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HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Textbook for English-speaking Students of Medical Universities

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INTRODUCTION. THE VALUE OF THE PHILOSOPHY

If any field of study is difficult to describe in a single statement, it is philosophy. Basically, philosophy is a quest for understanding the world, mostly our own place in this world. Some of us can conclude that philosophers discuss the kind of questions which have no answer. But may be more correct will be to say that philosophy studies questions which do have answers, though not any one answer on which all people can agree. It is mostly metaphysical which means that we can hardly find the empirical definite proof to find only one truthful answer.

However philosophy used to be known as the "Queen of the disciplines" because to study philosophy was to study everything humans knew. In our days any brunch of science for the first look exists independently from philosophy, but it is only for the first look...The scientific method was developed within philosophy. For example, physiologists often dispute about the nature of human consciousness, ethical side of euthanasia and abortions; biologists discuss the nature of life on Earth and its evolution; historians and sociologists trying to explain the reasons of different processes in human history and how it can be managed and put under control.

The word **“philosophy”** has meant different things at different times, but usually reflecting the culture and mood of the people’s life.

Etymologically from Greek *“philos”* – “love” and *“sophia”* – “wisdom” it will mean **“the love of wisdom”.** But we have to underline that this sort of wisdom is a result from a pursuit of knowledge of the most important parts of real human life.

Socrates, a master of philosophers, did not profess to have wisdom or knowledge, but he sought them. His philosophy was always *a quest*, never a body of knowledge or doctrine.

"Of what possible use can this be to me in later life?" many students have wondered. "What is philosophy other than a prolonged head trip? Years after graduation I will forget about Aristotle and Kant. And then what?" The lament has a certain appeal. After all, one doesn't "need" philosophy to earn a living, start a family, become wealthy or famous, have fun or even learn about the world. And many can get along quite fine without being too serious or curious or reflective. Socrates was probably speaking for a minority of the human family when he said the "unexamined life is not worth living."

But experience has a way of leading even the most pragmatic person into the arms of philosophy. Someone suddenly loses a best friend, can fall

ill of cancer or loses guiding line of life. The person wonders how its fair, why it happened to him, not someone else, why, ultimately, the evil happening – where is the root of all evil?

The questions are of course philosophical ones, and the pensive mood occasions many thoughts about justice, love, religion, truth, and the meaning of existence. A little perspective at that point is worth all the money one has saved up and all the success one has enjoyed.

Many of us will work hard all our adult life, build up a retirement account, achieve certain professional distinctions, but inevitably ask if "this is all there is." When boredom hits, when reason informs us that there must be something deeper in life than merely acquiring things and padding the bank account -- when life feels empty, even meaningless -- where do we turn?

Religions tell us that assent should precede understanding, and that faith is a wonderful surrogate for knowledge. They ask us to accept certain texts as precious and holy, even though such texts were written by ordinary men, fallible just as the rest of us are fallible, susceptible to culture-determined notions just as the rest of us are. For some of us, mere faith isn't enough: we want to know; we want the naked truth; we would much prefer an ugly truth to a soothing falsehood, and would rather stand with the lonely truth than with popular illusions and myths. It is philosophy to which we must then turn, for better or worse.

So, what Philosophy can give for us? With another subject, necessary to study at University, it gives us the basic educational background and learning skills that will allow us to adapt to a changing world; to expose us to ideas we would not ordinarily encounter, thus making us a more interesting person and a better citizen. Philosophy teaches us not only a good bit of the intellectual world history, but challenges us to broaden our horizons, sharpens our critical abilities.

We can say – Philosophy is the main tool to make us Humans.

Appendix

Bertrand Russell

The Problems of Philosophy

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 153-161

Fragments

HAVING NOW COME TO THE END of our brief and very incomplete review of the problems of philosophy, it will be well to consider, in conclusion, what is the value of philosophy and why it ought to be studied. It is

the more necessary to consider this question, in view of the fact that many men, under the influence of science or of practical affairs, are inclined to doubt whether philosophy is anything better than innocent but useless trifling, hair-splitting distinctions, and controversies on matters concerning which knowledge is impossible.

This view of philosophy appears to result, partly from a wrong conception of the ends of life, partly from a wrong conception of the kind of goods which philosophy strives to achieve. Physical science, through the medium of inventions, is useful to innumerable people who are wholly ignorant of it; thus the study of physical science is to be recommended, not only, or primarily, because of the effect on the student, but rather because of the effect on mankind in general. Thus utility does not belong to philosophy. If the study of philosophy has any value at all for others than students of philosophy, it must be only indirectly, through its effects upon the lives of those who study it. It is in these effects, therefore, if anywhere, that the value of philosophy must be primarily sought.

But further, if we are not to fail in our endeavour to determine the value of philosophy, we must first free our minds from the prejudices of what are wrongly called "practical" men. The "practical" man, as this word is often used, is one who recognizes only material needs, who realizes that men must have food for the body, but is oblivious of the necessity of providing food for the mind. If all men were well off, if poverty and disease had been reduced to their lowest possible point, there would still remain much to be done to produce a valuable society; and even in the existing world the goods of the mind are at least as important as the goods of the body. It is exclusively among the goods of the mind that the value of philosophy is to be found; and only those who are not indifferent to these goods can be persuaded that the study of philosophy is not a waste of time.

Philosophy, like all other studies, aims primarily at knowledge. The knowledge it aims at is the kind of knowledge which gives unity and system to the body of the sciences, and the kind which results from a critical examination of the grounds of our convictions, prejudices, and beliefs. But it cannot be maintained that philosophy has had any very great measure of success in its attempts to provide definite answers to its questions. If you ask a mathematician, a mineralogist, a historian, or any other man of learning, what definite body of truths has been ascertained by his science, his answer will last as long as you are willing to listen. But if you put the same question to a philosopher, he will, if he is candid, have to confess that his study has not achieved positive results such as have been achieved by other sciences. It is true that this is partly accounted for by the fact that, as

soon as definite knowledge concerning any subject becomes possible, this subject ceases to be called philosophy, and becomes a separate science. The whole study of the heavens, which now belongs to astronomy, was once included in philosophy; Newton's great work was called "the mathematical principles of natural philosophy." Similarly, the study of the human mind, which was a part of philosophy, has now been separated from philosophy and has become the science of psychology. Thus, to a great extent, the uncertainty of philosophy is more apparent than real: those questions which are already capable of definite answers are placed in the sciences, while those only to which, at present, no definite answer can be given, remain to form the residue which is called philosophy.

This is, however, only a part of the truth concerning the uncertainty of philosophy. There are many questions—and among them those that are of the profoundest interest to our spiritual life—which, so far as we can see, must remain insoluble to the human intellect unless its powers become of quite a different order from what they are now. Has the universe any unity of plan or purpose, or is it a fortuitous concourse of atoms? Is consciousness a permanent part of the universe, giving hope of indefinite growth in wisdom, or is it a transitory accident on a small planet on which life must ultimately become impossible? Are good and evil of importance to the universe or only to man? Such questions are asked by philosophy, and variously answered by various philosophers. But it would seem that, whether answers be otherwise discoverable or not, the answers suggested by philosophy are none of them demonstrably true. Yet, however slight may be the hope of discovering an answer, it is part of the business of philosophy to continue the consideration of such questions, to make us aware of their importance, to examine all the approaches to them, and to keep alive that speculative interest in the universe which is apt to be killed by confining ourselves to definitely ascertainable knowledge.

Many philosophers, it is true, have held that philosophy could establish the truth of certain answers to such fundamental questions. They have supposed that what is of most importance in religious beliefs could be proved by strict demonstration to be true. In order to judge of such attempts, it is necessary to take a survey of human knowledge, and to form an opinion as to its methods and its limitations. On such a subject it would be unwise to pronounce dogmatically; but if the investigations of our previous chapters have not led us astray, we shall be compelled to renounce the hope of finding philosophical proofs of religious beliefs. We cannot, therefore, include as part of the value of philosophy any definite set of answers to such questions. Hence, once more, the value of philosophy must not depend

upon any supposed body of definitely ascertainable knowledge to be acquired by those who study it.

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

Apart from its utility in showing unsuspected possibilities, philosophy has a value—perhaps its chief value—through the greatness of the objects which it contemplates, and the freedom from narrow and personal aims resulting from this contemplation. The life of the instinctive man is shut up within the circle of his private interests: family and friends may be included, but the outer world is not regarded except as it may help or hinder what comes within the circle of instinctive wishes. In such a life there is something feverish and confined, in comparison with which the philosophic life is calm and free. The private world of instinctive interests is a small one, set in the midst of a great and powerful world which must, sooner or later, lay our private world in ruins. Unless we can so enlarge our interests as to include the whole outer world, we remain like a garrison in a beleaguered fortress, knowing that the enemy prevents escape and that ultimate surrender is inevitable. In such a life there is no peace, but a constant strife between the insistence of desire and the power-lessness of will. In one way or another, if our life is to be great and free, we must escape this prison and this strife.

One way of escape is by philosophic contemplation. Philosophic contemplation does not, in its widest survey, divide the universe into two hostile camps—friends and foes, helpful and hostile, good and bad—it

views the whole impartially. Philosophic contemplation, when it is unalloyed, does not aim at proving that the rest of the universe is akin to man. All acquisition of knowledge is an enlargement of the Self, but this enlargement is best attained when it is not directly sought. It is obtained when the desire for knowledge is alone operative, by a study which does not wish in advance that its objects should have this or that character, but adapts the Self to the characters which it finds in its objects. This enlargement of Self is not obtained when, taking the Self as it is, we try to show that the world is so similar to this Self that knowledge of it is possible without any admission of what seems alien. The desire to prove this is a form of self-assertion and, like all self-assertion, it is an obstacle to the growth of Self which it desires, and of which the Self knows that it is capable. Self-assertion, in philosophic speculation as elsewhere, views the world as a means to its own ends; thus it makes the world of less account than Self, and the Self sets bounds to the greatness of its goods. In contemplation, on the contrary, we start from the not-Self, and through its greatness the boundaries of Self are enlarged; through the infinity of the universe the mind which contemplates it achieves some share in infinity.

For this reason greatness of soul is not fostered by those philosophies which assimilate the universe to Man. Knowledge is a form of union of Self and not-Self; like all union, it is impaired by dominion, and therefore by any attempt to force the universe into conformity with what we find in ourselves. There is a widespread philosophical tendency towards the view which tells us that Man is the measure of all things, that truth is manmade, that space and time and the world of universals are properties of the mind, and that, if there be anything not created by the mind, it is unknowable and of no account for us. This view, if our previous discussions were correct, is untrue; but in addition to being untrue, it has the effect of robbing philosophic contemplation of all that gives it value, since it fetters contemplation to Self. What it calls knowledge is not a union with the not-Self, but a set of prejudices, habits, and desires, making an impenetrable veil between us and the world beyond. The man who finds pleasure in such a theory of knowledge is like the man who never leaves the domestic circle for fear his word might not be law.

The true philosophic contemplation, on the contrary, finds its satisfaction in every enlargement of the not-Self, in everything that magnifies the objects contemplated, and thereby the subject contemplating. Everything, in contemplation, that is personal or private, everything that depends upon habit, self-interest, or desire, distorts the object, and hence impairs the union which the intellect seeks. By thus making a barrier

between subject and object, such personal and private things become a prison to the intellect. The free intellect will see as God might see, without a here and now, without hopes and fears, without the trammels of customary beliefs and traditional prejudices, calmly, dispassionately, in the sole and exclusive desire of knowledge—knowledge as impersonal, as purely contemplative, as it is possible for man to attain. Hence also the free intellect will value more the abstract and universal knowledge into which the accidents of private history do not enter, than the knowledge brought by the senses, and dependent, as such knowledge must be, upon an exclusive and personal point of view and a body whose sense-organs distort as much as they reveal.

The mind which has become accustomed to the freedom and impartiality of philosophic contemplation will preserve something of the same freedom and impartiality in the world of action and emotion. It will view its purposes and desires as parts of the whole, with the absence of insistence that results from seeing them as infinitesimal fragments in a world of which all the rest is unaffected by any one man's deeds. The impartiality which, in contemplation, is the unalloyed desire for truth, is the very same quality of mind which, in action, is justice, and in emotion is that universal love which can be given to all, and not only to those who are judged useful or admirable. Thus contemplation enlarges not only the objects of our thoughts, but also the objects of our actions and our affections: it makes us citizens of the universe, not only of one walled city at war with all the rest. In this citizenship of the universe consists man's true freedom, and his liberation from the thralldom of narrow hopes and fears.

Thus, to sum up our discussion of the value of philosophy; Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation; but above all because, through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the mind also is rendered great, and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes its highest good.

SUBJECT AND STRUCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHY

Let build some skeleton of philosophy as subject to study for better organization of all things we have to know after we will finish our course of philosophy:

Philosophy Subject
Main parts of philosophy

1. Ontology
2. Epistemology (gnoseology)
3. Human being (philosophical anthropology)
4. Society (social philosophy)

Main philosophical questions in context of main subjects

1. Essence of being
2. Origin of being
3. Matter (substance) and its forms
4. Consciousness, its origin and nature
5. Unconsciousness
6. Human being, its essence and existence
7. Soul, spiritual world of the person
8. Society
9. Society and person
10. Nature
11. Nature and society
12. Spiritual sphere of society life
13. Social sphere of society life
14. Perspectives of man and society
15. Ecology, problems of survive
16. Cognition problems
17. Influence of subject on object of perception
18. Limits of cognition
19. Philosophical categories
20. Dialectic
21. *Etc.*

Main philosophical methods

***(Method** – the ways, means, facilities according to which philosophical research can be realised)*

Dialectic	Metaphysic	Dogmatism
Hermeneutic	Eclectic	Sophistic

Main philosophical directions

1. Rationalism and Empiricism
2. Idealism, Materialism and Dualism

Functions of philosophy

1. ***Worldview function*** – forming integral picture of the world, presentation of its organization, mans place in it and principles of correlation with surrounding world
2. ***Methodological function*** – working out the main methods of cognition surrounding world
3. ***Gnoseological function*** – right and truthful perception of the world (mechanisms of perception)
4. ***Critical function*** – calling in questions world and knowledge about it, searching new qualities, features, finding the contradictoriness
5. ***Axiological function*** – (*axios* . greec. – value) evaluating things, phenomena of the world from the different points of view – moral, ethical, social, historical. Its look like the sieve to find the most important values.
6. ***Social function*** – to explain society, reasons of its origin and evolution; elements, moving forces, variants to perfect it.
7. ***Educational-humanitarian function*** – to cultivate humanistic values and ideals, to assist strengthening morality, to help man to adopt in the world
8. ***Prognosis function*** – on the basis of all scientific and philosophical knowledge to make prognoses of the world development tendency, future of matter, consciousness, cognitive processes etc.

§1. ANCIENT EASTERN PHILOSOPHY: CHINA AND INDIA

Plan

1. Hinduism
2. Buddhism
3. Confucius
4. Taoism

> *The most important characteristic of the Eastern world view – one could almost say the essence of it - is the awareness of the unity and mutual interrelation of all things and events, the experience of all phenomena in the world as manifestations of a basic oneness. All things are seen as interdependent and inseparable parts of this cosmic whole; as different manifestations of the same ultimate reality.*
>
> (***Fritjof Capra, The Tao of Physics***)

Peculiarities of society in Ancient East:

- **economy**: predominance of agriculture
- **social structure**: caste (India), Class (China)
- **policy:** empire state, active military activity, conquering territories

Peculiarities of Philosophy in Ancient East:

- Unity of mythology, religion & philosophy
- Ethic and socio-political problems higher than science
- **Indian Philosophy** – self-cognition, self-perfection, salvation
- **Chine's Philosophy-** policy, ideology

Difference between Western and Eastern philosophical teaching:

Western Philosophy

- For a long period of its forming and existing was under the power of religion
- Very dynamic development (different directions)
- Rational-critical character
- Outside directions (ontology, gnosiology, ethic, aesthetic etc.

Eastern Philosophy

- Influencing religion by itself
- Static situation (“calmness of eternity”)
- The main idea – correct, deep understanding, not arguing and changing
- Inside direction (self-cognition of a person)

ANCIENT INDIA

The first philosophical teachings in Ancient India started to develop in the context of religious teaching Brahmanism, later Hinduism. Besides this it were some sorts of nonreligious (atheistic) teaching, but they didn't influenced much on further development of Indian philosophy.

HINDUISM

All is One (Brahman)

The first collection of Indian philosophy that was written down was the Vedas. The word 'Veda' comes from the Sanskrit *"vid"*, meaning "*knowledge*" – the Vedas are "sacred knowledge". Their exact date is controversial, it is possible that the knowledge dates back 10,000 years BC, and were first written around 3,000 BC.

