenomena

4. Discuss Kant's ethics.
5. Understand Kant's position on the existence of God.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant was born in Konigsberg, East Prussia, on April 22, 1724. His parents were Pietists, a sect of Protestants who lived severe, puritanical lives and emphasized faith and religious feelings over reason and theological doctrines (Lawhead, 2015: 355). Although Kant's later religious thought was hardly orthodox, he was always sensitive to the longings of the heart that cannot be met by the cold dictates of theoretical reason. He attended the University of Konigsberg and later ended up becoming a professor there himself. Kant retired from public life and lecturing in 1797. He died on February 12, 1804 after a period of illness. His major works are, Critique of Pure Reason (1781), Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics (1785), Critique of Practical Reason (1788), Critique of Judgment (1790), Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science (1786), Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason (1793), Perpetual Peace (1795), Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals (1797), among others.

3.2. Forms of Judgment: Analytic and synthetic Judgment

As earlier stated in our introduction, Kant's task was to reconcile empiricism and rationalism. His epistemological quest, therefore, became the quest for a kind of knowledge that is synthetic-apriori. He was able to locate synthetic or aposteriori propositions in the empiricist programme, and apriori propositions in the rationalists programme. The synthetic-apriori judgments synthesized rationalism with empiricism, since it contains aspects of both doctrine (Essien, 2011: 239).

It is the believe of Kant that knowledge always appears in the form of judgments in which something is affirmed or denied (Lawhead, 2015:360). Therefore, to have a clear knowledge, he thought it was necessary to begin with the examination of the kinds of judgments that we make. Accordingly, he maintains that there are two categories of Judgments: analytic and synthetic.

Analytic judgments are based on the principle of contradiction. For example, “all bachelors are unmarried” is a true analytic judgment because the contradiction of this statement is necessarily false. We can confirm the truth of this judgment not by going out and gathering facts but merely by analyzing the meaning of the terms. The predicate “unmarried” is already contained within the subject “bachelors.” Furthermore, because the truth of this judgment is independent of any particular facts, it does not give us any new knowledge about the world. Synthetic judgments, however, do give us new information about the world. For example, “All the bachelors in this class are six feet tall” is a synthetic judgment. Judgments of this sort synthesize or bring together the subject (“bachelors in this class”) with the predicate (“six feet tall”). It would not be a logical contradiction to deny this statement about bachelors (Lawhead, 2015:360).

Kant makes a further distinction, this time between judgments that are apriori and judgments that are aposteriori. According to him, all analytic judgments are apriori: Their meaning does not depend on our experience of any particular cases or events since they are independent of any observations, as in the case of mathematics. Synthetic judgments, on the other hand, are for the most part aposteriori, that is, they occur after an experience of observation ((Stumpf and Fieser 276). Besides the analytic-apriori and the synthetic-aposteriori, Kant locates another form of judgments called the synthetic-apriori. The synthetic judgment is located in empiricism while the apriori judgment is rooted in rationalism

3.3. Kant's Copernican Revolution

In the first line of the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant asserts that, “There can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience…but though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience.” From this position, it is evidenced that in the first part of the statement, Kant supported empiricism, but in the second part, we also cite with the rationalists. Kant rejected either absolute empiricism or rationalism. As a result, he struck a synthesis between these two opposing epistemological schools. Taking clue from the revolution in astronomy initiated by Copernicus, Kant proposes a “Copernican revolution” in epistemology. The empiricists thought that the mind is passive when

confronting the world and simply records impressions. In this picture, knowledge conforms to its objects.

However, Kant proposes a different view to this believe. He reverses this picture asks us to consider the possibility that objects conform to our knowledge (Kant, CPR Bxvi). In other words, for sense data to be experienced as objects by us, the mind must impose a certain rational structure on them (Lawhead, 2015: 258). This means that in the process of acquiring knowledge, it is not the human mind that conforms to objects, instead, it is rather the objects that conform to the structure of the human mind so that we can only know things as they appear to us. This new hypothesis is what is called Kant's Copernican revolution.

3.4. Metaphysics: The Noumena and the Phenomenal

Kant claims that there are two nature of reality; reality as they are in themselves and as they appear to us. Things are they are in themselves are called noumena while things as they appear to us are called phenomena. Kant maintain that the noumena are beyond the scope of human knowledge while the phenomena are the product of the human mind (Omoregbe, 1998:13). The conclusion of this is that for Kant, we cannot know reality as they are in themselves, but only the way they appear.

Kant maintains that there are certain aspects of reality that human understanding could not access. Therefore, any attempt to explore these areas by our pure concepts of understanding is considered as going "beyond all possible experience" and this is certainly a misleading attempt. In other word, all objects of understanding which are beyond the possible experience, are impossible; at least with regard to our available abilities (Abdullah, 2008). This is due to the fact that the noumenal world, including the concept of substance, force, action etc., has certain characteristics that differentiated and distanced it from experience or the phenomenon. The characteristics of the noumenal world which were described as 1) independent of experience; 2) contain no appearance of the senses; and 3) hold a necessity of determination, had veiled it from being known or perceived by human experience (Neujhar, 1995).

3.4. Ethics

The foundation of Kantian ethics is the will. In his Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals, Kant states: "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called 'good' without qualification, except a good will" (Kant, 2008: 12). This implies is that, for Kant, the seat of moral worth is in the will, and the good will is one that acts out of a sense of duty. Popkin and Stroll (1996: 41), notes that the main question which Kant's moral theory was designed to answer is: 'What is the nature of morality?' This question, they reason, can also be put in different ways such as: 'What is a moral action as contrasted with a non-moral one?' or again, 'What is the difference between a person who acts morally and one who does not? For Kant, a person is acting morally only when he suppresses his/her feelings and inclinations, and does that which he/she is obliged to do. Kant stresses that the essence of morality is to be found in the Will from which the act is done. All those Wills reduced to one that a person is moral when he acts from a sense of duty (Popkin and Stroll, 1996: 44).

According to Kant, the moral law is presented to us as a categorical imperative. It tells you what you ought, should, or must do, but it does not depend on any prior conditions, or subjective wants and wishes, and it contains no qualifications (Lawhead, 2015: 372). A major test of a morally good act is, therefore, whether its principle can be applied to all rational beings and applied consistently. Moral philosophy is the quest for these principles that apply to all rational beings and that lead to behavior that we call good (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 287).

3.5. Space and Time

A discussion on the doctrine of space and time is the most important part of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (Russell, 1945: 712). His thesis in the discourse is that space and time are not mysterious sorts of "things" within experience but are fundamental frames of reference in terms of which objects, which he calls the "forms of intuition," appear to us (Lawhead, 2015: 361). In Kantian perspective, space is a form of all appearance of outer sense. It is the necessary condition of all outer objects as they appear to us but does not necessary underlie things as they are in themselves (Essien, 2011: 241). Time, on the other hand is closely related to space. However, the difference is that time is a form of intuition or perception of ourselves and our inner state, not of our intuition of objects outside us.

3.6. The Existence of God

Kant's argument for the existence/non-existence of God is quite simple. Following from his critical remarks, Kant claims that we cannot demonstrate God's existence, neither can we demonstrate that God does not exist by pure reason alone. If, therefore, the existence of God cannot be effectively dealt with by the theoretical reason, then some other aspect of reason must be considered as the source of the idea of God (Stumpf and Fieser, 2012: 283). Kant's argument for the existence of God, therefore, is that we cannot use transcendental ideas or theoretical principles to demonstrate the existence of God.