There are four Vedas:

1. **Rig Veda** (the first, oldest one) sacred hymn of verse, liturgical manual of chief sacrificial priest
2. **Sáma Veda** – hymnal singing
3. **Yajur Veda** – sacrificial formula, practical work as liturgical manual with ritual preparations
4. **Athrava Veda** – the youngest Veda, liturgical manual of "fire priests" with magical and medical spells

The metaphysical foundation of Hinduism, which is expressed in both the Vedas and the Upanishads is that Reality (Brahman) is One or Absolute, changeless, perfect and eternal. The ordinary human world of many separate and discrete (finite) things (which our mind represents by our senses) is an illusion. Through meditation and purity of mind, one can experience their true Self which is Brahman, God, the One infinite eternal thing which causes and connects the many things. True enlightenment is Self-realization, to experience the supreme reality as Self.

Appendix

Rig Veda
(Fragment)

1. ***Brahman*** is defined as "existence, consciousness and bliss". Brahman – absolute spiritual source of all existing things.

"OM Lead me from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality."

Though One, Brahman is the cause of the many.

Brahman is the unborn (aja) in whom all existing things abide. The One manifests as the many, the formless putting on forms.

Radhakrishnan
(Fragment)

The word Brahman means growth and is suggestive of life, motion, progress.

Fritjof Capra, 1972
(Fragment)

In Indian philosophy, the main terms used by Hindus and Buddhists have dynamic connotations. The word Brahman is derived from the Sanskrit root "brih" – "to grow"- and thus suggests a reality which is dynamic and alive. The Upanishads refer to Brahman as 'this unformed, immortal, moving', thus associating it with motion even though it transcends all forms.' The Rig Veda uses another term to express the dynamic character of the universe, the term Rita. This word comes from the root "ri"- "to move". In its phenomenal aspect, the cosmic One is thus intrinsically dynamic, and the apprehension of its dynamic nature is basic to all schools of Eastern mysticism.

They all emphasize that the universe has to be grasped dynamically, as it moves, vibrates and dances. ..The Eastern mystics see the universe as an inseparable web, whose interconnections are dynamic and not static. The cosmic web is alive; it moves and grows and changes continually.

Sudhakar S.D, 1988
(Fragment)

Hindu cosmology is non-dualistic. Everything that is is Brahman. Brahman is the eternal Now, and in eternity there is no before or after, for everything is everywhere, always. To use the words of Pascal 'it is a circle the center of which is everywhere and the circumference nowhere.'

2. ***Atman*** – an active individual spiritual source in life.
3. ***Ishvara*** – the Lord of all, the source of all knowledge, the inner controller, the source of all, indeed the origin as well as the end of all beings. Traditionally interpreted to mean God in personal sense.
4. ***Reincarnation*** – rebirth of personal atman in another body, before it will culminate in moksha.
5. ***Moksha*** – the end of the chain of personal rebirth when atman interflows to Brahman. The end of all suffering caused by the material world.
6. ***Karma*** – "action", "work", "function". Can be right or wrong, good or bad. The problem of cosmic justice and the problem of evil is solved through karma. Good deeds make a good deposit, evil deeds – bad deposit, thus cause good or bad karma. Right actions always earn reward and wrong – punishment. If something bad happens with good person it

means that he did something bad in his previous lifetime. Karma connected with the concept of social structure:

7. ***Caste system***: Brahmins (the highest cast – teachers and priests), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (farmers, merchants), Shudras (laborers, untouchables as polluted laborers).

Fritjof Capra
The Tao of Physics
(Fragment)

In Hinduism, Shiva the Cosmic Dancer, is perhaps the most perfect personification of the dynamic universe. Through his dance, Shiva sustains the manifold phenomena in the world, unifying all things by immersing them in his rhythm and making them participate in the dance - a magnificent image of the dynamic unity of the Universe.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism is a moral philosophy / religion based upon the teachings of **Siddhartha Gautama** (566 - 486 B.C.).

Siddhartha Gautama became known as the Buddha. 'Buddha' (from the ancient Indian languages of Pali and Sanskrit) means ***"one who has awakened"***. It is derived from the verbal root *"budh*", meaning *"to awaken"* or "*to be enlightened*", and *"to comprehend*".

The Buddha offered metaphysical knowledge into the nature of reality as well as a moral way of life. The Middle Way is an important idea in Buddhist thought and practice: to seek moderation and avoid the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification.

At the age of 35, meditating under a Bodhi tree, Siddhartha reached Enlightenment, awakening to the true nature of reality, which is Nirvana (Absolute Truth);

Buddha,
from the Dhatuvibhanga-sutta (No. 140) of the Majjhima-nikaya

"The dustless and stainless Eye of Truth (Dhamma-cakkhu) has arisen.

He has seen Truth, has attained Truth, has known Truth, has penetrated into Truth, has crossed over doubt, is without wavering.

Thus with right wisdom he sees it as it is (yatha bhutam) ... The Absolute Truth is Nibbana, which is Reality"

The Buddha taught that the nature of reality was impermanent and interconnected. We **suffer in life because of our desire to transient**

things. Liberation from suffering may come by training the mind and acting according to the laws of karma (cause and effect) i.e. with right action, good things will come to you. This teaching is known as the **Four Noble Truths**:

1. **Dukkha**: Suffering is everywhere
2. **Samudaya**: There is a cause of suffering, which is attachment or misplaced desire (tanha) rooted in ignorance.
3. **Nirodha:** There is an end of suffering, which is Nirvana (the possibility of liberation exists for everyone).
4. **Maggo**: There is a path that leads out of suffering, known as the Noble Eightfold Path (***right view, right thought, right speech, right conduct, right vocation, right effort, right attention and right concentration).***

It is proper for you to doubt .. do not go upon report .. do not go upon tradition..do not go upon hearsay..'

(Buddha, Kalama Sutra)

O Brahmana, it is just like a mountain river, flowing far and swift, taking everything along with it; there is no moment, no instant, no second when it stops flowing, but it goes on flowing and continuing. So Brahmana, is human life, like a mountain river. ***(Buddha****)*

'Wherefore, brethren, thus must ye train yourselves : Liberation of the will through love will develop, we will often practice it, we will make it vehicle and base, take our stand upon it, store it up, thoroughly set it going.' ***(Buddha****)*

From The Dhammapada:

- *Not to do any evil, to cultivate the good, to purify one's mind, this is the Teaching of the Buddhas.*
- *To speak no ill will, to do no harm, to practice self-restraint according to the fundamental precepts, to be moderate in eating, to live in seclusion, to devote oneself to higher consciousness, this is the Teaching of the Buddhas.*
- *By endeavour, diligence, discipline and self-mastery, let the wise person make (of himself) an island that no flood can overwhelm.*
- *All (mental) states have mind as their forerunner, mind is their chief, and they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts with a defiled mind, then suffering follows ..*
- *Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world; it is appeased by love. This is an eternal Law.*

- *Hard to restrain, unstable is this mind; it flits wherever it lists. Good is it to control the mind. A controlled mind brings happiness.*
- *'All conditioned things are impermanent', when one sees this in wisdom, then one becomes dispassionate towards the painful. This is the Path to Purity.*

Buddhism recognizes that humans have a measure of freedom of moral choice, and Buddhist practice has essentially to do with acquiring the freedom to choose as one ought to choose with truth: that is of acquiring a freedom from the passions and desires that impel us to distraction and poor decisions.

(Walpola Rahula, What the Buddha Taught)

Buddhism stands unique in the history of human thought in denying the existence of such a Soul, Self, or Atman. According to the teaching of the Buddha, the idea of self is imaginary, false belief which has no corresponding reality, and it produces harmful thoughts of 'me' and 'mine', selfish desire, craving, attachment, hatred, ill-will, conceit, pride, egoism, and other defilements, impurities and problems. It is the source of all the troubles in the world from personal conflicts to wars between nations.

(Walpola Rahula, What the Buddha Taught)

The theory of karma is the theory of cause and effect, of action and reaction; it is a natural law, which has nothing to do with the idea of justice or reward and punishment. Every volitional action produces its effects or results. If a good action produces good effects, it is not justice, or reward, meted out by anybody or any power sitting in judgement of your action, but this is in virtue of its own nature, its own law.

(Walpola Rahula, What the Buddha Taught)

For the first time in the history of the world, Buddhism proclaimed a salvation which each individual could gain from him or herself, in this world, during this life, without any least reference to God, or to gods either great or small.

(Aldous Huxley)

TAOISM

There is a thing, formless yet complete. Before heaven and earth it existed. Without sound, without substance, it stands alone and unchanging. It is all-pervading and unfailing. We do not know its name, but we call it Tao. .. Being one with nature, the sage is in accord with the Tao. ***(Lao Tzu)***

Taoism is one of the great religions/philosophies of Ancient China (along with Buddhism and Confucianism).

In 440 B.C. Taoism was adopted as a state religion of China, with **Lao Tzu** (so called founder of Taoism) honoured as a deity. Lao Tzu was a contemporary of Confucius and wrote a book called the "Tao te Ching", composed sometime between the sixth and third centuries B.C. Some people believe Lao Tzu is a mythical character. State support of Taoism ended in 1911 with the end of the Ch'ing Dynasty and much Taoist heritage was destroyed.

"Tao" (pronounced "Dao"') can be defined as "path", or "road". The way of the Tao is the way of Nature and of ultimate reality. Tao is often described as a force that flows through all life. A happy and virtuous life is one that is in harmony with the Tao, with Nature.

The philosophy of Taoism understands Tao as the One Thing which exists and connects the Many things. Tao, Nature, Reality are One.

Appendix

Lao Tzu

- "If people do not revere the Law of Nature, It will inexorably and adversely affect them

If they accept it with knowledge and reverence, It will accommodate them with balance and harmony."

- "There is a thing, formless yet complete.
Before heaven and earth it existed.
Without sound, without substance,
it stands alone and unchanging.
It is all-pervading and unfailing.
One may think of it as the mother of all beneath Heaven.
We do not know its name, but we call it Tao.
Deep and still, it seems to have existed forever."

- "The Great Tao flows everywhere.
It may go left or right.
All things depend on it for life, and it does not turn away from them.
It accomplishes its tasks, but does not claim credit for it.
It clothes and feeds all things, but does not claim to be master over them.
Always without desires, it may be called the Small.
All things come to it and it does not master them;
it may be called The Great."

-"The Tao that can be told of is not the eternal Tao;

the name that can be named is not the eternal name."

-"Hold on to the Tao of old in order to master the things of the present."

-"Being one with Nature, he is in accord with the Tao.

Being in accord with the Tao, he is everlasting."

-"Whether it is big or small, many or few, repay hatred with virtue."

-"Manifest plainness, Embrace simplicity, Reduce selfishness, Have few desires."

-"Be still like a mountain and flow like a great river."

CONFUCIANISM

Confucianism is an ethical and philosophical system based upon the teachings of the Chinese sage, **Confucius**.

Confucius was a famous thinker and social philosopher of China, whose teachings have deeply influenced East Asia for centuries. Living in the Spring and Autumn period (a time when feudal states fought against each other), he was convinced of his ability to restore the world's order, though failed. After much travelling around China to promote his ideas among rulers, he eventually became involved in teaching disciples. His philosophy emphasized personal and governmental morality, correctness of social relationships, and justice and sincerity. Used since then as the imperial orthodoxy, Confucius' thoughts have been developed into a vast and complete philosophical system known in the west as Confucianism.

The "Analects" is a short collection of his discussions with disciples, compiled posthumously. These contain an overview of his teachings. Confucius presents himself as a transmitter who invented nothing and his greatest emphasis may be on study, the Chinese character that opens the book. In this respect, he is seen by Chinese people as the Greatest Master. Far from trying to build a systematic theory of life and society, he wanted his disciples to think deeply for themselves and relentlessly study the outside world. For almost two thousand years, Analects had also been the fundamental course of study for any Chinese scholar, for a man was not considered morally upright or enlightened if he did not study Confucius' works.

The following quotes from **The Analects** demonstrate the simplicity and wisdom of Confucianism:

Confucius
Analects

- “Hold faithfulness and sincerity as first principles.”
- “ I am not one who was born in the possession of knowledge; I am one who is fond of antiquity, and earnest in seeking it there.”
- “ Everything has its beauty but not everyone sees it.”
- “ Forget injuries, never forget kindnesses.”
- “ Men's natures are alike, it is their habits that carry them far apart.”
- “ Respect yourself and others will respect you.”
- “ Study the past if you would define the future.”
- “ To see what is right, and not to do it, is want of courage or of principle.”
- “ What the superior man seeks is in himself; what the small man seeks is in others.”
- “ When anger rises, think of the consequences.”
- “ When we see men of a contrary character, we should turn inwards and examine ourselves.”
- “ Where somewhere you go, go with all your heart.”
- “ They must often change who would be constant in happiness or wisdom.”
- “ Fine words and an insinuating appearance are seldom associated with true virtue.”
- “ Have no friends not equal to yourself.”
- “ If a man takes no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand.”

Confucius
Analects
translated by James Legge (1893)
Extract

The Master said, "He who exercises government by means of his virtuemay be compared to the north polar star, which keeps its place and all the stars turn towards it."

The Master said, "In the Book of Poetry are three hundred pieces, but the design of them all may be embraced in one sentence 'Having no depraved thoughts.'"

The Master said, "If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame.

"If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good."

The Master said, "At fifteen, I had my mind bent on learning. "At thirty, I stood firm. "At forty, I had no doubts. "At fifty, I knew the decrees of Heaven. "At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth. "At seventy, I could follow what my heart desired, without transgressing what was right."

Mang I asked what filial piety was. The Master said, "It is not being disobedient."

Soon after, as Fan Ch'ih was driving him, the Master told him, saying, "Mang-sun asked me what filial piety was, and I answered him,-'not being disobedient.'"

Fan Ch'ih said, "What did you mean?" The Master replied, "That parents, when alive, be served according to propriety; that, when dead, they should be buried according to propriety; and that they should be sacrificed to according to propriety."

Mang Wu asked what filial piety was. The Master said, "Parents are anxious lest their children should be sick."

Tsze-yu asked what filial piety was. The Master said, "The filial piety nowadays means the support of one's parents. But dogs and horses likewise are able to do something in the way of support;-without reverence, what is there to distinguish the one support given from the other?"

Tsze-hsia asked what filial piety was. The Master said, "The difficulty is with the countenance. If, when their elders have any troublesome affairs, the young take the toil of them, and if, when the young have wine and food, they set them before their elders, is THIS to be considered filial piety?"

The Master said, "I have talked with Hui for a whole day, and he has not made any objection to anything I said;-as if he were stupid. He has retired, and I have examined his conduct when away from me, and found him able to illustrate my teachings. Hui!-He is not stupid."

The Master said, "See what a man does. "Mark his motives. "Examine in what things he rests.

"How can a man conceal his character? How can a man conceal his character?"

The Master said, "If a man keeps cherishing his old knowledge, so as continually to be acquiring new, he may be a teacher of others."

The Master said, "The accomplished scholar is not a utensil."

Tsze-kung asked what constituted the superior man. The Master said, "He acts before he speaks, and afterwards speaks according to his actions."

The Master said, "The superior man is catholic and not partisan. The mean man is partisan and not catholic."

The Master said, "Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous."

The Master said, "The study of strange doctrines is injurious indeed!"

The Master said, "Yu, shall I teach you what knowledge is? When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it;-this is knowledge."

Tsze-chang was learning with a view to official emolument.

The Master said, "Hear much and put aside the points of which you stand in doubt, while you speak cautiously at the same time of the others:-then you will afford few occasions for blame. See much and put aside the things which seem perilous, while you are cautious at the same time in carrying the others into practice: then you will have few occasions for repentance. When one gives few occasions for blame in his words, and few occasions for repentance in his conduct, he is in the way to get emolument."

The Duke Ai asked, saying, "What should be done in order to secure the submission of the people?" Confucius replied, "Advance the upright and set aside the crooked, then the people will submit. Advance the crooked and set aside the upright, then the people will not submit."

Chi K'ang asked how to cause the people to reverence their ruler, to be faithful to him, and to go on to nerve themselves to virtue. The Master said, "Let him preside over them with gravity;-then they will reverence him. Let him be final and kind to all;-then they will be faithful to him. Let him advance the good and teach the incompetent;-then they will eagerly seek to be virtuous."

Someone addressed Confucius, saying, "Sir, why are you not engaged in the government?"

The Master said, "What does the Shu-ching say of filial piety?-'You are final, you discharge your brotherly duties. These qualities are displayed in government.' This then also constitutes the exercise of government. Why must there be THAT-making one be in the government?"

The Master said, "I do not know how a man without truthfulness is to get on. How can a large carriage be made to go without the crossbar for yoking the oxen to, or a small carriage without the arrangement for yoking the horses?"

Tsze-chang asked whether the affairs of ten ages after could be known.

Confucius said, "The Yin dynasty followed the regulations of the Hsia: wherein it took from or added to them may be known. The Chau dynasty has followed the regulations of Yin: wherein it took from or added to them may be known. Some other may follow the Chau, but though it should be at the distance of a hundred ages, its affairs may be known."

The Master said, "For a man to sacrifice to a spirit which does not belong to him is flattery.

"To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage."