4.0 Conclusion

Kant attempted to put to rest, the struggle between rationalism and empiricism on the source and nature of human knowledge. His thought has even been described by some scholars as the last of man struggle with skepticism. However, it is not without criticism. As a matter of fact, it has been argued that Kant was not successful in his revolution as he failed to establish any truth about objective reality.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

1. Kant made an attempt to reconcile empiricism and rationalism
2. There are two natures of reality which are the noumena and the phenomena.
3. We can only have knowledge of phenomenal realities because the noumena are unknowable
4. Space and time are apriori form of intuitions
5. Synthetic-apriori judgments contain both reason and experience
6. Moral laws are presented as categorical imperative.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss Kant's Copernican revolution

Differentiate between the two types of judgment.

Differentiate between the noumena and the phenomena

6.0. References/Further Studies

Lawhead, W. F. (2015). the Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy. Fourth edition. Cengage learning.

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Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J. (2012). Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy. McGraw-Hill Education.

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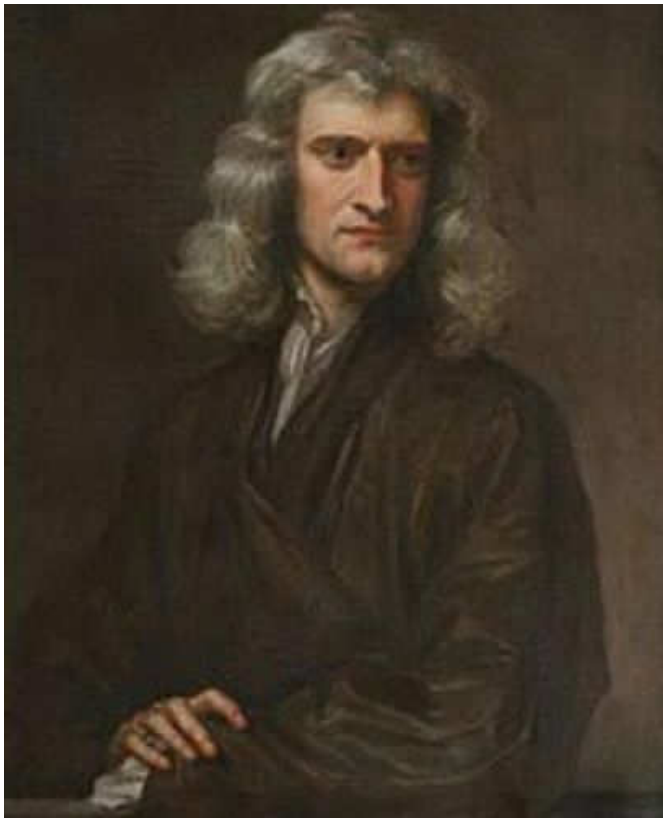
Kant, I. (1781). Critique of Pure Reason. N. Kemp (trans.). Merchant Books.

Omoregbe, J. (1990). Metaphysics Without Tears. JERP

Tutor Marked Assignment

Where can we find the essence of morality in Kant's ethics?

Answer: In Kant's ethics, the essence of morality is to be found in the motive from which the act is done. All those motives reduced to one that a person is moral when he acts from a sense of duty.



Isaac Newton

Module 4: Unit 2: Isaac Newton and the Age of Enlightenment

Contents

4.0. Conclusion

5.0. Summary

6.0. References/Further Studies

1.0 Introduction

The enlightenment age is often described as the period of optimism, hope, happiness, confidence and happiness. It is a period where man escaped from self-imposed tutelage to question his existence in all areas without restriction. It was also the age of revolution in science and technology which sprang up to improve the life of man. The enlightenment period started in the 18th century. Lawhead (2015: 293), describes this period as "perhaps the last period in the history of Western Europe when human omniscience was thought to be an attainable goal. However, the enlightenment period did suddenly come into being, instead, It came as a culmination of many of the cultural and intellectual trends such as empiricism and rationalism. Apparently, the spirit of enlightenment reached its apogee following the discovery of Newtonian science. In this unit, therefore, you will be exploring the contribution of Isaac Newton to enlightenment.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Highlight Newton's contribution to the enlightenment
2. Explain how his style prompted a new style in philosophizing
3. Discuss the consequence of Newton's thought on religion

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Isaac Newton

Sir Isaac Newton was English physicist and mathematician, who was the culminating figure of the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century. He was born December 25, 1642 in the hamlet of Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire, England. Newton was the only son of a local yeoman, also called Isaac Newton and the mother was

Hannah Ayscough. In June 166, Newton was admitted into Trinity College, Cambridge, where it is on record that he was far older than other undergraduates because of his interrupted education. Upon his arrival in Cambridge, Newton joined the movement now known as the Scientific Revolution. Newton received his bachelor's degree in April 1665. Shortly later in that same year, the university was closed following the outbreak of plague.

Newton was elected to a fellowship in Trinity College in 1667, after the university reopened. Two years later, Isaac Barrow, Lucasian professor of mathematics resigned the chair and recommended Newton to succeed him. However, the professorship exempted Newton from the necessity of tutoring but imposed the duty of delivering an annual course of lectures. He died on March 20, 1727. His major works are, Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica (1687), Opticks (1704), Observations upon the prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John (1733), The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended (1728), Method of Fluxions (1736), Arithmetica Universalis (1707), and An Historical Account of Two Notable Corruptions of Scripture (1754).

3.2. The Impact of Newton Science

Newton, in his Principia, denounced any speculative theories that are not firmly grounded on the empirical data. He was critical of any attempt to investigate the essences of things. Instead of focusing on essences, science should focus on describing the nature of phenomena. For him, we cannot comprehend things scientifically unless we focus on the phenomena. Newton's methodological principle had great impact in the philosophies of Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Kant. After Newton it gradually became apparent that the more science and experience were considered the sole basis of knowledge, the less we could know about reality in itself apart from the way it appears to us (Lawhead, 2015: 296).

3.3. Philosophizing in a Newtonian Style

Lawhead observes something quite important about thinkers of the enlightenment age, following the thoughts of Newton. According to him, the philosophers of the time thought that just as Newton had resolved all mysteries concerning physical bodies, so now the task was to apply the same methods of

experimental observation to the mysteries concerning human existence (2015: 296). They reasoned that operations of the human mind, ethics, and politics were collection of phenomena that could be explained in terms of descriptive laws. Hence, the philosophers of this time all aspired to formulate human sciences based on Newton's science.

The model of Newtonian physics greatly manifests in the epistemology of this era. Corresponding to the physical particles whose laws of motion Newton unveiled, ideas were thought to be mental particles that could be analyzed down into fundamental, atomic units (Lawhead, 2015: 296). This awakens in the thinkers of this age, the believe that all the ideas were complexes made up of simple ideas that are given to us by experience. They likened the human mind to the outer space of the astronomer as the "inner space," where ideas float and connect together according to psychological laws derived from experience.

3.4. The Consequences on Religion

Newtonian science influenced the religion of the age as well. Following his reduction of all abstract entities, which were once thought to showcase God's providence, into a precise mathematical code, there was an attack on some of the received doctrine in theology. As a result, many feared that materialism and atheism would creep in from the back of mechanistic science and take total control of the way people act, live and reason. However, Newton himself did not think that science will lead to atheism, for he was a consistent Christian. For him, science revealed a universe that was majestic and marvelous in its design, pointing to the greatness of its creator. His argument for God for the existence of God was not solely based on the evidence of design, but also on the problems within his own physics. For instance, he could not explain why the gravitational attraction of the stars does not cause them to collapse together. He could not also explain what seemed to be irregularities in the universe that would eventually cause it to run down. Running short of scientific ideas to explain these phenomena, Newton assumed that God actively intervened to keep the world machine going (Lawhead, 2015: 297). This position has been styled "God-of the-gaps." However, Lawhead, commenting on this position believes that it is risky to use gaps within our scientific knowledge as evidence for the necessity

of God because when these gaps are eventually filled as scientific knowledge expands, there may seem to be less need to believe in God.