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§2. PHILOSOPHY OF ANCIENT GREECE AND HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Plan

1. Philosophy of Presocratics
2. Turn to a Man: Sophists and Socrates
3. Plato: the World of Ideas-Forms
4. Aristotle: philosophy of "the Golden Mean"
5. Hellenistic Philosophy

1. Philosophy of Presocratics

Western philosophy was born in Greece in VI century BCE. First Greek philosophers were interested primarily in the structure and order of nature. That is why they are called *naturphilosophers*. Also, all those philosophers about which we will talk in this section, except Democritus, are often called Presocratics, as living before Socrates – philosopher whose activity is considered as turning-point from nature-centered philosophy to human-centered philosophy.

First philosopher is considered to be ***Thales*** (≈624-546 BCE) of Miletus whose doctrine is usually expressed by the statement "All is water". Its philosophical importance lies not in the literal meaning of this statement, but in the idea of single basic substance, that every specific substance is transformation of this single basic substance. So, Thales thought that water can be transformed in any other substance, and any other substance can be transformed into water. Probably, the idea was evoked by reflections on the importance of water for all living organisms (water is as if transformed into fabric of plants, animals, humans), observations of changes of aggregate states ice↔water↔steam, of solution of different substances (salt, sugar) in a water (they are as if transformed into water), huge areas of surface of Earth covered by water (let us recollect that Greece is s urrounded by seas and that Greeks were expert seafarers). Thales was also founder of first philosophical school – Miletian school. Its other famous representatives were Thales' pupils Anaximander and Anaximenes. There common idea was that of single basic substance.

Anaximander (≈610-546 BCE) modified Thales' doctrine suggesting that basic substance is not to be identified with any specific substance, of known kinds. It is neither water nor air nor earth nor stone nor anything else. But, at the same time, in a sense, it is everything: water, air, earth, stones etc. It is something that, as it can exist in a great multitude of forms

(as water, air, earth, stone etc.) is not to be identified with any *one* of these forms. Anaximander called it *apeiron* which means infinite and indefinite.

Anaximenes (≈585-525 BCE) have returned to a simpler view – identification of basic substance with one of observed substances. Anaximenes thought it is an air, which can be dilutes or condenses into forms of other observed substances. (For example, fire is diluted air, water is condensed air, and stone is yet more condensed air.)

In contrast to Miletians, ***Empedocles*** (≈492-432 BCE) taught that there are for basic elements – earth, water, air and fire – which, in different combinations form all other observed substances.

The highest development of philosophical views of matter in ancient Greece was the doctrine of *atomism*. Its main proponent was ***Democritus*** (≈427-347 BCE). This doctrine says that all things consist of very small (so small that human eyes can't see them) indivisible particles – *atoms*. All things are made of atoms and emptiness.

Ancient Greek naturphilosophers were interested also in the structure of Universe, form of Earth and its place in the Universe.[1]

On this point, Thales' theory was rather primitive and derivative from his theory of basic substance. He believed that Earth has a flat surface and is floating in water. On this theory, he explained earthquakes as resultant from waves of that ocean.

Thales' theory has rather salient drawback: if we admit that Earth is floating in an ocean of water, then what holds (supports) that ocean? And if we answer that question then the next question arises: what supports that thing which supports ocean in which earth is floating? This kind of questions arises *ad infinitum*? (There is an ancient myth of the same kind: earth is standing on three elephants, these elephants stand on a tortoise. Now, what is there downwards? There is also anecdotic variation: the Earth is standing on an elephant, that elephant is standing on another elephant and there are elephants all the way down ad infinitum.) Probably, it was this problem of "supports" which had prompted Anaximander to propose a different, more interesting theory.

Anaximander's theory is that Earth has a shape of a drum with two opposite flat surfaces, has no supports whatever and is immovably placed in the center of Universe. It is immovable (doesn't drop down despite there

[1] The following paragraphs about cosmology of Thales and Anaximander are following K.Popper's article "Back to the Presocratics" in his book "Conjectures and Refutations".

being no supports) because celestial bodies (stars, suns, moons) are located symmetrically relative to opposite surfaces of the Earth. Those celestial bodies which would be seen from the opposite surface of Earth (if we could get there and see) would be located, relative to observer, just as those we can see from our surface. As there is such symmetry, there is no reason for Earth to move one direction rather than another, and that is why it remains immovable. There are many interesting features in this theory.

First, it discards common concept of *absolute* up and down. On Anaximander's theory, up and down is relative to the viewpoint. The direction which is 'down' for an observer standing on one surface will be 'up' for an observer standing on opposite surface.

Second, Anaximander's explanation of why Earth remains immovable (why it doesn't drop down) can be considered as in a sense anticipating Newton's theory of gravitation. (It suggests that celestial bodies which are symmetrically located relative to opposite surfaces of Earth exert equal – but oppositely directed, and hence, mutually compensating and nihilating – influence on Earth's movement.)

Third, the progress from more primitive Thales' theory to much better Anaximander's theory is based not on experience, but on abstract considerations and ideas (problem of infinite regress with supports, symmetry). Moreover, if Anaximander developed his considerations on symmetry he could arrive to yet better theory – about spherical form of Earth (a sphere is more symmetrical than a drum). If we ask what prevented Anaximander from such a development, the obvious answer is: experience. It is obvious that the Earth has a flat surface (just as it is obvious that the Sun rotates round the Earth); but, despite obviousness, it is mistaken.

This is *a very important point for philosophy and science: experience-obviousness often deceives; abstract considerations are often more conductive to truth.*

Another important theme of Ancient Greek naturphilosophy was the problem of changes. Two opposite views are distinguished.

One is that everything is permanently changing. There is nothing immutable, except logos – law of changes. This was the central point of the doctrine of ***Heraclitus*** (≈550-480 BCE):

> "This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made. But it always was and will be: an ever-living fire, with measures of it kindling, and measures going out. All things are an interchange for fire, and fire for all things, just like goods for gold and gold for goods."

"Fire", as the innermost nature of the world, symbolizes incessant changes – flaring up and going out. Heraclitus was also famous for aphorisms: "Everything flows" and "You could not step twice into the same river", meaning that the river isn't the same as it contains other waters and you yourself have already changed. These aphorisms are simplified reformulations of Heraclitus' statements as retold by Plato:

> "Ever-newer waters flow on those who step into the same rivers."
> "Everything changes and nothing remains still ... and ... you cannot step twice into the same stream"
> "We both step and do not step in the same rivers. We are and are not."

At the same time, Heraclitus made statements that seem to be exactly the opposite of the doctrine of incessant changes – that changes are in a sense illusion and that true reality is immutable. This is identical with the doctrine of a philosopher who is usually considered as the opposite of Heraclitus – Parmenides (see lower). This seeming contradiction is Heraclitus' statements is explainable as follows.

Though Heraclitus taught that everything in the world changes, this doesn't pertain to the law of changes – *Logos*. *Logos* is immutable. And, on a view of Heraclitus, it is a higher, "true" reality, as opposed to always flowing and hence illusory reality of the world of changes. And the task of philosopher is to attain knowledge of *Logos*.

Another important point of Heraclitus' philosophy is a doctrine of unity of opposites. Heraclitus taught that "all things come into being by conflict of opposites", and that these opposites are, in some higher sense, identical with one another ("the path up and down are one and the same", "day and night are one", "the same thing is both living and dead"). Eventually,

> "God is day night, winter summer, war peace, satiety hunger, and it alters just as when it is mixed with incense is named according to the aroma of each."

Parmenides (≈540-470 BCE) contended that world is full and permanent; there can be no void and changes. All apparent changes are illusions. This doctrine harshly defies common sense: it is so obvious that there are changes; changes are so ubiquitous for our experience that it seems that no sane person can doubt their happening. But Parmenides thought that *obviousness, experience is no criterion of truth, they often deceive; we are not to rely on obviousness, experience; we are to rely only on reason*. This is a position which was later named 'rationalism' (in one of

several senses of the word, as opposed to ‘empiricism’ – the doctrine that all true knowledge is obtained from experience). It is of importance for philosophy and science. (For example, it is obvious that the surface of Earth is flat and that the Sun turns round the Earth.)

Parmenides thought that reason tells us that changes are impossible and, hence, all apparent changes are delusive. His argument is based on concepts of ‘being’ and ‘non-being’. Being is (exists); non-being is not (doesn’t exist). (It is just what these words mean: ‘being’ means that which is, exists; ‘non-being’ means that which is not, doesn’t exist.) This means that there is no void. (‘Void’ means nothing, non-being, which, as was proven above, doesn’t exist.) This means that the world is full. As there is no void, movement is impossible. (For movement to be possible there must be empty space, void; if there is no void, there is no empty space for things to move). Hence, changes are impossible.

There are different ways to deal with arguments of Parmenides. The one which is most obvious is to state that it is absurd, that we all know that there are changes; that we all see them etc. There is a legend that when Parmenides stated his doctrine to another philosopher, Diogenus, Diogenus said nothing but went going to and fro, thus “refuting” Parmenides’ doctrine. But such kind of “refutation” won’t do, for it assumes reliability of experience, while *the principal point of Parmenides’ argument is exactly that we are not to rely on experience*.

There are other ways, though. Instead of appealing to obviousness (experience), we may point out some faults in Parmenides’ reasoning. One such fault may be that Parmenides treats concepts of ‘being’ and ‘non-being’ as if they mean some things – those which exist and those which don’t; while really they mean *existential statuses* of things – whether things of certain kind exist or not. Other possible objection to Parmenides’ reasoning is that empty space (physical vacuum) is not nothing (non-being), but special kind of something (being). For example, physical concepts of electric and electromagnetic fields mean distribution throughout (empty) space certain properties – potentialities to accelerate charged bodies. But to have some properties empty space (vacuum) must be something, not nothing.

Parmenides’ pupil, ***Zeno of Elea***, is famous for his arguments which are called *aporias* and are also intended to prove that changes are impossible.

The most famous *aporia* is named ‘Achilles and Tortoise’. It says that it is impossible for fast-running Achilles to catch up with slowly-creeping

tortoise, if tortoise had some (whatever small) lead at start. It is because to catch up with tortoise Achilles must first to run through the distance which separated him from the tortoise at the start. But while he does it, the tortoise will creep some small distance. Now, to catch up with tortoise Achilles must first to run through that small distance. But while he does it, the tortoise will creep some (yet smaller) distance. Now, to catch up with tortoise Achilles must first to run through that distance. But while he does it, the tortoise will creep some (yet smaller) distance. *Etc., ad infinitum*. So, it is impossible for Achilles to catch up with tortoise.

Another Zeno's *aporia* – 'Dichotomy' (which means 'dividing into two equal parts') – says that it is impossible for a chariot to cover some (whatever) distance. For to cover this distance it has first to cover half that distance, and it remains for it to cover remaining half. But to cover remaining distance, the chariot has first to cover half of it, and it remains for it to cover remaining half. But to cover remaining distance, the chariot has first to cover half of it, and it remains for it to cover remaining half. *Etc., ad infinitum*. So, it is impossible for a chariot to cover some (whatever) distance.

These (and others) Zeno's *aporia*s can't be properly answered in the way in which (as legend says) Diogenus have answered Parmenides. It would be quite inappropriate to state that as Achilles is faster he surely will catch up with tortoise, or to demonstrate in practice that someone (who runs faster than tortoise) will catch up with a tortoise and that a chariot can cover some distance. Such a demonstration would be appeal to sensual experience, obviousness (we see that X has caught up with a tortoise; we see that a chariot have covered some distance), while *the principal point of Zeno's aporias is exactly that sensual experience (obviousness) is delusory*.

Zeno's *aporia*s can be adequately answered by pointing out faults in Zeno's reasoning. And there are such faults. So, in case of 'Achilles and Tortoise' and 'Dichotomy' the fault is principally the same – confusing two different processes:

(1) the process about which we are thinking (Achilles catching up with a tortoise; a chariot covering some distance)

and

(2) the process of thinking about (1).

Now (1) may be finite process, but we may organize our thinking about (1) in such a way that this thinking will become infinite – that in our thinking about (1) we will infinitely approach but never reach the end of (1). And this is exactly what Zeno does in the cases of 'Achilles and Tortoise' and 'Dichotomy'.

It is easier to see in the case of ‘Dichotomy’. There is some finite distance, but if we think about it the way ‘Dichotomy’ proposes we will never reach (in out thinking) the end of this distance. At each step we will find ourselves thinking of some intermediary point: half the distance, half and quarter of the distance; half and quarter and eighth part; half and quarter and eighth part and sixteenth part; *etc. ad infinitum*. But the fact that, if thinking this way, we will (in our thinking) never reach the end of the distance *does not* mean that the chariot (in a physical world) will never reach the end of the distance. So, Zeno’s “proof” is mistaken.

If we see this mistake, we can see some interesting points about ‘Achilles and Tortoise’ and ‘Dichotomy’.

First, they demonstrate that any finite segment is infinitely divisible (there are infinitely many intermediary points between any points A and B).

Second, they represent the mathematical concept of *decreasing geometrical progression*. It is known in mathematics that the sum of infinite number of members of decreasing geometrical progression is a finite number. So, ‘Dichotomy’ represents decreasing geometrical progression with the quotient ½, and the sum of infinite number of members of this progression equals 1:

$½+{}^{1}/_{4}+{}^{1}/_{8}+{}^{1}/_{16}+{}^{1}/_{32}+{}^{1}/_{64}+{}^{1}/_{128}+{}^{1}/_{256}+\ldots$ {*ad infinitum*}=1

In the case of ‘Achilles and Tortoise’ quotient depends on relation between speeds of Achilles and Tortoise.

Important development in early philosophy of Ancient Greece is the doctrine of ***Pythagoras*** (≈580-500 BCE). Pythagoras (the famous mathematician) founded his own philosophical school the main idea of which was that all reality is numbers and numerical relations. Though this idea seems *prima facie* implausible, it motivated a forceful and, at a long run, wonderfully successful attempt to apply mathematical concepts for description and explanation of reality. (It may be said that in modern physics the world – physical reality – sort of “dissolves” into mathematical equations.)

Great philosopher of XX century Karl Popper has suggested that the importance of Presocratics is to be seen not only in the content of their doctrines but in the distinctive character of the new intellectual tradition they have introduced – ***the tradition of critical discussion***. This tradition is opposed to dogmatic tradition which was peculiar to other civilizations, as well as to Europe of the Middle Ages.

In dogmatic tradition founders of great doctrines are considered as absolute, indisputable authorities; usually it is believed that the doctrine comes from supernatural source. (The most salient example is that of monotheistic religions such as Christianity or Islam.) This means that the doctrine, as it was initially given by the founder, is absolute truth and can't be improved. The task of followers of the doctrine is to transmit it in its initial purity. If they fail to do it, changes which occur are distortions, "heresies". Popper remarks that in such traditions there is no genuine history of ideas; instead, there is history of heresies and fight with them. If new ideas appear, they are believed by their proponents to be not new, but return to initial doctrine, rightly understood. Dissents evoke mutual accusations of heresies. One famous example – the Reformation, when Martin Luther had declared that Catholic Church has distorted Christian faith (he went so far as to call the Pope Antichrist), while Catholic Church has declared Luther's doctrine heresy.

What we see in Ancient Greece is quite different: philosophers critically discuss one another's doctrines and propose new ones, without claims for absolute authority. Particularly, it is salient feature of Miletian school where Anaximander and Anaximenes proposed new doctrines at variance with that of their teacher. Popper suggests that probably Thales wittingly encouraged critical attitude in his pupils.

This tradition is unique: it has emerged in the Ancient Greece; then it was suppressed in Middle Ages; and it was revived in period of Renaissance and was ever since the driving force of scientific progress peculiar to "the Western world" (Europe and North America).

This character of development of philosophy in Ancient Greece had found expression in the theory of knowledge stated by poet-philosopher ***Xenophanes*** (нар. ≈570 BCE):

> The gods did not reveal, from the beginning,
> All things to us; but in the course of time,
> Through seeking we may learn, and know things better…
> These things, we conjecture, are somehow like the truth.
> But as for certain truth, no man has known it,
> Nor will he know it; neither of the gods,
> Nor yet of all the things of which I speak.
> And even if perchance he were to utter
> The perfect truth, he would himself not know it:
> For all is but a woven web of guesses.

Xenophanes is also famous for his criticism of mythological ideas of gods. The meaning of this criticism is that people create their gods in their own likeness:

The Ethiops say that their gods are pug-nosed and black
While the Thracians say that theirs have blue eyes and red hair.

Yet if cattle or horses or lions had hands and could draw
And could sculpture like men, then the horses would draw their gods
Like horses, and cattle like cattle, and each would then shape
Bodies of gods in the likeness, each kind, of its own.[2]

2. Turn to a Man: Sophists and Socrates

Important change in the primary interest of philosophers have occurred in V century BCE and is attributed to philosophers called 'sophists' and to Socrates.

The name 'sophist' (as well as 'philosophy') comes from Greek word *sophia* – wisdom. ***Sophists*** were purported to be teachers of wisdom. They were paid travelling teachers who taught different arts needed for prosperous life in society.