4.0 Conclusion

Every philosophy is the product of its age. The eighteenth century was characterized by scientific revolution and Newton was a proponent figure of the age. It is therefore, not surprising that his idea impacted the empiricists in their search for what constitute the source and nature of human knowledge. Newton reduced all forms of natural phenomenon, the world of matter and all abstract entities into a precise mathematical code called the calculus (Mendie, 2016: 286). In this unit, you have learnt that his influence became enormous that his thought radically reflected in the manner of which philosophers of his age developed their thoughts.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. Newton establish empiricism as a method of science.
2. He denied the possibility of the human intellect to grasp the essences of thing
3. The world consists of ideas given by experience
4. In his idea of God, he believes that God is actively involved in the world to keep it going

Self-Assessment Exercise

Explain how Newton's philosophy influenced Hume.

Briefly explain the consequences of religion according to Newton

Discuss the impact of Newton's science

6.0. References/Further Studies

Mendie, P. J. (2016). "Isaac Newton" in A.F. Uduigwomen, M.E. Uka and E. C. Uduma. (Eds.). A Critical History of Philosophy, Vol. 2. Ultimate index books. Pp 289-303

Lawhead, W. F. (2015). the Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy. Fourth edition. Cengage learning.

Self-Assessment Exercise

How did Newton physics influence the thinkers of his age?

Answer: motion Newton unveiled, ideas were thought to be mental particles that could be analyzed down into fundamental, atomic units (Lawhead, 2015: 296). This awakens in the thinkers of this age, the believe that all the ideas were complexes made up of simple ideas that are given to us by experience.

Robert Boyle

Module 4: Unit 3: Robert Boyle: The Father of Chemistry

Contents

6.0. References/Further Studies

1.0 Introduction

Robert Boyle is the father of modern chemistry. Boyle detached chemistry from the mysticism of alchemy, magic and sorcery (Mendie, 2016: 298). According to him, most followers of alchemy were disinterested in finding the fundamental causes of phenomena. However, this is a philosophical work, so we shall be more concerned about his contribution to philosophy, specifically, natural philosophy. In this unit, you will learn about his Epistemology and his approach to Mind-Body relations.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will learn the following:

1. Know the difference between perception and imagination in Boyle's theory of knowledge
2. Explain how knowledge is possible according to Boyle
3. Outline the functions of the mind
4. Discuss the nature of interaction between the mind and the body

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Robert Boyle

Robert Boyle was born on 27 January 1627 in County Waterford in the south-east of Ireland. He was the seventh son of the earl of Cork. He was educated at Eton and later travelled to Europe to continue his studies. He returned from the continent in 1644 extremely interested in science and settled in Dorset where he built a laboratory. Between 1655 and 1666, Boyle moved to Oxford. In Oxford, he engaged Robert Hooke as an assistant and together they devised the most famous piece of experimental equipment, the vacuum chamber or air-pump. In 1660, together with 11 others, Boyle formed the Royal Society in London which met to witness experiments and discuss what would constitute scientific topics. In 1668, Boyle moved permanently to London, living with his sister. In 1680 he refused the

presidency of the Royal Society because the oath required violated his strongly held religious principles. Boyle died in London on 31 December 1691 (BBC, online). Boyle had many publications to his name.

3.2. Theory of knowledge: perception and imagination

Robert Boyle believes that we have knowledge of the world through perception and imagination. By perception, Boyle refers to the way by which information enters the brain as a result of causal interaction between the perceived and the perceived object. Boyle says that when the information perceived arrives at the brain, it is processed by a subsystem or set of subsystems devoted to presenting it to the mind, and to storing it thereafter. He says that upon entering the mind, the information is first processed by the common sense, which combines the inputs from the various sense organs.

Material images, according to him, are formed in the brain through imagination. Hence, he sees imagination as a process by which material images are formed in the brain. However, Boyle argues that we could have knowledge of things that are unimaginable (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). This is because somethings are either too large or too small to be imagined, that is, such things cannot be imaged. And because somethings are not imaginable, Boyle maintains that there is need for a non-material faculty in order to account for such things. This position gave birth to a great revolution in science that gave birth to chemistry as a discipline established by strict scientific rules. Boyle laid the foundation for scientists to rely more on the outcome of experiment rather than speculative knowledge which opened up the method of experiment in science (Asuo, 2011: 373).

3.3. The Nature of the Mind

Boyle adopted the dualism of Descartes. Set within a Cartesian substance dualism, he says that there are two sorts of substances, material and immaterial. The soul is an immaterial substance. However, he does not consider souls as the only immaterial beings; there are also angels, demons and God (Anstey, 2003: 188). The soul, for him, has some affinity with these other incorporeal beings. Like Descartes, Boyle believes that the function of the mind is thinking. Again Boyle also puts forward the thesis that even our unassisted reason can establish that the soul ‘being

an incorporeal substance, cannot perish with the body. This, however does not entails that the soul is immortal by nature, but merely that, in virtue of its being different from material bodies, it can exist apart from them, and that it retains its power of thinking even when divorced from the body. Boyle believes that we cannot have a full knowledge of the mind, hence, he calls for the need to search for another source of knowledge about the mind, over and above natural reason, if we are to establish its immortality (Anstey, 2003: 188). And Boyle believes that this source is Scripture. In his work, The Christian Virtuoso, Boyle argues that the immortality of the soul is one of the grand principles of natural religion. He tells us that the soul, 'being an immaterial spirit, and consequently a substance not really divisible, can have no parts expelled or transposed, and so being exempted from the physical causes of corruption that destroys bodies, she ought to last always" (Boyle, n.d: 518).

Boyle maintains that the mind is only housed in the body to perform its functions. He points out that the primary functions of the mind when united to the body are understanding, volition, action and the response to external stimuli by the production of sensations. However, he believes that the soul can also function independently from the body. It has powers of inference and the forming of clear and distinct ideas, the ability to reflect upon its own operations and of knowing its own limits that in no way depend upon its union with the body (Anstey, 2003: 189). And of course, unlike any corporeal entity, it is fitted to ponder and appreciate the excellences of God (Anstey, 2003: 189). It follows from Boyle's thought, therefore, that the mind is immaterial, incorruptible and rational while the soul is material and corruptible. Here, Boyle adopts the Platonian and Cartesian assumptions that the soul is a prisoner to the body.

3.4. Mind-Body Relation

Having agreed with Descartes on the dualism of the mind and the body, what is Boyles position on the relationship between them? Boyle cited with the nomic occasionalists. According to him, God ensures that the persevering motion of corpuscles after a collision is uniform and rectilinear (or circular) and that a predetermined quantity of motion is transferred on collision. So the collisions of corpuscles are the occasion of God's nomic intervention in the world (Anstey, 2003: 187). This implies that there is a union established by God according to certain laws

that demarcate the scope of interaction and it furnishes both the body and mind with new powers. Boyle styles the interaction that results from this union as 'supra-mechanical' and interestingly, he takes this to be the third in a tripartite division of the 'operations of God' in nature. Ostensibly this implies that God is integral to supra-mechanical interactions (Anstey, 2003: 191-92).

4.0 Conclusion

In this unit, we discussed the natural philosophy of Boyle. We assessed his philosophy where it is evident in his epistemology that he embraced dualism. His position on mind-body a relations and their interaction are also discussed.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

We have knowledge of the world through perception and imagination.

The soul (mind) is an immaterial substance.

Material images, according to him, are formed in the brain through imagination.

The relationship between the mind and the body is indicative of the operations of God in nature.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What is the difference between perception and imagination as stated by Boyle?

Know the difference between perception and imagination in Boyle's theory of knowledge

Explain how knowledge is possible according to Boyle?

Outline the functions of the mind?