The character of sophist's educational activities and philosophical ideas was due to the character of social life and politics in Ancient Greece. Ancient Greece was divided into many small states-cities called *polices*. They had different forms of government and other political arrangements which were often unstable, changeable. In some polices there were overturns from monarchy to aristocracy or democracy, from democracy to personal tyranny or oligarchy etc. and then back to democracy. Culturally and politically, the most important police was Athens; it was the center of intellectual life and art, as well as center of crafts, trade, seafaring. The form of government in Athens in this period was democracy, with the short interval of oligarchic dictatorship in between 404 and 400 BCE. The main political competitor of Athens was monarchic Sparta, famous for rigid submission of the whole life of its "free" citizens to the war and military training.

Also, one of the main activities of Greeks was seafaring trade. Greek merchants travelled to other countries and graded with people of cultures and customs, which were often very different from those of their own countries.

[2] Xenophanes is quoted by: Popper K. "Back to the Presocratics"

Among arts taught by sophists the prominent place was given to *rhetoric* – the art of public speech. Its importance was due to the fact that in many polices, especially democratic ones, all free citizens (there was slavery in Ancient Greece) could took direct part in discussions of important political questions. Greek democracy was not like ours (representative); it was direct: all citizens gathered in the central square of police to discuss important political questions, could make speeches etc. Besides, judicial system in many policies was so arranged that citizens often needed to make speeches in public courts and the success of their suit depended on their ability to persuade the public.

One negative consequence of the prominence of rhetoric was that it was intended not on revealing the truth but on persuasion. Artful rhetorian could persuade public in whatever he wants, whether it was true or not, even if he knew that it was false. One of charges which were made against sophists (especially by later most famous Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle) was that they practiced and taught different tricks devised for the purpose of misleading by (deceitful) appearance of logically correct form. Such tricks have got name '***sophisms***'; and the manner of persuasion aimed at misleading by such tricks was called '***sophistry***'.

Moreover, sophists made statements which are usually construed in the sense that there is no impersonal, objective truth; all there is are opinions which differ from person to person. There is a famous dictum of the most prominent sophist, ***Protagoras*** (≈481-411 BCE): "A man is the measure of all things; existent that they do exist, and non-existent that they don't". Other prominent sophist, ***Gorgias*** (≈483-374 BCE) argued that (1) nothing exists; (2) if it did, we could not know it; (3) if we knew anything, we could not talk about it.

The doctrine that there is no objective truth, that all truths are "relative" in the sense that they are just opinions held by some persons or groups – is called ***relativism about truth***, and sophists are considered as founders of relativism. Relativism about truth was criticized, for if it was true we couldn't meaningfully communicate with one another; any communication presupposes that there is something which is really the case, and our discussions and communications and are intended to reveal and communicate it, i.e. to reveal and communicate objective truth. Also, relativism about truth is charged with self-contradiction, for statement that there is no objective truth pretends to be an objective truth (not just opinion which has no force for those who don't hold it). General criticism of relativism about truth is that it confuses truth (which is objective) with opinions (which are subjective, and may be objectively true or false). If

someone thinks that 2*2=99, he is mistaken; even if at all humans were to become mad and believe that 2*2=99, this belief would be false. The same applies to cases about which we have different opinions and can't check what is true. For example, if God exists, the statement "God exists" is true and the statement "God doesn't exist" is false, even if all humans were atheists. If God doesn't exist, the statement "God exists" is false and the statement "God doesn't exist" is true, even if all humans believe that God exists.

There is also other – limited and much more widespread – form of relativism – ***moral relativism***. It can be described as the contention that there is no objective truth in moral matters; what is good for some people is bad for others; what is good in some cultures is bad in others etc.

One source of popularity of moral relativism is identification of "good" with "useful", "pleasant" etc. and "bad" with "harmful", "unpleasant" etc. But this may be criticized as confusion. The meaning of "good"/"bad" *in a moral sense of the words* is different from "useful"/"harmful", "pleasant"/"unpleasant" (for a particular person or group) etc.

Another, more powerful source of popularity of moral relativism is the fact that different cultures and persons differ very much in their moral norms and ideas about what is good and what is bad. But this, as in the case of relativism about truth, may be mere confusion. The fact that different cultures and persons differ in *opinions* about what is good and bad doesn't mean that there is no *objective truth* about what is really good and bad. Really, opinions have a sense only if there is some objective truth; our opinions is what we think (possibly, mistakenly) to be an objective truth; if we think that there is no truth about something, then we can have no opinion about it. If someone really believes that there is no objective truth about what is good and what is bad, than he can have no opinion about what is good and what is bad. If he has some such opinions, this means that there is some real, objective difference between good and bad. Moral relativism, if consistent, becomes moral nihilism – total renunciation of all moral judgments.

Supporters of moral relativism often defend it as making for tolerance for other systems of moral values and other cultures. But such a defense is self-contradictory, for it presupposes that we must be tolerant, that tolerance makes an objective moral difference, that it is an *objective moral value*. Moreover, it assumes that tolerance toward other cultures and other system of moral values is the highest moral value. This assumption is not only inconsistent with moral relativism, but self-destructive. Are we to be tolerant to those systems of values and cultures which are intolerant, which

encourage violent oppression and extermination of other systems of values and cultures, which negate human rights, personal freedom etc.? Are we to be so absolutely tolerant about other cultures that we can't even express our negative moral opinion about some their norms and practices?

Tolerance is an important moral value, but it is to be balanced with other moral values. Real tolerance must be based not on moral relativism but on ***moral fallibilism*** – admission that our (personal or dominant in our culture) moral views are imperfect, mistaken on some points, and that we can reveal this mistakes and improve our moral views in a discussion with other people (and other cultures). But such a discussion may have a sense only if we presuppose that there is some truth of the matter, which we may possibly reveal in the discussion. If there is no truth, there is nothing to discuss and nothing to improve. Also, it is to be admitted that moral value of *some* norms and *some* practices is dependent on a wider cultural and social context, but this value is still to be considered as objective. Our tolerance and open-mindedness about other moral systems and cultures must not prevent us from making moral judgments, including moral judgments about various aspects of other moral systems and cultures, and from acting on those judgments.

Like sophists, ***Socrates*** (≈470-399 BCE) has made a man center of his philosophy. He has accepted as his slogan the inscription which was engraved above main Greek temple – the temple of Apollo in Delphi: "Do Know Yourself".

Unlike sophists Socrates did believe that there is an objective truth about moral matters and that search of these truths is a primary task for a philosopher. Socrates made conversations with different people questioning their views about different issues and directing the discussion to the pivotal questions about the nature of moral good, virtue.

Socrates has left no systematic doctrine. He used to say that he teaches nothing, and compared himself with a midwife who doesn't give birth but helps others to do it. Also, he has compared himself with a gadfly who is fastening upon "a great and noble steed who is tardy in his motions … and requires to be stirred into life". Socrates suggested that he, like that gadfly, stirs Athenians out of sleep of complacency, forcing them into thinking about good and virtue. Socrates' method consisted in asking the succession of questions in such a way, that his interlocutor comes to contradicting what he did state before, revealing by this that he doesn't really know what he believed to know. In popular exposition, Socrates is usually presented as an

author of the dictum: “I know that I know nothing, but other people don’t know even this”.

Socrates didn’t write anything, and all we know about his philosophical ideas and activities comes from his pupils whose testimonies differed essentially. Also, different Socrates’ pupils moved from his philosophy in different directions (Plato, cynics, stoics – see in next sections).

The main source of information about Socrates was his famous pupil Plato. Plato has written almost all his works in the form of dialogues with Socrates as the main personage. This creates the problem of distinguishing views of real Socrates from views of Plato put into mouth of this personage. Usually, early works of Plato are considered as rather trustworthy source of information about real Socrates (for when Plato wrote them he was young and haven’t formed his own philosophical doctrine), while in Plato’s later works “Socrates” becomes more and more mouthpiece of Plato’s himself.

The most important source of information about Socrates is early work of Plato titled “Apology”. It is the narration of Socrates’ speech at a trial which have sentenced him to death. In this speech Socrates has made an account of his philosophical activities and his understanding of his vocation.

Socrates begins his speech by explaining what he considers to be real reasons of the suit against him. He was charged with corrupting the youth, not believing in the gods of the state and having other new divinities of his own. He denied the charge and did explain that real reasons of the trial were quite different. As a preliminary, he tells a story as follows.

One Athenian went to the temple Delphi and asked its prophetess (who was believed to be able to get into communication with the god of Delphi and report his answers) whether there was anyone wiser than Socrates, and the answer was that there was no man wiser.

Socrates tells that when he has heard of it he did wonder: “What can the god mean? and what is the interpretation of this riddle? for I know that I have no wisdom, small or great. What can he mean when he says that I am the wisest of men? And yet he is a god and cannot lie; that would be against his nature. After a long consideration, I at last thought of a method of trying the question.” Socrates went questioning different people, especially those who had a repute of wise men and believed that they are wise. Here is Socrates report:

> “I went to one who had the reputation of wisdom…; he was a politician … – and the result was as follows: When I began to talk with him, I could not help thinking that he was not really wise, although he

was thought wise by many, and wiser still by himself; and I went and tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and heard me. So I left him, saying to myself, as I went away: Well, although I do not suppose that either of us knows anything really beautiful and good, I am better off than he is – for he knows nothing, and thinks that he knows. I neither know nor think that I know. In this latter particular, then, I seem to have slightly the advantage of him. Then I went to another, who had still higher philosophical pretensions, and my conclusion was exactly the same. I made another enemy of him, and of many others besides him.

After this I went to one man after another, being not unconscious of the enmity which I provoked… And I swear to you, Athenians … – the result of my mission was just this: I found that the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that some inferior men were really wiser and better… When I left the politicians, I went to the poets; tragic, dithyrambic, and all sorts. … Accordingly, I took them some of the most elaborate passages in their own writings, and asked what was the meaning of them… …I must say that there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their poetry than they did themselves. That showed me in an instant that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration… …and I further observed that upon the strength of their poetry they believed themselves to be the wisest of men in other things in which they were not wise. So I departed, conceiving myself to be superior to them for the same reason that I was superior to the politicians.

At last I went to the artisans, for I was conscious that I knew nothing at all, as I may say, and I was sure that they knew many fine things; and in this I was not mistaken, for they did know many things of which I was ignorant, and in this they certainly were wiser than I was. But I observed that even the good artisans fell into the same error as the poets; because they were good workmen they thought that they also knew all sorts of high matters, and this defect in them overshadowed their wisdom – therefore I asked myself on behalf of the oracle, whether I would like to be as I was, neither having their knowledge nor their ignorance, or like them in both; and I made answer to myself and the oracle that I was better off as I was.

This investigation has led to my having many enemies of the worst and most dangerous kind, and has given occasion also to many calumnies, and I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I

myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and in this oracle he means to say that the wisdom of men is little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name as an illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing…

There is another thing: young men of the richer classes, who have not much to do, come about me of their own accord; they like to hear the pretenders examined, and they often imitate me, and examine others themselves; there are plenty of persons, as they soon enough discover, who think that they know something, but really know little or nothing: and then those who are examined by them instead of being angry with themselves are angry with me: This confounded Socrates, they say; this villainous misleader of youth! – and then if somebody asks them, Why, what evil does he practice or teach? they do not know, and cannot tell; but in order that they may not appear to be at a loss, they repeat the ready-made charges which are used against all philosophers about teaching things up in the clouds and under the earth, and having no gods, and making the worse appear the better cause; for they do not like to confess that their pretence of knowledge has been detected – which is the truth: and as they are numerous and ambitious and energetic, and are all in battle array and have persuasive tongues, they have filled your ears with their loud and inveterate calumnies. And this is the reason why my three accusers, Meletus and Anytus and Lycon, have set upon me."

Then Socrates questioned one of his accusers and has shown that he contradicts himself.

After this Socrates tells what he thinks about the threat of death sentence and his philosophical vocation:

"… if, I say, now, when, as I conceive and imagine, God orders me to fulfil the philosopher's mission of searching into myself and other men, I were to desert my post through fear of death, or any other fear; that would indeed be strange, and I might justly be arraigned in court for denying the existence of the gods, if I disobeyed the oracle because I was afraid of death: then I should be fancying that I was wise when I was not wise. For this fear of death is indeed the pretence of wisdom, and not real wisdom, being the appearance of knowing the unknown; since no one knows whether death, which they in their fear apprehend to be the greatest evil, may not be the greatest good. Is there not here

conceit of knowledge, which is a disgraceful sort of ignorance? And this is the point in which … I might perhaps fancy myself wiser than other men, – that whereas I know but little of the world below, I do not suppose that I know: but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better, whether God or man, is evil and dishonorable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil. And therefore if you let me go now … – if you say to me, Socrates, this time we … will let you off, but upon one condition, that you are not to inquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing this again you shall die; – if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting anyone whom I meet after my manner… For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons and your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue come money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching… Wherefore, O men of Athens, … either acquit me or not; but whatever you do, know that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times.

…I would have you know that, if you kill such a one as I am, you will injure yourselves more than you will injure me. Meletus and Anytus will not injure me: they cannot; for it is not in the nature of things that a bad man should injure a better than himself. I do not deny that he may, perhaps, kill him, or drive him into exile, or deprive him of civil rights; and he may imagine, and others may imagine, that he is doing him a great injury: but in that I do not agree with him; for the evil of doing as Anytus is doing – of unjustly taking away another man's life – is greater far. And now, Athenians, I am not going to argue for my own sake, as you may think, but for yours… For if you kill me you will not easily find another like me, who, if I may use such a ludicrous figure of speech, am a sort of gadfly, given to the state by the God … I am that gadfly which God has given the state and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you. And as you will not easily find another like me, I would advise you to spare me. I dare say that you may feel irritated at being suddenly awakened when you are caught napping; and you may think that if you were to strike me dead, as Anytus advises, which you

easily might, then you would sleep on for the remainder of your lives, unless God in his care of you gives you another gadfly.

…

Yet a word more. Perhaps there may be someone who is offended at me, when he calls to mind how he himself, on a similar or even a less serious occasion, had recourse to prayers and supplications with many tears, and how he produced his children in court, which was a moving spectacle, together with a posse of his relations and friends; whereas I, who am probably in danger of my life, will do none of these things. … And why not? …my reason simply is that I feel such conduct to be discreditable to myself, and you, and the whole state. …setting aside the question of dishonor, there seems to be something wrong in petitioning a judge, and thus procuring an acquittal instead of informing and convincing him. For his duty is, not to make a present of justice, but to give judgment; and he has sworn that he will judge according to the laws, and not according to his own good pleasure… Do not then require me to do what I consider dishonorable and impious and wrong… And to you and to God I commit my cause, to be determined by you as is best for you and me."

The jury, by small majority, has found Socrates guilty and, according to procedure, before deciding on sentence, Socrates had his saying about sentence he would propose. Socrates said that as he has to propose what is just, and as his activity is beneficent, then he suggested "sentence" must be "some good thing", some "reward suitable to a poor man who is your benefactor":

"I will not say of myself that I deserve any evil, or propose any penalty. Why should I? Because I am afraid of the penalty of death which Meletus proposes? When I do not know whether death is a good or an evil, why should I propose a penalty which would certainly be an evil? Shall I say imprisonment? And why should I live in prison, and be the slave of the magistrates of the year…? Or shall the penalty be a fine, and imprisonment until the fine is paid? There is the same objection. I should have to lie in prison, for money I have none, and I cannot pay. And if I say exile (and this may possibly be the penalty which you will affix), I must indeed be blinded by the love of life if I were to consider that when you, who are my own citizens, cannot endure my discourses and words, and have found them so grievous and odious that you would fain have done with them, others are likely to endure me… And what a

life should I lead, at my age, wandering from city to city, living in ever-changing exile, and always being driven out!"

Socrates was sentenced to death and was given his last speech to public. First he addressed to those who have condemned him:

"Not much time will be gained … in return for the evil name which you will get from the detractors of the city, who will say that you killed Socrates, a wise man… If you had waited a little while, your desire would have been fulfilled in the course of nature. For I am far advanced in years, as you may perceive, and not far from death. …I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you as you would have liked me to address you, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have been accustomed to hear from others, and which, as I say, are unworthy of me. But I thought that I ought not to do anything common or mean in the hour of danger: nor do I now repent of the manner of my defence, and I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live. For neither in war nor yet at law ought any man to use every way of escaping death. For often in battle there is no doubt that if a man will throw away his arms, and fall on his knees before his pursuers, he may escape death; and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything. The difficulty, my friends, is not in avoiding death, but in avoiding unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death. I am old and move slowly, and the slower runner has overtaken me, and my accusers are keen and quick, and the faster runner, who is unrighteousness, has overtaken them. And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death, and they, too, go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of villainy and wrong; and I must abide by my award - let them abide by theirs…

And now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and that is the hour in which men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my death punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives. But that will not be as you suppose: far otherwise. For I say that there will be more accusers of you than there are now; accusers whom hitherto I have restrained: and as they are younger they will be more

severe with you, and you will be more offended at them. For if you think that by killing men you can avoid the accuser censuring your lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honorable; the easiest and noblest way is not to be crushing others, but to be improving yourselves…"

Then, Socrates addressed to his friends and explained why he isn't afraid of death. He told that he has sort of inner voice – he did call it by word which is usually translated in English as 'daemon' or 'oracle' (we would probably call it conscience) – which always warns him against doing bad things:

"…Hitherto the familiar oracle within me has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error about anything; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition…; …now in nothing I either said or did touching this matter has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this? I will tell you. I regard this as a proof that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. This is a great proof to me …, for the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good.

Also, Socrates have discussed two alternative views of what death is, and argued that in any case it is not bad:

"… there is great reason to hope that death is a good, for one of two things: – either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by the sight of dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king, will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now if death is like this, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead are, what good, O my friends and judges,

can be greater than this? If indeed when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life, that pilgrimage will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I, too, shall have a wonderful interest in a place where I can converse with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and other heroes of old, who have suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in that; I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! For in that world they do not put a man to death for this; certainly not. For besides being happier in that world than in this, they will be immortal, if what is said is true.

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth – that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death…

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways – I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows."

In Plato's dialogue "Crito" it is narrated that when awaiting death in prison, Socrates was visited by his friend who have prepared a flight and urged Socrates to flee. But Socrates have refused, repeating his arguments that death is not evil, explaining that to flee would be the same as to be sentenced to exile (the sentence he rejected at trial as disgraceful and worse then death). Also, Socrates argued that, as he has chosen to live under laws of Athens (if he judged them unjust, he could choose any other police, with other laws, to live), it would be unjust to break these laws by his flight; it is his duty to obey these laws up to his death.

Fulfilling the sentence, Socrates had calmly drunk poisoned beverage and died.

3. Plato: the World of Ideas-Forms

Plato was on of the greatest Greek philosophers, author of first great philosophic systems which encompasses metaphysics (doctrine about reality, its general structure), epistemology (doctrine about knowledge), ethics and political philosophy.

The pattern for Plato's doctrines was mathematics – the only reliable science of true knowledge that can be proven. Mathematics is sort of immaterial world of forms-ideas (Greek *eidos*) and relations which are eternal, unchangeable, and not given through perceptual experience, but given to speculative thought.

On this pattern, in metaphysics, Plato (like Parmenides) taught that changeable things given in perception is not true reality; true reality is eternal, unchangeable. ***True reality is the world of eternal, unchangeable forms-ideas***, like those of mathematics. Plato taught that each class of things corresponds to its form-idea: there is eternal, unchangeable form-idea of table, horse, man, state etc. All tables are tables due to their participation in the form-idea of tables, and so with all other perceptual things. Form-idea is a perfect pattern for perceptual things; all individual perceptual things are imperfect copies of their forms-ideas. On Plato's views, perceptual, changeable things are not true reality, they are secondary to the true reality of eternal, unchangeable ideas-forms, – sort of illusions, perceptual representations of ideas-forms, their shadows.

Besides, there is yet higher (the highest) level in Plato's hierarchy of reality – ***the idea-form of ideas-forms – the Good***. It relates to the multitude of ideas (forms) as any idea-form relates to a multitude of its perceptual representations (as idea-form of table relates to the multitude of tables).

According to Plato, people, except sages-philosophers, live in sort of unreal world of shadows, taking shadows of true reality for reality itself. Only sages-philosophers know true reality. This idea is vividly described by Plato in "The Allegory of the Cave" – see Appendix.

In epistemology (theory of knowledge) Plato taught that we don't really acquire new knowledge, but recollect what we know in some way but have forgotten. ***Learning is recollection.*** He explains this by the myth that before humans are born their souls reside in the true reality – the world of ideas – and directly contemplate it. On birth, humans forget this, but the knowledge is retained in some unconscious form. When seeing perceptual things (imperfect copies of "shadows" of their ideas) humans can recollect their ideas.

In politics, Plato was a confirmed opponent of democracy. He believed that state must be ruled by sages-philosophers who know true reality of eternal forms-ideas. One famous statement of Plato is:

> "There will be no order in the state until philosophers become kings or kings become philosophers."

The most important part of Plato's political philosophy was ***the doctrine of the ideal state*** which he propounded in his two largest books "The Republic" and "The Laws".

This doctrine has its roots in Plato's doctrine about human soul. Plato's taught that human soul has three parts – the rational soul (bearer of reason, intellect), the spirited soul (bearer of volitions), the appetitive soul (bearer of emotions or desires). They can be correlated with different parts of body – head, breast and bosom. To each of these souls corresponds specific virtue – wisdom, courage and moderation. Different people have different souls dominating. Hence, in an ideal state all people have to be divided into three classes which perform different functions – rulers-philosophers, soldiers (defenders of a state) and feeders (farmers, artisans, merchants – to provide material sustenance for a state).

Body	Soul	Virtue	Class	Function in state
head	rational	Wisdom	rulers	government
breast	spirited	Courage	soldiers	defense, war
bosom	appetitive	Moderation	feeders	material sustenance

According to Plato, in an ideal state there must be no personal freedom; all life of citizens must be strictly subdues to the regime and orders prescribed by rulers-philosophers. There must be no initiative.

Also, there must be no private property. Even family, as a form of private property, is to be abolished. Children must be brought up in public schools. Parents mustn't know their children. All grown-ups must be considered as parents to all children. Sexual intercourse is to be arranged by rulers on eugenic considerations; but for people not to feel offence, it is to be given appearance of drawing lots. Rulers are to invent means to made common even feelings.

In such a state there can be no freedom of thought, religion and speech. All must accept religion established by rulers. If someone preaches different religious ideas, he is first to be imprisoned and brought to the Night councel of inquisitors where he inquisitors will try to persuade him to give up his "heresy". If he doesn't give up, he is to be annihilated.

Also, Plato proposed that in an ideal state it must be forbidden to teach youth new ideas. Philosophy is to be taught only to future rulers at a mature age, after a long course of study in other subjects.

Paradoxically, though Plato believed himself to be pupil of Socrates and usually put his ideas in the mouth of personage of his dialogues named "Socrates", his ideal state is a blatant negation of Socrates of "Apology". In Plato's ideal state a man like Socrates couldn't preach his ideas, couldn't discuss philosophical matters with young men, couldn't defend himself publicly in court, as he did in democratic Athens…

So, Plato was the author of the first known project of totalitarian communistic project in the history of European thought. The basic principle of his political philosophy was that men, as parts of a state, exist for the state as a whole.

Besides his theory of ideal state, other Plato's contribution to political philosophy was ***typology, classification of existent political regimes***. Plato distinguished six regimes – three correct and three perverted – depending on a number of rulers and their ruling motives:

Number of rulers	Correct form	Perverted form
One	monarchy	tyranny
Few	aristocracy or timocracy	oligarchy
all citizens	democracy	ochlocracy

In correct forms rulers are guided by laws and interests of a state, while in perverted ones – by their selfish interests and whims. Plato thought that among the correct forms the less is number of rulers the better (monarchy is better then aristocracy, aristocracy is better then democracy). Among the perverted forms, vice versa – the less is number of rulers the worse (tyranny is worse then oligarchy, oligarchy is worse then ochlocracy).

Appendix

The Allegory of the Cave

by Plato (from Plato's *The Republic*)
translated by Benjamin Jowett

AND now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: Behold! human beings living in an underground den, which has a mouth open toward the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them,

being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionetteplayers have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

– I see.

– And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent.

– You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners.

– Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

– True, he said; how could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

– And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?

– Yes, he said.

– And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?

– Very true.

– And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy when one of the passersby spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?

– No question, he replied.

– To them, I said, the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.

– That is certain.

– And now look again, and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look toward the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then conceive someone saying to him, that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now, when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned toward more real existence, he has a clearer vision -- what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them -- will he not be perplexed? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

– Far truer.

– And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take refuge in the objects of

vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

– True, he said.

– And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he is forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.

– Not all in a moment, he said.

– He will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day?

– Certainly.

– Last of all he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is.

– Certainly.

– He will then proceed to argue that this is he who gives the season and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold?

– Clearly, he said, he would first see the sun and then reason about him.

– And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellowprisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity him?

– Certainly, he would.

– And if they were in the habit of conferring honors among themselves on those who were quickest to observe the passing shadows and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together; and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honors and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer,

– "Better to be the poor servant of a poor master,"

– and to endure anything, rather than think as they do and live after their manner?

– Yes, he said, I think that he would rather suffer anything than entertain these false notions and live in this miserable manner.

– Imagine once more, I said, such a one coming suddenly out of the sun to be replaced in his old situation; would he not be certain to have his eyes full of darkness?

– To be sure, he said.

– And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who had never moved out of the den, while his sight was still weak, and before his eyes had become steady (and the time which would be needed to acquire this new habit of sight might be very considerable), would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if anyone tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death.

– No question, he said.

– This entire allegory, I said, you may now append, dear Glaucon, to the previous argument; the prisonhouse is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upward to be the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world according to my poor belief, which, at your desire, I have expressed -- whether rightly or wrongly, God knows. But, whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this visible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellectual; and that this is the power upon which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must have his eye fixed.

– I agree, he said, as far as I am able to understand you.

– Moreover, I said, you must not wonder that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; for their souls are ever hastening into the upper world where they desire to dwell; which desire of theirs is very natural, if our allegory may be trusted.

– Yes, very natural.

– And is there anything surprising in one who passes from divine contemplations to the evil state of man, misbehaving himself in a ridiculous manner; if, while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the surrounding darkness, he is compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or the shadows of images of justice, and is endeavoring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen absolute justice?

– Anything but surprising, he replied.

Anyone who has commonsense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from two causes, either from coming out of the light or from going into the light, which is true of the mind's eye, quite as much as of the bodily eye; and he who remembers this when he sees anyone whose vision is perplexed and weak, will not be too ready to laugh; he will first ask whether that soul of man has come out of the brighter life, and is unable to

see because unaccustomed to the dark, or having turned from darkness to the day is dazzled by excess of light. And he will count the one happy in his condition and state of being, and he will pity the other; or, if he have a mind to laugh at the soul which comes from below into the light, there will be more reason in this than in the laugh which greets him who returns from above out of the light into the den."

4. Aristotle: philosophy of "the Golden Mean"

Aristotle was another greatest Greek philosopher. Though he was a pupil of Plato, he didn't share radical ideas of his teacher. His philosophy can be considered as a kind of a compromise between Plato's ideas and common sense. That is why he is sometimes said to be unoriginal.

Unlike Plato, who was looking for pattern of philosophic knowledge in mathematics, Aristotle was more interested in the knowledge of empirical character. He has accomplished a great systematization of up-to-date knowledge in all important fields, and have left after himself a great volume of philosophic texts. Unlike Plato's dialogues, they have a form of "monologic" scientific tracts.

Aristotle's general attitude was that of avoiding extremes and seeking after "the golden mean", in everything.

In metaphysics, Aristotle rejected Plato's doctrine about the world of ideas-forms and taught, instead, that ideas-forms don't exist separately from perceptual (material) things. Everything existent is a unity of two aspects – form-idea and matter.

Matter is a stuff from which things are made. The concept of form-idea means in Aristotle's philosophy (as well as in Plato's) not just geometrical form, but rather "essence" of thing – that which makes thing what it is, an item of certain species. For example, the form of a hen isn't just a form of its body but its cackle, egg laying eggs etc. There are "external" and "internal" forms. In particular, soul of a man is his internal form.

Like Plato, Aristotle taught that human soul consists of three parts – nutritive soul, sensitive soul and rational soul. Nutritive soul is a part common to all living beings (plants, animals, humans alike); it initiates and guides their most basic functions, the absorption of food, growth, and reproduction of its kind. Sensitive soul belong to animals and humans; it perceives features of their surroundings and move in response to the stimuli this provides. Rational soul, which is responsible for thought, is peculiar to humans.

The main idea of Aristotle's ***ethic doctrine*** is that all virtues are "the golden means" between two extremes. So, courage is "the golden mean" between cowardice and rashness; temperance – between intemperance and insensibility; generosity – between wastefulness and stinginess; being friendly – between being ingratiating and being surly; magnanimity – between vanity and of pusillanimity; etc.

In ***political doctrine*** Aristotle accepts Plato's typology of six "pure" political regimes. But, in keeping with his general line of searching for "the golden mean", Aristotle believed that the best regime is a mixed one – which unites features of three "pure" correct regimes – monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. This synthesis – which Aristotle called ***polity*** – is the most stabile and protected from degeneration into corrupted regimes.

Aristotle taught also that a human being is a ***political animal***; it needs a state for a truly human life. A state originates from the need in communication and friendship; its satisfaction is necessary for human happiness.

Aristotle taught that there are ***three forms of happiness***: the lowest is a life in a luxury and pleasures; the middle is a life of a free and responsible citizen; the highest is philosophic thinking-contemplation.

The necessary condition of human happiness is friendship. Aristotle distinguished ***three forms of friendship***:

1) *Friendship for a pleasure* – when two people have a common interest which they may realize in common activity so that everyone gets more pleasure then he could by himself. Such a friendship is lowest and least enduring.

2) *Friendship for utility* – when two people may get more enduring utility from relationship, - for example, to acquire some skill.

3) *Friendship for the good* is the highest and most enduring form of friendship. It is relationship for the sake of developing the overall goodness, virtues.

Aristotle was a founder of science of ***formal logics***: he has formulated main rules of inference from true premises to true conclusions. Such inferences are called ***syllogisms***. For example, from the premises "All human beings are mortal" and "Socrates is a human being" it the conclusion "Socrates is mortal" logically follows.

An important part of Aristotle's philosophy is the doctrine about ***four kinds of causes***:

The **material cause** is the stuff out of which the thing is made. For example, the material cause of a house is a brick.

The **formal cause** is the pattern or essence in conformity with which these materials are assembled. For example, the material cause of a house is its design.

The **efficient cause** is the agent or force which makes the things. For example, labour of builders of a house.

Lastly, the **final cause** is the purpose for which a thing exists. For example, efficient cause of a house is that it provides shelter for human beings.

It is important that Aristotle, unlike most of modern people, believed that not only human-made things (like house), but everything existent has its purpose, final cause. The final cause (purpose) of rain is watering plants, giving animals and humans water to drink. Plants have their efficient cause (purpose) in feeding animals and humans. Animals have their efficient cause in different human needs etc. Every thing aspires to realize its immanent potentialities which distinguish them from other things and make it what it is (water, plant, dog, cat, human). For human beings such a potentiality-ability is a reason. So the final cause of humans is thinking, and its highest form is philosophic contemplation.

The doctrine about four kinds of causes proceeds to Aristotle's theology (doctrine about God). Aristotle's God, or Absolute, is a perfect eternal immutable being which is an efficient cause (immovable "first mover") and final cause (purpose) of all the Universe.

In XIV century CE these ideas were adapted by Christian philosopher-theologist Thomas Aquinas into his "proofs" of existence of God.

5. Hellenistic Philosophy

Hellenism is a name for a period of history of Greek and other countries much influenced by Greek culture, Ancient Rome primarily, which have started with the empire of Alexander Macedonian and continued by the Rome Empire. Textbook of history of philosophy usually pay little attention to this period, for it is usually assumed that the philosophy of ancient western world have gained its climax in works of Plato and Aristotle. But Hellenistic philosophy is also rich in interesting philosophers and philosophical schools.

Hellenistic philosophy had some tendencies essentially different from those of classic period of sophists, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Important shift of the brunt of philosophic interest was originated by political changes.

Philosophy of classical period from sophists to Aristotle had developed in cities-states (polices) having different and changeable political

arrangements. Greeks of this period were citizens who took active part in affairs of their city-state. That is why the primary philosophic interest was politics: political regimes and arrangements, the skill of government, virtues of a citizen, the purpose of a state and citizens etc.

Hellenistic philosophy pays politics much less attention. As the system of cities-polices was replaced with great empires, citizen had a little opportunities to influence politics, and philosophy of this period reflects this situation. It is interested primarily not in public life of a man as a citizen, but in his private life as a person who aspires to a good life, happiness, virtue, peace of mind. Though there were different schools in philosophy of this period, they shared some main ideas such as:

– ***self-sufficiency***: a wise man finds happiness within himself; to be happy, he have no need in external comforts, in whatever depends on other people and fortune;
– ***apathy*** – a wise man has to keep his peace of mind whatever happens, to be indifferent to all external circumstances, in particular, to physical sufferings;
– there is ***a necessary connection between happiness and virtue***.

Now let us survey ideas of most interesting schools of this period.

Cynics – philosophic school whose followers believed that a man have no need in comforts of civilization, – to attain happiness we are to live simply and naturally, like animals. This often made cynics to discard generally adopted norms of behavior, openly and shamelessly break or ignore them. That is why word 'cynic' have acquired a negative meaning we are accustomed to.

In Greek, "cynic" means "canine"; it implies that cynics have lived, wittingly, like dogs. Founder of this school, Diogenes, was famous for living in a large barrel.