6.0. References/Further Studies

Anstey, P. R. (2003). The Philosophy of Robert Boyle. Routledge

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Mendie, P. J. (2016). "Robert Boyle" in A.F. Uduigwomen, M.E. Uka and E. C. Uduma. (Eds.). A Critical History of Philosophy, Vol. 2. Ultimate index books. Pp 289-303

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Tutor Marked Assignment

What are the primary functions of the mind when united to the body according to Boyle?

Answer: For Boyle, the primary functions of the mind when united to the body are understanding, volition, action and the response to external stimuli by the production of sensations.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte

Module 5: Unit 1: Johann Gottlieb Fichte

Contents

4.0. Conclusion

5.0. Summary

6.0. References/Further Readings

1.0. Introduction

Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy brought a new wave of thought in German; the wave of idealism. In Kant's philosophy, the mind is all that there is and anything that we come to know is simply structured by the Mind. However, he divided reality into the noumenal and the phenomenal, that is, things as they are in themselves and things as they appear to us. This gave rise to the assumption that while the phenomenal world is the product of the human mind, the noumenal world remains beyond the bounds of the mind. The implication of this is that the human mind can only capture reality in part and not in whole. This skepticism involving the unknowability of things in themselves (the noumena) became the starting point of German idealism. In this unit, however, we shall begin an investigation to German idealism by discussing the idealism of Fichte.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Learn the idealist thought in the philosophy of Johann Fichte.
2. Identify his arguments against Kant.
3. Explain his conception of reality

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Johann Fichte

Fichte was born on May 19, 1762, in Rammenau, in Saxony, Germany, to a family of modest means. He received his education through aristocratic benefactors. Fichte attended University of Jenna, Wittenberg and Leipzig from 1780 to 1784, where he studied theology and law without taking a degree (Zoller, 1999: 524). In 1794, he was offered a professorship at University of Jenna, but he lost the position five years after, on charges of atheism. Fichte spent the remaining years of his life

in Berlin giving private lectures. However, following the establishment of University of Berlin, he was appointed as its rector between 1811-1812. Fichte died on January 29, 1814 of typhoid fever which he contracted from his wife who was a nurse. His major works are, Attempt at a Critique of All Revelation (1792), Addresses of the German Nation (1808), Foundations of the Wissenschaftschre (1794-1795), The Vegetation of Man (1800), among others.

3.2. Fichte's Metaphysics

Fichte's metaphysical system is a reaction to Kant's transcendental idealism. Accordingly, he rejected Kant's noumena and accepted his phenomena as the only reality that there is. Phenomena, for him, is the product of the mind. According to Essien, (2011: 247), Fichte followed Kant in maintaining that the phenomenal world, that is, the physical world of sense perception, is the product of the human mind. This human mind is termed as the "Ego" by Fichte. Fichte argued that the ego can penetrate the things in themselves. The ego, for him, is the human mind which is also a fragment of the Infinite or the Absolute ego (God). Fichte argued against the Kantian position that the noumena (things in themselves) are unknowable. For him, the entire universe is an expression of the Infinite Ego which is capable of penetrating things as they are in themselves.

For Fichte, the ground for all existence rests on the subject, the self-positing "I" which is also the object of reality. In defiance to Kantian heritage, Harrison-Barbet (2012) writes:

> Fichte rejected the idea of an unknowable thing-in-itself; this, he said, leads to dogmatic materialism and idealism. But he was aware of himself as a free, moral being, with an interest in the self rather than in 'things,' and understood this as the active, free, Absolute Ego, which is self-affirming intelligence-in-itself, creative thought and the Absolute moral principles in man.

However, Fichte was faced with the problem of how to derive 'objective' consciousness from self-conscious intelligence-in-itself and how to account for the world of material objects. In attempting to solve these problems, he posited three principles.

1. The pure Ego posits itself and this self-positing intuition constitutes its 'being' which we refer to as reality.
2. In positing itself as pure of Absolute Ego, a 'Non-Ego' is opposed to it and it is here that category of negation is applicable.
3. The Ego and Non-Ego must limit or restrain each other; for if they are unlimited, they would cancel each other out and there would be no consciousness at all. And we thus reach the category of limitation or finitude (Darty, 2012).

Fichte accounts for the genesis of the thing-in-itself in the pure self-positing act of the "I." According to Saitya Das (2012), since the "I" cannot be an object of outer sense like any other objects of cognition, as against Kant, "I" can only emerge in a pure primordial act of inner self. For such a being as I, there is no other predicate than itself. It is its own object. This object appears as its own nature which is the self limitation of the self-positing subject.

3.3. Fichte's Epistemology

Fichte in his epistemology rejected dogmatism. This rejection follows from his conviction that consciousness can only be explained in terms of empirical and mechanical necessity. His theory of knowledge, therefore, makes the Ego the foundation of knowledge. Hence, he sets out the conditions under which the subject can achieve consciousness of itself. He argues that self-consciousness presupposes the individuation of the subject as a person among others and the application of categorical concepts that lend a lawful structure to the manifold of sensory data (Zoller, 1999: 526).

Fichte develops a distinction between the knowing subject and the known object by means of dialectical relationship among three chief capacities of the Ego. These three capacities of the Ego are the Absolute Ego, the theoretical Ego and the Practical Ego. The Absolute or Infinite Ego is the ground of everything. The theoretical ego is the human mind or subject of cognition whereas the practical ego consists in the ego striving to completely destroy what is not given to the mind (the Non Ego), thereby eliminating any source of determination other what is given to the mind itself. The human mind, for him, is part of the absolute mind and since the absolute mind is infinite, human beings then are able to acquire knowledge because

they possess the mind and the human mind is a fragment of the Absolute mind. Knowledge, therefore becomes possible through a form of intuition.

3.4. Ethics

In his ethics, Fichte conceives of the human being as a dualistic entity. First, as an agent that is governed by laws of sense intuition, determined by nature, responsible for his/her self-preservation, and second, as a self-determining subject. Human being is inclined to freedom which, to Fichte, is possible in both realms of body and spirit (Abam, 2016: 368). The extended world, therefore, is structured by our interests and values which provides an avenue for us to make choices and realize our moral goals. Fichte expresses this thought when he asserts:

The Nature on which I have act is not a foreign element, called into existence without reference to me, into which I cannot penetrate. It is molded by my own laws of thought, and must be in harmony with them; it must be thoroughly transparent, knowable, and penetrable to me, even to its inmost recesses. In all its phenomena, it expresses nothing but connections and relations of my own being to myself, so surely may I expect to comprehend it (Fichte, 1956:93).

From the above excerpts, Fichte made a point between the harmony of nature and how it penetrates our inmost recesses. This is why the notion of conscience plays a very crucial role in his moral theory. Conscience for him is the immediate consciousness or feeling of our determinate duty (Abam, 2016: 368). Hence, he is of the view that a moral agent ought to deduce and set general rules that will guide his actions and categorize them to their conduciveness to the Ego's moral end (Abam, 2016: 369). Fichte conceived of the infallibility of the human conscience. Conscience for him, is the function of the empirical Ego and failure to adhere to it amount to the performance of evil actions by a moral agent.

3.5. Critique

Fichte's claim to the primacy of the self-positing Ego as the subject and object of reality was rejected by subsequent idealist thinkers. For instance, Harrison-Barbet (2012) is of the view that in the context of German idealism, Fichte's system has been held to be one-sided and subjective since it deals with nothing but the self-imposing ego. Similarly, Bowman (2012) alludes to the claim that Fichte's system

leads to nihilism; that is, attempting to produce reality out of mere mental representations, and thus, from nothingness.