There is a legend that once Alexander Macedonian rode near Diogenes' barrel and has stopped to have a talk with a philosopher. Alexander asked if Diogenes has some request Alexander could grant to express his favor. "I have. – Diogenes answered. – Please, move away, for you are screening the sun from me." The meaning of this legend is that a wise man needs nothing which depends on other people, even on Emperors; all he needs is himself and natural goods (such as a sun) which are easily available to everybody.

Epicurus (≈340-270 BCE) had taught that *the only purpose of a human life is happiness – having pleasures and avoiding sufferings.* This kind of doctrine is called ***hedonism***.

Especially, Epicurus emphasized avoiding sufferings. In our search for pleasures we are to be considerate, for things which evoke our desires and bring immediate pleasure often have, as their more distant consequences, sufferings which far outweigh pleasures. It is more important to avoid sufferings then to get pleasures. (Take smoking for example.) We are to appraise different possibilities not in the light of short-term expectations, but in the prospect of a whole life. The pleasures worth aspiring, pleasures which don't entail future sufferings are of spiritual kind – enjoinment of art, friendship etc. To attain happiness, a man has to develop self-control, moderation, peace of mind. Epicurus taught that "*pleasure is our first and native good*"[3], but made important reservations:

> "When we say, then, that pleasure is the end and aim, we do not mean the pleasures of the prodigal or the pleasures of sensuality, as we are understood to do by some through ignorance, prejudice, or willful misrepresentation. By pleasure we mean the absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul. It is not an unbroken succession of drinking-bouts and of merrymaking, not sexual love, not the enjoyment of the fish and other delicacies of a luxurious table, which produce a pleasant life; it is sober reasoning, searching out the grounds of every choice and avoidance, and banishing those beliefs through which the greatest disturbances take possession of the soul.
>
> Of all this the source is prudence. For this reason prudence is a more precious thing even than the other virtues, for neither there is a life of pleasure which is not also a life of prudence, honor, and justice; nor there is a life of prudence, honor, and justice, which is not also a life of pleasure. For the virtues have grown into one with a pleasant life, and a pleasant life is inseparable from them."

One of the main sources of sufferings is a fear of death. Epicurus didn't believe in an afterlife and taught that to remove the fear of death we are to become understand that there is nothing to fear:

> "Accustom yourself to believe that death is nothing to us, for good and evil imply awareness, and death is the privation of all awareness… Death, therefore, the most awful of evils, is nothing to us, seeing that, when we are, death is not come, and, when death is come, we are not. It is nothing, then, either to the living or to the dead, for with the living it is not and the dead exist no longer.

[3] This and other quotations are from Epicurus' *Letter to Menoeceus*

Epicurus was materialist who accepted, with some modifications, Democritus' doctrine of atomism. He did admit existence of gods, but taught that gods don't interfere in human life.

Epicurus has his philosophic school. The most famous of his followers was Roman poet Titus Lucretius Karr who in his philosophical poem *De Rerum Naturae* (*On the Nature of Things*) propagated Epicurus' ideas.

Stoicism was a philosophic school which is associated with fortitude to withstand any ordeals. Its founder was a Greek philosopher Zeno of Citium (not to be confused with Zeno of Elea). Its most famous representatives were Roman philosophers Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius and Seneca. Like cynics and Epicurus, stoics professed the ideal of self-sufficient man – a sage who needn't for his happiness anything which depends on a fortune or other people, whose happiness resides in himself, who is able to keep a peace of mind whatever happens. While Epicurus taught that the purpose of human life is happiness and its necessary condition is virtue, stoics taught that the purpose of human life is virtue and happiness is its by-effect.

Stoics believed that the world is governed by Reason, God, Logos. Hence, whatever happens is reasonable, expedient. So, a wise man has to accept all events with a composure and try to understand their expediency.

Unlike cynics, stoics preached not renunciation of comforts of civilization, but indifference to them. It is of no significance for a happiness of a man if he is rich or poor, if he is a slave or an Emperor. As Seneca puts it:

> "…he is a great man who uses earthenware dishes as if they were silver; but he is equally great who uses silver as if it were earthenware."

It is characteristic that one of most famous stoics, Epictetus, was a former slave, while another, Marcus Aurelius, was an Emperor of Rome.

Philosophy of stoics has its attractive and unattractive aspects. On the one side, it may be admired for an extraordinary fortitude which has become associated with word 'stoic'. On the other side, stoics seem to go too far in their pursuing of an ideal of self-sufficiency and apathy; some of their precepts and patterns on this account seem callous, heartless.

For example, Seneca tells much about how important friendship (and love as a form of friendship) is, but in these discussions friendship looks impersonal – as if a person of a friend is of no importance, as if a friend is just an opportunity for practicing a virtue of friendship; friends are easily replaceable:

> “In this sense the wise man is self-sufficient, that he can do without friends, not that he desires to do without them. …he endures the loss of a friend with equanimity. But he need never lack friends, for it lies in his own control how soon he shall make good a loss. Just as Phidias, if he lose a statue, can straightway carve another, even so our master in the art of making friendships can fill the place of a friend he has lost…
>
> The wise man, I say, self-sufficient though he be, nevertheless desires friends if only for the purpose of practising friendship, in order that his noble qualities may not lie dormant… For what purpose, then, do I make a man my friend? In order to have someone for whom I may die, whom I may follow into exile, against whose death I may stake my own life, and pay the pledge, too.
>
> …he will live happily even without friends.”

And, to support these claims on friendship, Seneca adduces, as a pattern of self-sufficiency and apathy, the story about Stilbo:

> “Stilbo, after his country was captured and his children and his wife lost, as he emerged from the general desolation alone and yet happy, spoke as follows to Demetrius, called Sacker of Cities because of the destruction he brought upon them, in answer to the question whether he had lost anything: "I have all my goods with me!" There is a brave and stout-hearted man for you! The enemy conquered, but Stilbo conquered his conqueror. "I have lost nothing!" Aye, he forced Demetrius to wonder whether he himself had conquered after all. "My goods are all with me!" In other words, he deemed nothing that might be taken from him to be a good.”

In Hellenistic period there were also some developments of importance in the philosophy of knowledge. The dominant trend was ***skepticism*** – the view opposed to Plato’s faith in possibility of attaining certain, provable knowledge. Skepticism about knowledge has its varieties – radical and moderate.

Radical skepticism about knowledge is a total denial that it is possible to attain true knowledge. This was a view of Pyrro who preached total suspension of judgment and sort of mysticism.

Moderate skepticism about knowledge is the view that we can’t achieve *certain* knowledge and are to be content with more or less plausible ideas (which may well be true, but we can never be quite sure of it). This view was in Hellenistic period by leading philosophers of Academy (school which was founded by Plato), though it was running against main aspiration

of its founder. Plato has seen his aim exactly in replacement of unreliable "opinions" with a certain, provable knowledge ("justified true belief"). His successors at the head of Academy have came to conclusion that such a knowledge is impossible, and we are to be content with opinions and search for the means to distinguish more "probable" ones.

Another school of importance in Hellenistic philosophy was ***neoplatonism*** which had developed some features of Plato's philosophy (especially, his concept of Good) in the course of mysticism. The most famous representative of this school was ***Plotinus***. His philosophy made a great impact on a later Christian philosophy-theology, – in particular, that of St. Augustine.

According with Plotinus, reality is a hierarchy the highest level (or center) of which is the One (Good, God). This One as if irradiates outward and this "emanations" constitute further levels of being. The second level is Spirit, Reason, Logos – the image of the One in which it sees itself. The third level is Soul. Soul creates Matter, bodies in which it incarnates. The next level is an absolute darkness, non-being which is not reached by irradiation (emanations) of the One. The farther from the One the less real is being; as it moves away from the One it is gradually turns into non-being. The evil in Plotinus' philosophy has no its own reality, it is just lack of being, lack of Good. (This idea was later incorporated by Christian philosophy.) Comprehension of being, ascension of human soul to the One is possible not on rational way but through mystical experience – the state when a man feels its unity with the One or "the cosmic soul".

Appendix

Epicurus

Fragments and Aphorisms

• Let no one be slow to seek wisdom when he is young nor weary in the search thereof when he is grown old. For no age is too early or too late for the health of the soul. And to say that the season for studying philosophy has not yet come, or that it is past and gone, is like saying that the season for happiness is not yet or that it is now no more.

• Not the person who denies the gods worshipped by the multitude, but he who affirms of the gods what the multitude believes about them is truly impious.

• The same exercise at once teaches to live well and to die well.

• Of desires some are natural, others are groundless; and that of the natural some are necessary as well as natural, and some natural only. And of the necessary desires some are necessary if we are to be happy, some if the body is to be rid of uneasiness, some if we are even to live. He who has a clear and certain understanding of these things will direct every preference and aversion toward securing health of body and tranquility of mind, seeing that this is the sum and end of a happy life.

• No pleasure is in itself evil, but the things which produce certain pleasures entail annoyances many times greater than the pleasures themselves.

• We regard independence of outward things as a great good, not so as in all cases to use little, but so as to be contented with little if we have not much, being honestly persuaded that they have the sweetest enjoyment of luxury who stand least in need of it, and that whatever is natural is easily procured and only the vain and worthless hard to win.

• It would be impossible to banish fear on matters of the highest importance, if a person did not know the nature of the whole universe, but lived in dread of what the legends tell us. Hence without the study of nature there was no enjoyment of unmixed pleasures.

• The just person enjoys the greatest peace of mind, while the unjust is full of the utmost disquietude.

• Unlimited time and limited time afford an equal amount of pleasure, if we measure the limits of that pleasure by reason.

• Of all the means which are procured by wisdom to ensure happiness throughout the whole of life, by far the most important is the acquisition of friends.

Epictetus

Fragments and Aphorisms

• Some things are in our control and others not. Things in our control are opinion, pursuit, desire, aversion, and, in a word, whatever are our own actions. Things not in our control are body, property, reputation, command, and, in one word, whatever are not our own actions. The things in our control are by nature free, unrestrained, unhindered; but those not in our control are weak, slavish, restrained, belonging to others.

• Men are disturbed, not by things, but by the principles and notions which they form concerning things. Death, for instance, is not terrible, else it would have appeared so to Socrates. But the terror consists in our notion of death that it is terrible.

• The chief source of all evils to man, and of baseness and cowardice, is not death, but the fear of death.

• We must make the best use that we can of the things which are in our power, and use the rest according to their nature. What is their nature then? As God may please.

• What then should a man have in readiness in such circumstances? What else than "What is mine, and what is not mine; and permitted to me, and what is not permitted to me." I must die. Must I then die lamenting? I must be put in chains. Must I then also lament? I must go into exile. Does any man then hinder me from going with smiles and cheerfulness and contentment? "Tell me the secret which you possess." I will not, for this is in my power. "But I will put you in chains." Man, what are you talking about? Me in chains? You may fetter my leg, but my will not even Zeus himself can overpower. "I will throw you into prison." My poor body, you mean. "I will cut your head off." When, then, have I told you that my head alone cannot be cut off? These are the things which philosophers should meditate on, which they should write daily, in which they should exercise themselves…

• In order to determine the rational and the irrational, ... we consider also what is appropriate to each person. For to one man it is consistent with reason to hold a chamber pot for another, and to look to this only, that if he does not hold it, he will receive stripes, and he will not receive his food: but if he shall hold the pot, he will not suffer anything hard or disagreeable. But to another man not only does the holding of a chamber pot appear intolerable for himself, but intolerable also for him to allow another to do this office for him. If, then, you ask me whether you should hold the chamber pot or not, I shall say to you that the receiving of food is worth more than the not receiving of it, and the being scourged is a greater indignity than not being scourged; so that if you measure your interests by these things, go and hold the chamber pot. "But this," you say, "would not be worthy of me." Well, then, it is you who must introduce this consideration into the inquiry, not I; for it is you who know yourself, how much you are worth to yourself, and at what price you sell yourself; for men sell themselves at various prices.

• Philosophy does not propose to secure for a man any external thing. If it did philosophy would be allowing something which is not within its province. For as the carpenter's material is wood, and that of the statuary is copper, so the matter of the art of living is each man's life.

• The condition and characteristic of a vulgar person, is, that he never expects either benefit or hurt from himself, but from externals. The condition and characteristic of a philosopher is, that he expects all hurt and benefit from himself.

• A man ought not to be invincible in the way that an ass is. Who then is the invincible? It is he whom none of the things disturb which are independent of the will.

• Don't be prideful with any excellence that is not your own. If a horse should be prideful and say, "I am handsome," it would be supportable. But when you are prideful, and say, "I have a handsome horse," know that you are proud of what is, in fact, only the good of the horse.

• Remember that you must behave in life as at a dinner party. Is anything brought around to you? Put out your hand and take your share with moderation. Does it pass by you? Don't stop it. Is it not yet come? Don't stretch your desire towards it, but wait till it reaches you.

• Whatever moral rules you have deliberately proposed to yourself, abide by them as they were laws, and as if you would be guilty of impiety by violating any of them.

• A good man does nothing for appearance' sake, but for the sake of having done right.

• If you seek Truth, you will not seek to gain a victory by every possible means; and when you have found Truth, you need not fear being defeated.

• Knowest thou what a speck thou art in comparison with the Universe? – That is, with respect to the body; since with respect to Reason, thou art not inferior to the Gods, nor less than they. For the greatness of Reason is not measured by length or height, but by the resolves of the mind. Place then thy happiness in that wherein thou art equal to the Gods.

• Who then is a Stoic?.. Show me a man that is sick – and happy; in danger – and happy; on his death-bed – and happy; an exile – and happy; in evil report – and happy!.. Show me, one of you, a human soul, desiring to be of one mind with God, no more to lay blame on God or man, to suffer nothing to disappoint, nothing to cross him, to yield neither to anger, envy, nor

jealousy – in a word, … one that from a man would fain become a God; one that while still imprisoned in this dead body makes fellowship with God his aim.

• Nature hath given men one tongue but two ears, that we may hear from others twice as much as we speak.

• Even as the Sun doth not wait for prayers and incantations to rise, but shines forth and is welcomed by all: so thou also wait not for clapping of hands and shouts and praise to do thy duty; nay, do good of thine own accord, and thou wilt be loved like the Sun.

Marcus Aurelius

Fragments and Aphorisms

- That which does not make a man worse than he was, also does not make his life worse.

- There is nothing good for man, which does not make him just, temperate, manly, free; and that there is nothing bad, which does not do the contrary to what has been mentioned.

- He who does wrong does wrong against himself. He who acts unjustly acts unjustly to himself, because he makes himself bad.

- Nothing is either bad or good which can happen equally to the bad man and the good.

- Death certainly, and life, honour and dishonour, pain and pleasure, all these things equally happen to good men and bad, being things which make us neither better nor worse. Therefore they are neither good nor evil.

- A man ought to consider as an enjoyment everything which it is in his power to do according to his own nature. And it is in his power everywhere.

- Remember too on every occasion which leads thee to vexation to apply this principle: not that this is a misfortune, but that to bear it nobly is good fortune.

- Nothing happens to any man which he is not formed by nature to bear.

- The best way of avenging thyself is not to become like the wrong doer.

- Take care not to feel towards the inhuman, as they feel towards men.

- If a thing is difficult to be accomplished by thyself, do not think that it is impossible for man: but if anything is possible for man and conformable to his nature, think that this can be attained by thyself too.

- It is a ridiculous thing for a man not to fly from his own badness, which is indeed possible, but to fly from other men's badness, which is impossible.

- Consider that men will do the same things nevertheless, even though thou shouldst burst.

- Every man is worth just so much as the things are worth about which he busies himself.

- Always bear this in mind, that very little indeed is necessary for living a happy life.

- Thou canst remove out of the way many useless things among those which disturb thee, for they lie entirely in thy opinion.

- Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up, if thou wilt ever dig.

- Whatever of the things which are not within thy power thou shalt suppose to be good for thee or evil, it must of necessity be that, if such a bad thing befall thee or the loss of such a good thing, thou wilt blame the gods, and hate men too, those who are the cause of the misfortune or the loss, or those who are suspected of being likely to be the cause; and indeed we do much injustice, because we make a difference between these things. But if we judge only those things which are in our power to be good or bad, there remains no reason either for finding fault with God or standing in a hostile attitude to man.

- He often acts unjustly who does not do a certain thing; not only he who does a certain thing.

- The perfection of moral character consists in this, in passing every day as the last, and in being neither violently excited nor torpid nor playing the hypocrite.

- When thou hast done a good act and another has received it, why dost thou look for a third thing besides these, as fools do, either to have the reputation of having done a good act or to obtain a return?

- How much trouble he avoids who does not look to see what his neighbour says or does or thinks, but only to what he does himself, that it may be just and pure.

• Constantly observe who those are whose approbation thou wishest to have, and what ruling principles they possess.

• Short-lived are both the praiser and the praised, and the rememberer and the remembered.

• Receive wealth or prosperity without arrogance; and be ready to let it go.

• Adorn thyself with simplicity and modesty and with indifference towards the things which lie between virtue and vice.

• No longer talk at all about the kind of man that a good man ought to be, but be such.

• If any man is able to convince me and show me that I do not think or act right, I will gladly change; for I seek the truth by which no man was ever injured. But he is injured who abides in his error and ignorance.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

Fragments and Aphorisms

• Whatever is well said by anyone is mine.

• What man can you show me who places any value on his time, who reckons the worth of each day, who understands that he is dying daily? For we are mistaken when we look forward to death; the major portion of death has already passed, whatever years be behind us are in death's hands.

• Hold every hour in your grasp… While we are postponing, life speeds by. Nothing is ours, except time. We were entrusted by nature with the ownership of this single thing, so fleeting and slippery that anyone who will can oust us from possession. What fools these mortals be! They allow the cheapest and most useless things, which can easily be replaced, to be charged in the reckoning, after they have acquired them; but they never regard themselves as in debt when they have received some of that precious commodity, – time! And yet time is the one loan which even a grateful recipient cannot repay.

• It is not the man who has too little, but the man who craves more, that is poor. What does it matter how much a man has laid up in his safe, or in his warehouse, how large are his flocks and how fat his dividends, if he covets his neighbour's property, and reckons, not his past gains, but his hopes of gains to come? Do you ask what is the proper limit to wealth? It is, first, to have what is necessary, and, second, to have what is enough.

• If anything forbids you to live nobly, nothing forbids you to die nobly.

• If you consider any man a friend whom you do not trust as you trust yourself, you are mightily mistaken and you do not sufficiently understand what true friendship means. Indeed, I would have you discuss everything with a friend; but first of all discuss the man himself. When friendship is settled, you must trust; before friendship is formed, you must pass judgment. Those persons indeed put last first and confound their duties, who … judge a man after they have made him their friend, instead of making him their friend after they have judged him. Ponder for a long time whether you shall admit a given person to your friendship; but when you have decided to admit him, welcome him with all your heart and soul. Speak as boldly with him as with yourself… Regard him as loyal, and you will make him loyal. Some, for example, fearing to be deceived, have taught men to deceive; by their suspicions they have given their friend the right to do wrong.

• It is equally faulty to trust everyone and to trust no one.

• I warn you … not to act after the fashion of those who desire to be conspicuous rather than to improve, by doing things which will rouse comment as regards your dress or general way of living… The mere name of philosophy, however quietly pursued, is an object of sufficient scorn; and what would happen if we should begin to separate ourselves from the customs of our fellow-men? Inwardly, we ought to be different in all respects, but our exterior should conform to society… Let us try to maintain a higher standard of life than that of the multitude, but not a contrary standard; otherwise, we shall frighten away and repel the very persons whom we are trying to improve.

• Do you ask me what you should regard as especially to be avoided? I say, crowds… To consort with the crowd is harmful; there is no person who does not make some vice attractive to us, or stamp it upon us, or taint us unconsciously therewith. Certainly, the greater the mob with which we mingle, the greater the danger. … I come home more greedy, more ambitious, more voluptuous, and even more cruel and inhuman, because I have been among human beings.

• The young character, which cannot hold fast to righteousness, must be rescued from the mob; it is too easy to side with the majority.

• Who that is pleased by virtue can please the crowd? It takes trickery to win popular approval… However, what you think of yourself is much more

to the point than what others think of you. The favour of ignoble men can be won only by ignoble means. … If I see you applauded by popular acclamation, if your entrance upon the scene is greeted by a roar of cheering and clapping, marks of distinction meet only for actors, – if the whole state, even the women and children, sing your praises, how can I help pitying you? For I know what pathway leads to such popularity.

• You should not copy the bad simply because they are many, nor should you hate the many because they are unlike you. Withdraw into yourself, as far as you can, Associate with those who will make a better man of you. Welcome those whom you yourself can improve. The process is mutual; for men learn while they teach.

• Lay these words to heart, that you may scorn the pleasure which comes from the applause of the majority. Many men praise you; but have you any reason for being pleased with yourself, if you are a person whom the many can understand? Your good qualities should face inwards.

• Hold fast, then, to this sound and wholesome rule of life – that you indulge the body only so far as is needful for good health. The body should be treated more rigorously, that it may not be disobedient to the mind… It matters little whether the house be built of turf, or of variously coloured imported marble; understand that a man is sheltered just as well by a thatch as by a roof of gold… And reflect that nothing except the soul is worthy of wonder; for to the soul, "if it be great, naught is great."

• Hear and take to heart this useful and wholesome motto: "Cherish some man of high character, and keep him ever before your eyes, living as if he were watching you, and ordering all your actions as if he beheld them." Such is the counsel of Epicurus… The soul should have someone whom it can respect, – one by whose authority it may make even its inner shrine more hallowed.

• Let your thoughts, your efforts, your desires, help to make you content with your own self and with the goods that spring from yourself.

• Are you surprised … that after such long travel and so many changes of scene you have not been able to shake off the gloom and heaviness of your mind? You need a change of soul rather than a change of climate…. Do you ask why such flight does not help you? It is because you flee along with yourself. You must lay aside the burdens of the mind; until you do this, no place will satisfy you...

• Philosophy is no trick to catch the public; it is not devised for show. It is a matter, not of words, but of facts. It is not pursued in order that the day may yield some amusement before it is spent, or that our leisure may be relieved of a tedium that irks us. It moulds and constructs the soul; it orders our life, guides our conduct, shows us what we should do and what we should leave undone; it sits at the helm and directs our course as we waver amid uncertainties.

• Philosophy teaches us to act, not to speak; it exacts of every man that he should live according to his own standards, that his life should not be out of harmony with his words, and that, further, his inner life should be of one hue and not out of harmony with all his activities. This, I say, is the highest duty and the highest proof of wisdom, - that deed and word should be in accord, that a man should be equal to himself under all conditions, and always the same.

• If there is any good in philosophy, it is this, – that it never looks into pedigrees. All men, if traced back to their original source, spring from the gods. … A noble mind is free to all men; according to this test, we may all gain distinction. Philosophy neither rejects nor selects anyone; its light shines for all. Socrates was no aristocrat. Cleanthes worked at a well and served as a hired man watering a garden. Philosophy did not find Plato already a nobleman; it made him one. … We have all had the same number of forefathers; there is no man whose first beginning does not transcend memory. Plato says: "Every king springs from a race of slaves, and every slave has had kings among his ancestors." The flight of time, with its vicissitudes, has jumbled all such things together, and Fortune has turned them upside down. Then who is well-born? He who is by nature well fitted for virtue. … A hall full of smoke-begrimed busts does not make the nobleman. No past life has been lived to lend us glory, and that which has existed before us is not ours; the soul alone renders us noble, and it may rise superior to Fortune out of any earlier condition, no matter what that condition has been.

• "He is a slave." His soul, however, may be that of a freeman. "He is a slave." But shall that stand in his way? Show me a man who is not a slave; one is a slave to lust, another to greed, another to ambition, and all men are slaves to fear. I will name you an ex-consul who is slave to an old hag, a millionaire who is slave to a serving-maid; I will show you youths of the noblest birth in serfdom to pantomime players! No servitude is more disgraceful than that which is self-imposed.

§3. MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY, RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

Plan

1. Medieval Philosophy
2. Renaissance and Its Philosophy
3. Reformation

1. Medieval Philosophy

Middle Ages – historical period which begins nearly IV century CE and closes near XIV century CE. The name "Middle Ages" was given later by people who regarded this period – between Antiquity (Ancient Greece and Hellenism) and Renaissance (the cultural movement of XIV-XVI centuries aimed at renaissance of antique culture) – as "dark" ages of cultural obscurantism.

The definitive feature of Medieval (adjective from Middle Ages) life, culture, worldview in the largest part of Europe was a religious monopoly of Catholic Christian Church. Soon after the emperor of Roman Empire Constantine have made Christianity state religion of Roman Empire, at the end of IV century heathen cults were banned. Philosophy and science, independent of Christian religion, were also repressed; in VI century the center of antique philosophy and science, Athenian higher school, was closed. The only kind of philosophy which was allowed to exist was a philosophy which subdued itself to the Christian doctrine and tried to provide it with philosophical foundations and justification. The situation of philosophy in Middle Ages is characterized by expression: "Philosophy is a servant of theology".

In intermediary period between Antiquity and Middle Ages, in III century CE, there were some Christian thinkers worthy of mentioning. Their thinking reflects a conflict and interaction between the culture and philosophy of Antiquity and growing Christianity.

Origenus (185-253) was a Greek thinker who made a considerable contribution to Christian theology, but also taught some doctrines which were shortly after condemned by Christian Church as heretic, anathematized. These were the doctrine about ***universal salvation*** and the doctrine about ***human soul's reincarnations***.

Despite the view which was later officially adopted by Christian Church and is supported by many statements in the Bible, Origenus taught that all humans and angels will finally achieve salvation. This included even

rebellious angels and Satan himself; Origenus taught that they finally will repent and reconcile with God. (To remind, according with the Bible, Satan was created by God as the most perfect of angels, but then, urged by arrogance, have rebelled against God, and third of God's angels have followed Satan.) As God is omnipotent and omniscient, Satan's rebel and the Fall of Adam and Eve can't be anything but part of God's plan, Providence which leads to God's purpose. He knew that this will happen beforehand. And as God is not only omnipotent and omniscient but also absolutely good, no god's creature can perish. But for God's purpose be achieved with respect to humans, one earthly life may be not enough. Many people don't achieve during their earthly lifetime that state of soul which is needed for salvation. So, Origenus taught that such people will be born repeatedly in a new body and new world (aeon), as many times as needed for their soul's improvement.

With respect to Christian texts which later have constituted the Bible, especially Gospels, Origenus advocated allegoric interpretation of and have proposed many such interpretations which were used by Christian theology along with more literal.

Another famous Christian polemist of this time was ***Tertullianus*** (160-230), mostly known as the author of a slogan: "Credo ad Absurdum" – ***"I believe it, because it is absurd."***

The general brunt is that though Christian doctrine contradicts reason, we are to believe Christian doctrine, despite reason.

In medieval philosophy the question about relation of Christian faith and reason was one of the most discussed. On this issue, most medieval philosophers did hold view different from that of Tertullianus; they taught that there is a harmony between Christian faith and reason.

Probably the most important philosopher of beginning of the Middle Ages was Augustine Aurelius (354-430), who was declared saint by Catholic Church. Augustine path to Christianity was through manicheism (religion which taught eternal conflict of good and evil, where good was identified with a spirit and evil – with a material reality), skepticism and neoplatonism. His main works are *The Confessions* and "City of God".

The dominant idea which runs all through *The Confessions* is sin, depravity of human nature. This depravity makes all humans deserving eternal infernal sufferings, so that people may be saved only through God's grace. Bertran Russell has described it as follows:

> "St. Augustine taught that Adam, before tha Fall, had had a free will and could have abstained from sin. But as he and Eve ate the apple, corruption entered into them and descended to all their posterity, none of whom can of their own power abstain from sin. Only God's grace enables man to be virtuous. Since we all inherited Adam's sin, we all deserve eternal damnation. All who die unbaptized, even infants, will go to the hell and suffer ending torment. We have no reason to complain of this, since we are all wicked. (In *The Confessions* the Saint enumerates the crimes of which he was guilty in a cradle.) But, by God's free grace certain people, among those who had been baptized, are chosen to go to heaven; these are the elect. They do not go to heaven because they are good; we are all totally depraved, except in so far as God's grace, which is only bestowed on the elect, enables us to be otherwise. No reason can be given why some are saved and the rest damned; this is due to God's unmotived choice. Damnation proves God's justice; salvation – His mercy; both equally display His goodness. ... It may seem odd that damnation of unbaptised infants should not have been thought shocking, but should have been attributed to a good God. The conviction of sin however so dominated him, that he really believed newborn children to be limbs of Satan. A great deal of what is most ferocious in the medieval Church is traceable to his gloomy sense of universal guilt."[4]

So, on Augustine's view, the afterlife fate of every human being – salvation or infernal sufferings – is preordained by God and doesn't depend on a (wo)man himself. Before creating the world, in eternity, God, without any reason, has chosen some people for salvation by his grace while others for eternal infernal sufferings; and nobody can change this choice. This is called ***the doctrine of predestination***. It is to be remarked that Catholic Church didn't make explicit judgment on this doctrine, but was in practice following a different one – that humans have a freedom of will and their salvation depend on their faith in the doctrine of Church and on the balance of their good and bad deeds. Later, the doctrine of preordainment was revived in one of influential protestant branches of Christianity, Calvinism, and opposed to Catholic doctrine of salvation through faith and good deeds.

In the book "The City of God" Augustine contrasted two "cities" (communities) – earthly and heavenly. In the earthly city the ruling motives are egotism, greed, competition and envy; in the heavenly – love of God and one another. Augustine identified earthly community is with a state;

[4] Russell B. The history of Western Philosophy

heavenly – with the Church. At present, these two "cities" coexist on Earth and penetrate one another and struggle for rule over humans. In future, after Doomsday, only one – heavenly city will remain. This Augustine's doctrine was used by Catholic Church in its struggle for dominance with a temporal power which was one of salient features of the Middle Ages.

Other important philosopher of earlier part of the Middle Ages was Severinus Boetius. His main work, "Consolations of Philosophy", was written in prison while he was awaiting execution of death sentence. He was sentenced because of his political activities and intrigues of his political enemies. His fate and philosophy reminds much of Socrates. Though he was a Christian, his philosophical views, as expressed in "Consolations of Philosophy", bear no specific features of Christianity and are more in spirit with stoicism. (There are mentions of God, but no name of Jesus Christ; Boetius' God may be identified with Logos of stoics.)

The book is written in the form of a dialogue of the author with Philosophy personalized in women. The plot is that while awaiting the death in prison Boetius is besieged by thoughts about injustice of his fate which imply injustice of what happens in the world. Then Philosophy, in appearance of a woman, appears to console and encourage him. Philosophy reminds Boutius his own philosophic convictions that vicissitudes of a fortune – whether it gives us riches, fame *etc* or poverty, prison *etc* – are of no significance; that all that matters for man's good is his own soul, and it is in his own power, doesn't depend on "the wheel of fortune". Philosophy reminds Boetius Socrates' wisdom that even death is not evil; the only evil for a man is depravity of his soul. Finally, all is ruled by omnipotent and omniscient God (≡Reason, Logos) and advances to his aim of absolute good, though humans are unable to comprehend divine plan and discern it in deceptive movements of "the wheel of fortune".

Main topics of discussions in Medieval philosophy were

- **Relation between Christian faith and reason**. Unlike Tertullian, most philosophers of Middle Ages believed that Christian faith and reason are in harmony and supplement one another.

- **Proofs of God's existence**. Philosophers of Middle Ages proposed arguments which they believed to be proofs of God's existence. One of most influential and controversial "proofs" was proposed by Anselm of Cantembury and is called ontological proof. Five other "proofs" were formulated by the most influential philosopher of Middle Ages Thomas Aquinas.

- **The problem of universals.** It is the problem of the kind of reality represented by concepts – general names, universals – such as "a tree", "a chair", "a man" etc.? Is there some special entities (besides a great many different trees, chairs and men) which such concepts name? There must be something that makes all trees to be trees. What is that something ("essence" of tree) and how it exists? Two opposite views with respect to this problem were called realism and nominalism. ***Realism about universals*** is the view that there is some special kind of reality represented by universals, besides concrete trees, chairs, men etc. (In the philosophy of Ancient Greece this view was represented by Plato – his theory about the world of forms-ideas.) The opposite view – ***nominalism about universals*** – is that there are no such special realities, besides concrete trees, chairs, men etc.; universals are just words which men devised to signify things which are similar in a certain important respects. In Medieval philosophy discussion about universals was entangled with Christian theological dogma of Trinity saying that God is one in three persons – God-father, God-son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. Though this dogma was declared by Church sacred mystery beyond human understanding, it was to some extent explained by stating that these three persons have the same essence.

- **The question of primacy between will of God and distinction of good and evil.** Do moral distinctions originate from the will of God? Or good is good and bad is bad independently of God's will, and God's will is subordinate to good? This problem was first posed by Socrates who asked: whether something is good because gods like it – or gods like it because it is good? Socrates' option was clearly the second. In Mideival philosophy the problem was aggravated by monotheistic doctrine that God have created everything and there can be nothing independent of God. This seem to exclude the second option (good is good by itself, independently of God's will, but as God is good, he wills what is good). But the first option seems yet more unacceptable, for it means that God could will anything whatever and whatever he would will would be good. For example, this option means that God could will to give instead of Ten Commandments "Don't kill", "Don't steal", "Don't slander" *etc* quite the opposite commandments "Do kill", "Do steal", "Do slander" *etc*, and this would make killing, stealing and slandering good. The answer to this problem which was acceptable to the Church was contrived by Thomas Aquinas (see below).

Anselm of Cantembury (1033-1109) has formulated the argument named ontological proof of God's existence. This "proof" proceeds from

content of *concept of God as absolutely perfect being* and seems to derive logically from this content God's existence. It runs as follows.

(1) By definition, God is an absolutely perfect being, i.e. such a being that it is impossible to think of more perfect being.
(2) Existence is a good quality; it is better to exist then not to exist; hence, all other qualities equal, a being which exists is more perfect then a being which doesn't.
(3) Suppose that God doesn't exist. Then, we can think of a being that has all perfections that God has and, besides, exists. This being would be more perfect then God. So, if God didn't exist, we could think of o being which is more perfect than God. But this contradicts (1). Hence, God exists.