According to Lawhead (2002: 350), Fichte's account of the Absolute lacks the anthropomorphic qualities of traditional concept of deity. Instead, it is more like an impersonal but rational moral order that is in the process of evolving. Again, the subjectivity of human consciousness gives a good ground for the contradiction of Fichte's position that the individual mind is part of or representation of the Absolute mind. This contradiction arises from the fact that different individuals think, act and behave differently. Why should this be the case when every individual ego arises from the Absolute Ego? However, despite the criticisms brought against Fichte's metaphysical system, the importance of his thought is also enormous. Hence, in the history of German idealism, Fichte is described as the stage setter upon which subsequent German idealists stood to elucidate the nature of reality.

4.0. Conclusion

Fichte presents the world as a dynamic and spiritual process in which human beings are active participants. His thoughts, therefore, made a serious attempt to broaden and give justifiable credence to idealism as a foundation for understanding reality.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

1. That reality, according to Fichte, consists of the mind.
2. There is an absolute mind through which individual mind shares its form.
3. The entire universe is an expression of the Infinite or Absolute Mind.
4. The "Mind," the "ego" or "I" are the same thing.
5. There is harmony in nature and this harmony is maintained in a form of subject-object relationship.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Briefly discuss how knowledge is possible in Fichte's epistemology.

Discuss the idealist thought in the philosophy of Johann Fichte.

Discuss Fichte's arguments against Kant.

Discuss Fichte's conception of reality

6.0. References/Further Readings

Abam, M. E. (2016). "Johann Gottlieb Fichte." In A. F. Uduigwomen, M. E. Ukah and E. C. Uduma (Ed.). *A critical history of philosophy: modern philosophy,* vol. 2. Ultimate index book publishers Ltd. Pp 363-373.

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Tutor Marked Assignment

What is Fichte's view on Kant's noumena?

Answer: Fichte argued against Kant's position that the noumena (things in themselves) are unknowable. For him, the entire universe is an expression of the Infinite Mind and as such, the mind is capable of penetrating things in themselves.

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling

Module 5: Unit 2: Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling

Contents

6.0. References/Further Readings

1.0 Introduction

In unit 1, you learnt about how Fichte argued against the possibility of the noumena. In this unit, you will be learning about another German idealist who was himself a disciple of Fichte, but was more emphatic than what Fichte did concerning the physical nature as the objective form of the Absolute.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss the idealism of Schelling.
2. Know where he disagrees with Kant.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling was born on January 27, 1775 I Leonberg, Germany. He was the second child of his parents, Gottliebin Marie and Joseph Schelling. In1788, Schelling attended the Latin School in Nurtingen. In 1790, he studued at Tubingenstift, a Protestant Seminary, where he met Holderlin and Hegel, both of which later became great poet and philosopher of German origin respectively. Schelling graduated from philosophy department in 1792 and also completed his degree in theology in 1795. He was greatly influenced by the philosophy of Fichte. When Schelling turned 23 years of age in 1798, the University of Jenna offered him a professorship position. He later left the University of Jenna to join Wurzburg as a professor in 1803. Following the fall of Wurzburg to Berlin in 1805, Schelling travelled to Munich. However, he was later called upon to occupy the vacant chair of philosophy position in Berlin following Hegel’s death in 1840. Schelling died on August 20, 1854 in Switzerland.

3.2. Schelling's Idealism

The dichotomies postulated by Kant and those before him, such as subject-object, matter-spirit, ideal-real, noumena-phenomena, alarmed Schelling and this resulted in a search for synthesis in his system. As against these dualisms, Schelling maintained that there is unity in nature. According to him, all these dichotomies are manifestations of one and the same reality, the Absolute. He maintained that all contractions and opposites are synthesized, harmonized, and overcome in the Absolute (Essien, 2011: 247). This Absolute is a spiritual reality, hence, reality is ultimately one and it is spiritual. This means that the whole universe and everything we see around us are manifestations of the Absolute.

Schelling placed a greater emphasis on the physical nature as the objective form of the Absolute than Fichte did (Lawhead. 2002: 350). He described the Absolute as the indubitable, all-encompassing, self-creating, unifying principle of reality that permeates nature (ibid). Because the Absolute permeates nature, Schelling maintained that we can understand nature because it is comprised of the same spirit that is in us. He believed further that the Absolute is made up of both the unconscious and the conscious forces, and that these forces are fused in glorious synthesis. This implies that the world evolves from the unconscious force available in both organic and inorganic nature and steadily moves until it realizes itself in self-consciousness such as the creativity of an artist or the rationality of the philosopher.

Schelling reasoned that since the ego precedes all thinking (I must exist before I think) and thinking determines all being (a thing is nothing other than the object of thought), then the absolute ego ("I") must be the fundamental principle of reality (Darty, 2012). However, Schelling, in his subsequent works, attempted to demonstrate that the unity of thinking and being can be approached from two different directions beginning either with nature or with spirit. This implies that this unity of thinking and being can be deduced from the absolute ego as Fichte did and also from the unconscious but dynamic powers of nature. Feeling betrayed by Schelling whom he thought of as a loyal disciple, Fichte was displeased with Schelling's nature of the ego. Accordingly, he argued that Schelling had confused the categories of "the ideal" and "the real" by making the Ego, the ideal to be dependent upon nature, the real.

From the above, it is evidenced that Schelling started out from a Fichtean position which emphasized the primacy of an unlimited self-positing Ego, he came to regard the objective world of nature (matter) and the subjective self (spirit) as equally real and originally in a unity. For Schelling, nature becomes invisible spirit and spirit becomes invisible nature and in this sense, both spirit and nature may be regarded as developing in parallel (Darty, 2012). Schelling held the opinion that man's conscious mind emerges from nature which is controlled by an unconscious, creative, intelligent, active principle or world soul. Hence, nature is a manifestation of the Absolute. As expressed by Harrison-Barbet (2012), the Absolute, for Schelling, is a pure identity of subjectivity and objectivity. Darty (2012) is also of the view that while we move in Schelling's philosophy of nature, from the objective to the subjective, his transcendental idealism is an attempt to move from the subjective to the objective. For Schelling, therefore, both the subjective and the objective approaches to reality are complementary.

On the nature of reality, Schelling maintains the position that reality deals with being in its double manifestation as nature and mind. Schelling's thought did not only influence other Idealists, but also provided a metaphysical basis to art. This is why it is often believed that for Schelling, reality is unfolded through aesthetic experience.

4.0. Conclusion

Schelling attempted the unification of metaphysical dualism through his postulation of the Absolute as the permeating force of all reality. This Absolute force progresses from unconsciousness to self-consciousness.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

1. Schelling made an attempt to synthesize dualism
2. The Absolute is the ultimate reality
3. The whole universe and everything we see around us are manifestations of the Absolute
4. The Absolute consists of the unconscious and conscious forces fused in glorious synthesis

Self-Assessment Exercise

How did Schelling synthesize dualism?

Discuss the idealism of Schelling?

Discuss the similarity between Schelling's idealism and Kant?

6.0. References/Further Readings

Essien, E.S. (2011). Summa philosophica: an introduction to philosophy and logic. Lulu press.

Darty, D. (2012). German idealists' metaphysics: Fichte, Shelling, Hegel and Schopenhauer. In Uduigwomen, A. and Akpan, C. *Metaphysics: A book of readings*. Ultimate index book publishers ltd.

Lawhead, W. F. (2002). *The voyage of discovery: a historical introduction to philosophy*. Wadsworth and Thomson learning

Tutor Marked Assignment

How did Schelling describe the Absolute?

Answer: Schelling describes the Absolute as the indubitable, all-encompassing, self-creating, unifying principle of reality that permeates nature.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Module 5: Unit 3: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Contents

3.5 Political theory

4.0. Conclusion

5.0. Summary

6.0. References/Further Readings

1.0 Introduction

The German Idealism that started with Kant reached its apex in the philosophy of Hegel. Having been influenced by the thoughts of Kant, Fichte and Schelling, Hegel believed that all reality must conform to a rational pattern. As a matter of fact, this conviction led him to picture the goal of philosophy as an attempt to achieve a unified and systematic understanding of things as whole. In this unit, you shall be learning about Hegel's idealism and how it is distinct from other idealists before him.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss the idealism of Hegel
2. Understand his dialectics as the movement of the Absolute
3. Relate his political theory as self-objectification and self-development of the Absolute Spirit

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Hegel was born in Stuttgart in present Southern Germany in 1770. He was raised in the period of the French Revolution. In 1788, Hegel entered the University of Turbingen through a state sponsored education. While in the University, Hegel made friends with Holderlin and Schelling who were at the same time studying in the same school. After his graduation, Hegel became a private tutor. He later became the headmaster of a Gymnasium, (a high school equivalent) in Nuremberg. By this time, however, Hegel had started to distinguish himself as a philosopher. As a result of the new reputation, he was invited to become a professor of philosophy in Heidelberg where he served from 1816-1818. Later, he was invited to an enviable

position of chair of philosophy at the University of Berlin. Hegel died in 1831 of cholera. His major works are, Phenomenology of Spirit, Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, The Philosophy of History, Philosophy of Rights, Philosophy of Nature, among others.

3.2. Theory of knowledge

Hegel's epistemology revolves around his dictum "the real is rational and the rational is real" (Essien, 2011: 248). This position is in contrast to Kant's assumption that the real is unknowable. Hegel argues that if the noumenon exists, then it is knowable. In other words, Hegel is of the view that Kant contradicted himself by postulating something he could not know. For Hegel, if we could rationalize on the noumenon, then it exists because when we look at the world rationally, the world also looks rationally back at us.

The crux of German idealism is the glorification of the mind as the ultimate source of knowledge. The mind constitutes the rational part of human beings. Hence, Hegel believes that if all our objects of knowledge are product of a mind other than our individual minds, then there must be an absolute mind, an intelligent mind through which individual minds share in its intelligibility. Accordingly, Hegel, like other idealists, concluded that "all objects of knowledge, and indeed the whole universe are the product of an absolute subject, indeed, an Absolute mind" (Stumpf and Fieser, 2003: 310). For Hegel, therefore, reality and the knowledge of it is found in the Absolute idea. This Absolute idea, however, is progressive, moving from a lower to a higher level of consciousness in a dialectical order.

3.3. Metaphysics

In his metaphysical system, Hegel believes that there is only one ultimate reality called the Absolute Spirit (Geist). The Absolute Spirit is the totality of things. This Absolute Spirit, by its nature, undergoes self-projection, self-expression, self-externalization and self-manifestation (Essien, 2011: 248). Hegel set himself to address the problem of the Absolute or infinite and the relation between the finite and the infinite. In attempting to overcome a dualistic outlook between the finite and the infinite, Hegel believed that the Absolute is infinite love and the conscious unity of life. It is the infinite life that unites all finite things from within, however, without

annihilating them. In other words, infinite life or spirit is a living unity of the manifold (Darty, 2012). This position is expressly corroborated by Rusk and Scotland (1979), when they offered a panoramic summary of Hegel's metaphysics thus:

> In Hegel, the idealism of Kant finds its consummation and most complete expression. Instead of two realms – a natural and spiritual – as with Kant, there is for Hegel, only one form of existence, the spiritual, and it comprises the natural. The ultimate source of all being and of all knowing is mind or the absolute (182).

This means that the absolute is mind (spirit). The whole world, the universe, is a single great organism through which an external uniformity manifests itself. This uniformity expresses itself both in external nature and in spirit (Darty, 2012). Life then, is the union of the spiritual with the material. Without mind or spirit, matter is lifeless, it remains formless and in the words of Hegel, it is a "mere chaos." It is only through the entrance of the spirit into the material that the cosmos originates (Rusk and Scotland, 1979: 83).

Hegel maintains that the Absolute Spirit manifests itself in the physical universe. This implies that our physical universe is nothing but the Absolute Spirit disclosed, this disclosure occurs in a dialectical process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. In the Hegelian dialectics, reality (being) is the thesis, non-being is the antithesis and the synthesis is becoming. For Hegel, everything undergoes a constant process of change. This change is not just a blind force, but a form of gradual unfolding of self-consciousness. For him, therefore, reality is constantly moving toward its goal of understanding itself (Warburton, 2011: 128). Hegel, therefore, explains change as a movement of the Absolute Spirit. For Hegel, the central idea of reality is the while which is "the absolute" – the infinite creative totality in which all finite distinctions are unified. It is the spirit and self-thinking thought, the identity-in-difference of the ideal and real, of subjectivity and objectivity. Hegel holds that the absolute is a necessary process of self development from potentiality to actuality revealing itself through nature. The point of it all is that for Hegel, reality as absolute reason is revealed objectively in the dialectic processes of nature through the reasoning processes of individual human minds (Harrison-Barbet, 2012).

The idealist metaphysics of Hegel which subsumes matter into spirit sees the absolute spirit as the only medium through which matter can have life and form (Darty, 2012: 368). However, the understanding of reality in the Hegelian perspective resulted in the later opposition championed by the logical positivists. As Redding (2012) puts it, Hegel's conception of reality had within it, a dark mystical roots and overt religious content. Hence, it is hardly surprising that Hegel's metaphysics so understood, is regarded as being very confrontational to the largely secular and scientific conceptions of reality that have been dominant from the twentieth century till now. Notwithstanding its shortcomings, Hegel's metaphysical system which presages the final stage in German idealism, according to Darty (2012: 368), was an extraordinary achievement. This is why Hegel ranks as one of the greatest and most influential western thinkers. His metaphysical system positively inspired thinkers like Marx and Sartre, though it also had a negative impact on Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard.

3.4. Ethics

Like his metaphysics, Hegel's moral theory also depicts the movement of the Absolute Spirit becoming conscious of itself through the human spirit. Instrumental to his moral theory are the notions of human freedom and will. According to Lawhead, as the rationality in nature becomes fully explicit and self-aware through its realization in the human spirit, the human community creates a second world of its own that consists of ethical, political and legal institutions and all other accomplishments (2002: 369).

Morality for Hegel, is essentially a matter of purpose and intention in the ethical life of humanity (Akpan, 2016: 416). Living ethically, then, entails a return of consciousness to world social roles and institutions. More so, moral duty, for Hegel, is derived from the requirements of identifying a person's individual will with that of the universal will (Akpan, 2016: 416). There is no way, for Hegel, that an individual will could be separated from the universal will because he believes that the particular cannot be separated from the whole. This is what constitute a perfect explanation of freedom for him, hence, he says that the relation between the individual's will and the universal's will, is the relation between freedom and duty, objectivity and subjectivity (Hegel, 1953: 37).

3.5. Political theory

Hegel's political thought is connected to his moral theory and metaphysics. In his view, the state is the highest form of human society in which the spirit objectifies and actualizes itself (Omoregbe, 2010: 86). The state is the synthesis between the family and the civil society. What this implies is that the spirit objectifies itself, first in the family, then the civil society and finally in the state. Using his dialectics, the family is the thesis. It is characterized by unity; however, this unity is negated by the diversity of the civil society. The civil society then forms the antithesis. The state comes into existence as a synthesis between the unity of the family and the diversity of the civil society.

Omoregbe (2010: 87), observed that Hegel emphasizes the unity of and supremacy of the state. The state possesses its own will which is the collective will of every citizen of the state. Hegel calls this will the Universal Will. This Universal Will is the will of the Absolute and consequently the authentic will of the individual citizens (ibid). The law of the state is then established to ensure the conformity of the individual will with the universal will:

> For the state is not the abstract confronting the citizens; they are parts of it, like members of an organic body, where no member is end and none is means. It is the realization of freedom, of the absolute, final purpose and exists for its own sake (Hegel, 1953: 52).

It is observed from the above excerpts that the state, for Hegel, is not human construction, neither did the action of human beings force them to form a state. Instead, the state is a living organism. It is the objectification of the absolute through human beings, therefore, the state is superior to the individual. The state has right, the abstract right which dims the light of individual right. This right of the state emanates from her freedom which extinguishes the freedom of the individual (Essien, Ukpe and Iniodu, 2014: 253).

In Hegel's political thought, human right as the right of the individual is considered a joke. Freedom and right, according to him, belong to the state. Right in Hegel's philosophy, is primarily that immediate existence which freedom gives itself in an immediate way. In his Philosophy of right, freedom does not consist in

possibilities of acting, but a kind of action in which one is determined entirely through oneself, and not all by any external factor . He describes freedom as actively relating to something other than oneself in a manner that the other becomes integrated into one's project, completing and fulfilling them so that it counts as belonging to one's own action rather than standing over against it. What this means is that freedom is possible only to the extent that we act rationally, and in circumstances where the objects of our actions are in harmony with our reason (Essien, Ukpe and Iniodu, 2014). Hegel believes that the most spiritual of such objects is the state in which we live.

For Hegel, therefore, freedom is only possible in a rational society whose institutions can be felt and known as rational by individuals who are with themselves in those institutions. Freedom then becomes the freedom of the social order, the state and the right emanating from this absolute freedom is abstract right.

4.0 Conclusion

Hegel's philosophy is characterized by the movement and objectification of the Absolute Spirit. This absolute spirit operates through a triadic dialectical process crowned by the synthesis of the subjective spirit as the thesis and the objective spirit as the antithesis the absolute spirit becomes conscious of itself through the finite spirit of individuals. However, on a critical perspective, the view that everything is the manifestation of the absolute cast dust on his freedom of will. It is a contradiction for Hegel to presuppose the freedom of individuals and at the same time believe that every event in the universe is a self-manifestation, self-projection and self-externalization of the absolute. The features of his Absolute spirit means the absolute is a deterministic force. But away from this criticism, Hegel's philosophy is of great impact not only philosophy, but to social science who are more focused on individuals.

5.0. Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

1. There is only one ultimate reality, according to Hegel, and it is the Absolute Spirit.

2. The Absolute Spirit by its nature undergoes self-projection, self-expression, self-externalization and self-manifestation.
3. The rational is real and the real is rational.
4. Hegel debunked the unknowability of Kant's noumena
5. The state is the highest form of human society in which the absolute objectifies and actualizes itself

Self-Assessment Exercise

How does Hegel's dialectics explain change?

Discuss the idealism of Hegel

Understand his dialectics as the movement of the Absolute

Relate his political theory as self-objectification and self-development of the Absolute Spirit

6.0. References/Further Readings

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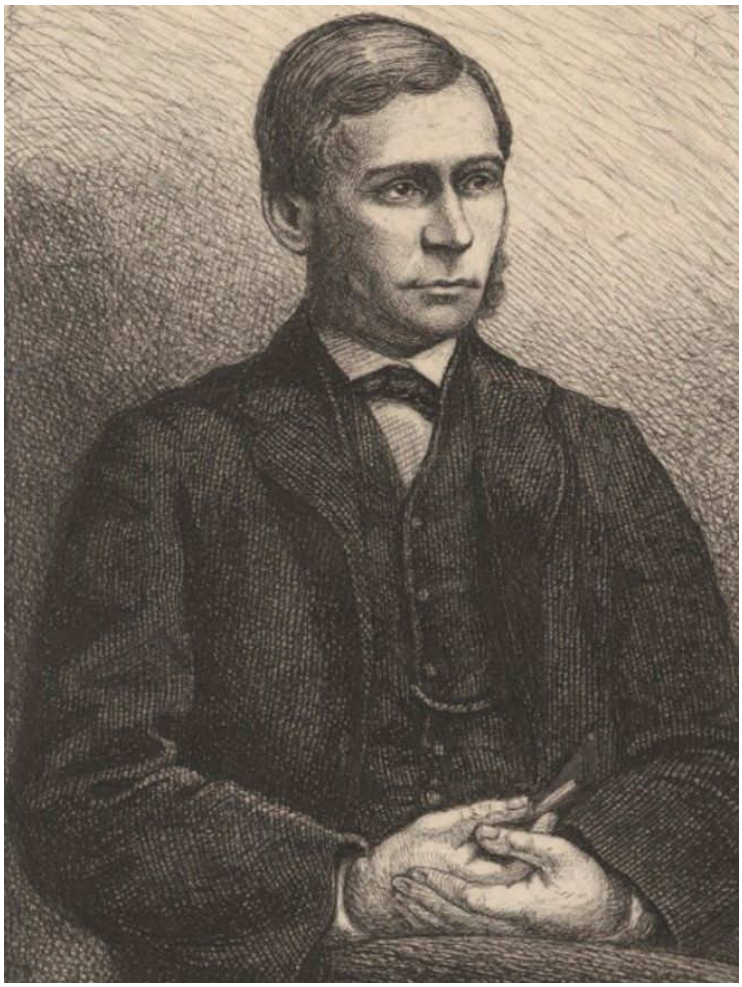
Tutor Marked Assignment

What does Hegel think of our physical universe?

Answer: Hegel thinks of our physical universe as the Absolute disclosed.



Thomas Hill Green

Module 5: Unit 4: Thomas Hill Green

Contents

1.0 Introduction

You have learnt about German Idealism in units 1, 2, and 3 of this module. The twentieth century brings with it a new wave of Idealism domiciled in Great Britain. Robert Hill Green represents a significant expansion in scholarship of British idealism. In this unit, you shall be introduced to his thought.

2.0. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the idealist thought in Green's philosophy.
2. Discuss Green's understanding of consciousness.

3.0. Main Content

3.1. A Brief Biography of Thomas Hill Green

Thomas Green was a member of the British Idealist movement. He was born on April 7, 1836 in Oxford, England. In 1855, he attended Balliol college in Oxford. Green is best known as a moral and political philosopher. He also had interest in theology. Thomas Green died on March 26, 1882. His major works are, Essay on Christian Dogma, Prolegomena to Ethics, Moral Psychology, Different Senses of Freedom, Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation, Lecture on Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contracts, Different Senses of Freedom as Applied Will and the Moral Progresses of Man, among others.

3.2. Religious Views

Green lived at a time in England when the developments in geology and Paleontology were rapidly shaking the foundations that were laid by classical and scholastic philosophy and theology (Effiong, 2016: 448-449). In his Essay on Christian Dogma, Green developed his matured thought on theology. He began by his projects by analyzing the history of Christian dogma. From this analysis, he attacked most of the practices of that were being carried out in the church. One of such dogma was the formulation of creeds. Accordingly, he maintained that the church was more committed to traditions than the real doctrine of the Bible. Green characterized the formulation of creeds an attempt to arrive at an authoritative expression of those doctrines by which all Christians – irrespective of time and place – should judge the varying interpretations of faith (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

Green argued that rather than allow people to worship God as an actual dynamic being present in the world, creed tends toward idolatry as it made people to worship images instead of God. He also argued that reason is an essential element in the pursuit of salvation because rational self-consciousness is an element of that which identifies us with the perfect being (Effiong, 2016: 499). Through this rational self-consciousness, we are able to realize ourselves in principle, which makes it possible for us to understand the spiritual world and our reliance on God for knowledge and existence.

3.3. On Eternal Consciousness

The first and most important problem that Green intended to tackle in his philosophy is the nature of knowledge and its implication about the nature of man. He has several sets of opponents in mind whom he wishes to refute. The most prominent, whom he confronts first, are those who argue for an empiricist or naturalistic account of man and of knowledge. Green's attack is on those who seek to create a natural science of man, on the grounds that they are trying to carry science outside its proper province. He never disputes or impugns the idea of science and scientific knowledge (Nicholson, 2006: 142). On the contrary, his rejection of a science of man presupposes that science itself is possible, legitimate, and successful. The point on which his whole position pivots is that science, the acquisition of knowledge of the natural world, itself necessarily requires a conception of the

scientist (standing in for ‘man’) which cannot be accounted for in purely scientific terms.

There are two principal features of Green’s claim to distinguish; first, what scientific knowledge is and what this implies, logically, about the knower; and second, what, by logical extension, scientific knowledge could be and what that implies, logically, about the knower. Green contends that in scientific knowledge everything known, so far as it is known, consists in relations between it and other things (relations such as position and succession), themselves likewise related, and that the source of all these relations must be a consciousness or self which unifies the relations into a connected whole. The consciousness, working on the assumption that there is a single, uniform, and unalterable order of relations, decides which of its experiences is ‘real’ and ‘objective’ by checking that each new experience is combinable in one system with other recognized relations (Nicholson, 2006). That assumption is a necessary assumption of science in the sense that it must be made if there is to be knowledge of a world at all. However, the consciousness which is organizing experience must itself be outside time and space: as the condition of relations, it cannot be a relation, and therefore no scientific explanation of it can be given (since natural science necessarily explains things in terms of relations).

From Green’s perspective, therefore, the naturalists and empiricists are simply contradicting themselves whenever they attempt to offer an explanation of man because a natural explanation of man uses a theory about nature, but the very idea of such a theory itself presupposes that man is more than simply natural. Green’s first main conclusion, then, is that our consciousness, or understanding, that is, the consciousness of each individual human being, ‘‘makes nature’’ for us, in the sense of enabling us to conceive that there is such a thing’ (Green, 2003: 19). He argues further that our understanding ‘makes nature’ in the additional sense that, ‘it is the source, or at any rate a condition, of there being these relations. It is our consciousness, therefore, that establishes ‘the relations in which it conceives reality to consist’ (Green, 2003: 13).

The second sense of ‘man making nature’ goes further in claiming that not only nature as an intelligible whole but also all its constituent parts, are the creations of man’s consciousness, that is, not only the end-products of the mind’s work are the

mind's creation, but also all that the mind works on to produce them. Green argues, nevertheless, there is an Infinite mind that the human mind participates in the Infinite mind (Essien, 2011: 253). He conceives of the mind as a fragment of the all prevailing and Infinite mind. The universe, for him, is also a manifestation, a projection and an externalization of the Infinite Mind. Human consciousness, then, becomes possible because the human mind is inextricably inseparable from the Infinite Mind. The unfolding of the eternal consciousness, therefore, is the increasing manifestation of God in the world (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

3.4. On the Will

Green's theory of the will is simply his discussion of the moral agent as the human self. For him, the self is the willing agent who has to make a choice between desires and emotional impulses (Effiong, 2016: 452). Green argues that desires and emotional impulses are recognized by human subjects as indispensable to his nature as they make him realize his existence. This implies that by desiring, we acknowledge our existence as self-conscious. However, it is in the nature of individuals to desire many things at a time. But knowing that it is not possible for us to have everything we desire at the same time, we are then forced to decide what we truly wish to achieve. In this way, the will chooses which object to possess. In this way, choice becomes a determinant of action, which is backed by the will. According to Green, what makes the will free is choice.

For Green, the action of a moral agent, then, is to be explained in terms of motive rather than desire. Unlike the mere animal pushed from behind by some want, desire, or impulse, human beings, because they are self-conscious, have the capacity in thought to transcend both the present and the actual and to look forward to possible future states, thereby creating for themselves ends which they then endeavour to bring about (Dimova-Cookson and Mander, 2006). Green goes on to argue that the motive determining an agent's will is always an idealized future state of his own self, a conception of himself as satisfied, whatever it may be that he seeks. For this, he argues that moral action is "the process of self-realization, that is, of making a possible self real" (Green, 1997: 224). In historical terms, Green's arrival at the formula of self-realization represents an important shift in ethical thinking. Instead of asking with the utilitarian, intuitionist, and even the Kantian philosophers of the

day, ‘What ought I to do?’, Green and the many Idealists who followed him re-construed ethical inquiry in the mould of an older question, ‘What kind of person ought I to be?’(Dimova-Cookson and Mander, 2006: 9).

But what leads Green to this formula? The answer is not wholly clear. At times the derivation seems a trivial one, amounting to no more than the claim that, whatever we want, in wanting it we necessarily want also a state in which our own wanting is satisfied. In this sense it amounts to more than the claim that the act is a self-conscious or deliberate one. At other times, however, Green seems to be asserting a stronger thesis equivalent to some type of psychological egoism. He says that self-reflection reveals to us that the only desire possible is for our own personal good in some form or other (PE §§91, 95): that unless an act was for the agent’s own good (however we may go on to construe that notion), he would simply have no reason to perform it.

There are, of course, a great many things which we might desire for ourselves. But it is notorious that not everything we want is really in our own best interests. And what we want today, we may grow out of tomorrow. Green introduces the notion of what he calls the true good, which he describes as ‘an end in which the effort of a moral agent can really find rest’ (2003: 171), ‘an abiding satisfaction of an abiding self’ (2003: 234). The true or unconditional good is, thus, that which fulfils the agent’s desire for long-term satisfaction on the whole. Linking with Green’s theme of moral and cognitive growth, it is what would satisfy us in our fullest development. But what would such a good be? One of the most interesting aspects of Green’s moral philosophy is his claim that this cannot be known. The moral ideal amounts to the complete realization or perfection of human capacities, but since these have never yet been perfectly realized, we cannot now properly say what this would amount to. Green’s moral theory is a species of ideal or perfectionist ethics, but since our moral understanding stands in need of development just as much as our moral nature itself, a measure of ignorance is, according to him, unavoidable.

Green holds that the true good is a common or social good. Transforming his earlier egoism into something almost directly its opposite, Green argues that while it is indeed true that the moral ideal is one of personal development and that the only possible motive for action is the attainment of personal good, it needs to be

recognized that people are fundamentally social creatures, and hence that our true personal good properly understood turns out to be social good. To pursue a selfish life is to misunderstand one's own true nature, and hence where one's own true happiness lies. The theory of the common good thus gives a distinctive twist to Green's account. According to it, in the same way as we carry a vision and a will for a better self, we carry also interests in the good of other persons, 'interests which cannot be satisfied without the consciousness that those other persons are satisfied' (Green, 2003). Green calls this a 'distinctive social interest' (Green, 2003: 200), and he views it as a permanent feature of human nature, not simply enlightened self-interest or the result of some process of evolution from earlier stages in which men were less civilized. The notion of the common good helps Green to define the moral ideal substantively, providing content to what would otherwise remain a merely formal notion (Dimova-Cookson and Mander 2006).

4.0 Conclusion

Thomas Green's philosophy had enormous influence on British Idealist movement. Aside the philosophical circle, it also extended to social and political disciplines. In his idealism, he argues that knowledge has to do with system or structure. For him, the difference between what counts as knowledge and illusions, dreams, or error are relations or actions of the mind. This mind, he maintained, possesses an eternal consciousness of which everything that there is resides.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

1. Green marked new force of idealism which took place in Britain in the 20th century.
2. The human mind participates in the Infinite mind.
3. The human mind possesses eternal consciousness of which everything resides.
4. What makes the will free is choice.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What is Green's conception of the mind?

Explain the idealist thought in Green's philosophy.

Discuss Green's understanding of consciousness.

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Tutor Marked Assignment

Explain Green's idea of the self.

Answer: Green conceives of the self as the willing agent who has to make a choice between desires and emotional impulses