In short, this argument says that to think that absolutely perfect being doesn't exist is to think that absolutely perfect being is not absolutely perfect. This means to contradict himself.

This argument was criticized as soon as it became known. One its critic contended that in the same way we can "prove" that somewhere exists an absolutely perfect island (such an island that it is impossible to think of more perfect one) and all other absurd things of this sort.

Nevertheless, it is not easy to see what is faulty in Anselm's reasonings, what is wrong with its logics. That is why many serious thinkers, including such a famous philosopher and mathematician as Rene Descartes thought that this "proof" is correct.

At the end of XVIII century, Immanuel Kant has given a refutation to this "proof" which was considered by most of later philosophers as final. Kant contended that 'existence' is not an attribute of things (for all existent things do exist) but sort of reality-status of concepts: to say that X exists is the same as to say that somewhere in the world there is a thing which corresponds with the concept "X".

We can also remark that Anselm's "proof" is a trick which consists in incorporating "existence" is concept, and then deriving existence from that concept, and that this trick con be applied to all kinds of fancy things. For example, I may propose the "proof" of existence of a dragon which stands now behind my back. It is possible for me to think of a dragon standing behind my back. But, on the logics of Anselm's "proof", to think that a dragon standing behind my back doesn't exist is to contradict himself (it is impossible for a thing which doesn't exist to stand behind my back). Hence, a dragon standing behind my back exists.

The most influential European medieval philosopher was ***Thomas Aquinas*** (1225-1274). He was declared saint by Catholic Church; moreover, in 1879 Pope Leo XIII have declared Aquinas' philosophy the only true philosophy which entirely corresponds Christian doctrine. So, the teaching of Thomas Aquinas and his followers – thomism – has become official philosophy of Catholic Church.

Thomas applied philosophical ideas of Aristotle to support and explain philosophically Christian doctrine.

He believed that reason and Christian faith are in harmony and supplement each other. As far as religious matters are concerned, reason can provide arguments for belief in God, but he is unable by its own means to get specific content of religious knowledge – so he needs to be supplemented by religious doctrine given by God himself, based on God's revelation.

To demonstrate how philosophical reasoning can support Christian faith, Thomas formulated five "proofs" of God's existence. These "proofs" are based mostly on Aristotle's doctrine about God-Absolute as perfect being which is immovable "first mover" ("efficient cause") and purpose ("final cause") of everything existent.

(1) Necessity of existence of "immovable mover". Everything that moves is brought into movement by some other thing, which needs to be brought into movement by some yet other thing etc. This chain can't be infinite, so there must be exist immovable mover of everything. It is God.

(2) Necessity of existence of first cause of everything – analogically to (1).

3) Necessity of necessary being. Existence of any particular thing in our world seems contingent (it seems that it could possibly not exist). But the whole reality can't be contingent. There must be some necessary being which is a source of everything seemingly contingent. This necessary being is God.

4) Teleological (from *telos* – purpose) proof. As Aristotle taught, everything has its purpose (final cause). The purpose (final cause) of the world is God.

5) We see in the world different degrees of perfectness. So, there must exist absolutely perfect being. It is God.

All these "proofs" are really far from being proofs in the strong sense. In particular, Immanuel Kant has refuted them (as well as Anselm's "proof") by explaining that they are based on premises which are far from being indubitable. But they may be arguments which are convincing for some people.

With respect to the problem of universals, Thomas advocated moderate realism. He taught that universals exist first as *ideas of God, by which he has created the world* and then are imperfectly comprehended by human reason and grasped in concepts.

With respect to the problem of primacy between will of God and distinction of good and evil Thomas proposed a solution which was accepted by Catholic Church, though sceptics may say that it is just a verbal trick. The solution consisted in incorporating the concept of good in the concept of God. On Thomas' doctrine God has two aspects: the first is his eternal immutable nature, "essence"; the second is his will. The first is identical with the good; the good is eternal immutable nature, "essence" of God. The second – will of God – necessarily corresponds with His eternal immutable nature, "essence"; God couldn't possibly wish something which runs contrary to his eternal immutable nature, "essence".

In philosophy of later Middle Ages (XIII - XIV century) there was considerable interest in problems of scientific knowledge. In this context, Roger Bacon and William Ockham deserve mentioning.

Roger Bacon (≈1214-1294) emphasized the importance of experiments for development of knowledge. Besides, he taught that mistakes in human ideas proceed from four main sources: 1) example of bad authority; 1) influence of habits; 3) opinions of uneducated crowd; 4) covering one's own ignorance under the mask of pretended authority. This teaching of Roger Bacon have anticipated (and probably have influenced) much of the teaching of his famous descendant – Francis Bacon (see §4).

William Ockham (≈1290-1349) developed logics, advocated nominalism about universals. He is mostly known owing to the principle called "Ockham's razor". Its usual formulation is: "Don't multiply entities without need". In Okham's works there are other formulations: "You shouldn't do with the more that which can be done with the less." The meaning is that if we have several different theories which successfully explain some events, it is reasonable to give a preference to the simplest one.

2. Renaissance and Its Philosophy

Renaissance is the name for cultural movement in XV-XVII centuries which aimed at revival of culture and philosophy of Ancient Greece and Rome. Antiquity as perion of cultural heyday was opposed to Middle Agas as period of decline, "dark ages". The favourite ancient philosopher of for Renaissance was Plato – in opposition to Aristotle who, after his

accommodation to Christianity by efforts of Thomas Aquinas, has became absolutely dominant authority in late Middle Ages.

Renaissance was connected with the invention of book-printing (the end of XIV century), progress in sea-faring and trade, great geographic discoveries (in particular, the discovery of America at the end of XV century) which have broadened cultural horizons, developments in natural sciences (such as discoveries of Copernicus, Halileo, Kepler).

The motherland of Renaissance was Italy – the foremost country in sea-faring and trade. Large cities of Italy were centers of crafts and trade and had political independence. Italy was divided into five larger and many smaller states. Generally, cultural and political situation in Italy was much like that of Ancient Greece.

Poet Dante Aligiery (1265-1321), poet Franchesko Petrarka (1304-1374), novelist Jovanni Bocaccho (1313-1375) are usually regarded as forerunners of Renaissance in literature.

One of the most important features of Renessance outlook was a new view of human being; this view is called *humanism*. Its followers, humanists, were admirers of human abilities, values of earthly life, bodily beauty – in contraposition to medieval emphasize on human sinfulness and miserableness of all earthly and corporeal. So, Lorenzo Valla (1407-1457) aspired to rehabilitate earthly pleasures in his philosophy and propagated neoepicureism; Pojo Braccholini in the book *On Greed* advocated striving for enrichment; Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525) in book *On Immortality of Soul* asserted the unity of soul and body, denied immortality of soul, criticized faith in revelations and miracles; he also asserted the existence of natural ethics and that the purpose and the sense of human existence is achieveing happiness through rational contition. Titles of books of Janozzo Manetti, *On the Dignity and Superiority of Man*, and Pico Della Mirandola, *The Praise of Human Dignity*, are much indicative.

Renaissance philosophers also gave the highest value to nature. Many of them were pantheists – followers of the doctrine that nature and God is the same, that nature is God. The most famous philosopher-pantheist of Renaissance was Jordano Bruno (1548-1600). He is mostly known as a preacher heliocentric view about Universe (it is not quite correct description, for Bruno really believed that the Universe has no center, for it is infinite; but our planetary system is heliocentric) who was burned alive for his convictions by Catholic Church's Inquisition.

The important theme of philosophical works of this period was politics.

The most famous political thinker of Renaissance was – ***Nikollo Mackiavelli*** (1469-1527). He is famous mostly for his book *The Prince*

where he have expounded the view that ruler (prince) in his political activity has to be free from moral considerations and to do whatever is effective for strengthening his power and order in the state – whether it is lie, treasom, perjury, murder etc. And Mackiavelli gives detailed advices as to when and how these means are to be used efficiently. After Mackiavelli, this attitude to politics has got the name ***mackiavellism***.

Other Renaissance political thinkers have introduced literary-philocophic genre of ***utopia***.

This name originates from the title of the book written by English thinker ***Thomas More*** (1478-1535). In this book, Utopia is a name of a fictional island where social system is entirely different from that existent in England and other European countries. It is a communist system where all property is common. More believed that a community of property leads to equality and harmony in relations between humans, cancels competition and enmity. Inhabitants of Utopia live in equal prosperity, have identical houses and wear identical clothes, feed in common dining-rooms, work six hours, and use a free time for reading and common entertainments.

After More, the word 'utopia' has become used to designate unfeasible projects of ideal social arrangements, usually of communistic nature.

Another well-known utopia of Renaisance period was "The City of The Sun" by ***Tomazo Campanella*** (1568-1639). Like More, Campanella describes a fictional city with ideal social system which combines communism (common property) with theocracy (rule of priests).

Also, Campanella has formulated a theory of knowledge which in some important points atticipates the famous meditations of Renes Descartes (see §4). It says that external senses aren't reliable source of knowledge about the world. As they are *my* senses, their sensations may originate not in external things, but in myself. The certain knowledge is possible only on the foundation of internal feeling whose testimonies are indubitable. Internal feeling indubitably testifies that 1) I am, 2) I am a being who cognizes and acts, but knows and does far from everything. Hence, I am limited. Hence, there are extermnal things which limit me.

3. Reformation

Reformation was a religious movement of XVI-XVII centuries aimed at "purification" of Christianity, against the authority of Pope of Rome, priests, organization of Catolic Church. Its direct result was a split in a western Christianity into Catholicism and Protestantism. ***Protestantism*** is a common name for the multitude of Christian denominations (Lutherans, Calvinists, Baptists, Adventists *etc.*) which don't belong to Catholic Church

or Orthodox Church and have its origin in Reformation. Their important common feature is that, unlike Catholic Church and Orthodox Church, they don't acknowledge priests as mediators between laymen and God. (In Catholic Church and Orthodox Church priests are believed to have a prerogative of performing sacraments through which God's Grace descends.)

Reformation wasn't something absolutely new. Throughout all Middle Ages there were inorthodox Christian movements which were labeled by Catholic Church ar "heresies" and cruelly suppressed. Cruel tortures of "heretics" and burning them alive was a usual affair. Sometimes such "heresies" involved large populations and their suppression was difficult. Also, there were many individual "heretics". As there was no clear-cut division of prerogatives between Church and temporal rulers, there was considerable struggle for power and tension. And temporal rulers often gave refuge to "heretics", including quite a many prominent medieval philosophers. But generall Catholic Chusch successfully suppressed "heresies" up to XVI century. "Herecies" of XVI-XVII centuries have turned out to be stronger and luckier; 'Reformation' is a name for their success.

One of the main causes of Reformation was a popular indignation agains the corruption of Catholic Church, which has gained enormous scales. For example, almost any ecclesiastical office could be bought.

The greatest exciter of indignation was the practice of indulgences. It was connected with a specific doctrine of Catholic Church (absent in Ortodox Church and all other Christian denominations) – about purgatory.

In all other Christian denominations there are only two alternative afterlife possibilities – either salvation or perdition, either the paradise (the Heaven) or the hell. But in Catholicism there is a third possibility – the purgatory. It is temporary place where most Christians get after death. It is like the hell, for there people suffer for their sins; but unlike the hell (which is eternal) it is temporary: a term in the purgatory depends on the balance of good and bad deeds. After completion of his term, a man is "purged" and goes to the paradise.

This means that whenever a (wo)man does a good deed, he/she diminishes a term of his/her suffering in the purgatory. Since making donations to Church is a good deed, a (wo)man can lessen his term in the purgatory – to "compensate" some of his sins – by making such donations. The larger is donation the more is shortening of the term in purgatory. Pope Clement VI have "rationalised" this idea and in 1343 issued sort of price-

list determining how much a (wo)man has to donate to Church to compensate different sins. Soon after, priests began to sell certified papers saying that a person X, for his donation to Church is absolved from such and such sin, or is absolved from N years in purgatory. A rich man could bye absolvation for almost any horrible crime. It is easy to understand why this aroused indignation, especially among poor people.

Initiator of Reformation was German monk Martin Luther (1483-1556). He has rejected the doctrine about existence of the purgatory, as well as the doctrine that human afterlife fate depends on the balance of good and bbad deeds. Instead, he postulated formula *sola fide*: “the faith alone, without deeds redeems, absolves and saves”. He rejected the authority of Pope and organization of Catholic Church. Instead, he proclaimed that the only authority for Christians is the Bible. Also, he denied the function of priests as mediators between God and laymen.

It is important that owing to Luther the Bible became accessible for usual people. Before Luther, the Bible existed only in Greek and Latin, and wasn’t translated on any “living” European language. All divine services in Church were in Latin. Not only the greatest majority of laymen, but also the majority of priests hasn’t read the Bible, for they didn’t understood Latin. Luther was the first translator of the Bible into German. After his example, the Bible was soon translated in other European languages.

Luther vigorously propagated his doctrine, and it found strong support both among simple men who were indignant about indulgences and other displays of corruption in Catholic Church, and by many princes who were displeased by attempts of Church to interfere in their authority and strived to get rid of such interference. Soon, similar Reformist movements had arisen and were propagated in other parts of Europe.

These movements had different doctrines. Some of them also had specific social programs. So, large part of Germany was involved in a peasant insurrection inspired by sermons Christian socialism by Thomas Munzer. This insurrection was suppressed. In Great Britain, Reformist movement was used by the King to get rid of Pope’s authority and to place himself at the head of the Church (Anglican Church has the King as its head).

One of the strongest Reformist movements was Calvinism; its leader was John Calvin (1509-1564); its center was Geneva (Zwitzeland). Calvin also rejected the doctrine that salvation may be deserved by good deeds, but he also didn’t accept Luther’s formula of salvation through faith. Instead, he have revived St.Augustine’s *doctrine of predestination*: "From all eternity

God has predestined certain men to be burned and others to be saved." – with no reason at all, simply because "it is the will of God".

There was a violent struggle and wars all over the Europe between the Catholic Churh and its supporters and different protestant movements and their supporters. Both sides were equally cruel and intolerant. But after some prolonged period of religious wars all sides were emaciated and forced to look for establishing conditions of peaceful co-existence. Ideas of religious tolerance became more and more widely accepted. After some time they become to apply also beyond Christian religion, even to ateists. Policy, science and philosophy became more and more secular, free from religious influences. This was the most important result of Reformation, though it was contrary to intention of its leaders (who aspired to make people more religious, pious).

As the power of Catholic Church was undermined, no religious organization could so thoroughly control social life and consciousness. Also, as protestants didn't recognize authority of priests and their role of mediators between God and Laymen, and recognized the the Bible as the only authority – and as different people understood the Bible differently – there were endless divisions of protestants into new and new denominations and sects.

Another most important influence of Reformation was in economics. As classical work of Max Weber shows, protestants have introduced a new ethics of trade which have a great influence on formation of capitalistic social relations in its earlier centuries.

§4. THE NEW AGE PHILOSOPHY (XVII-XVIII CENTURIES) BEGINNING OF THE MODERN SCIENCE

Plan

1. Historical conditions and specific of New Age Philosophy
2. Empiricism: F.Bacon, Th. Hobbes, Jh. Locke
3. Rationalism: R. Descartes, B. Spinoza, G.W. Leibnitz

In the 16th and 17th centuries the new science brought about the biggest single change in man's conception of the universe that had ever occurred.

The system of Astronomy hat was developed over generations by the ancient Greeks came to be known as the *Ptolemaic system*, after Ptolemy, an astronomer who lived in Alexandria in the 2nd century AD and published the first systematic account of astronomy as it had evolved up to that time. This remained the basis for astronomy in Europe until the 16th century. It taught that *the earth was a sphere hanging unsupported in space, and was the centre of the universe, with the planets and stars moving around it in vast circles*.

During the Middle Ages the Catholic Church incorporated the Ptolemaic system into the Christian view of the world, as part of its general program of combining the wisdom and learning of the ancients with the Christian religion. On this view God had made the world to be at the centre of everything. And to be the master of this world he had created man in his own image.

But in the 16th century a Polish churchman **Copernicus** (1473-1543) pointed out that many of the most fearsome mathematical difficulties would melt away if, instead of assuming that the earth were at the centre, we treated the sun as the centre. When we did this, he showed that planetary movements that were becoming increasingly difficult to explain suddenly made good, clear sense. For Copernicus' hypothesis meant that the earth moved round the sun, and not vice versa; and not only did this deny something the church had been teaching for a thousand years, it flatly contradicted the Bible itself. Psalm 93 says (addressing God): "Thou hast fixed the earth immovable and firm." It is scarcely surprising that, in the century after its publication, Copernicus' theory was officially condemned by the church. Another consequence of Copernicus' ideas that was to be seismic in its effect was the removal of man from his privileged position in the universe. Humans were no longer the centre of everything. It no longer

appeared that everything else revolved around humans. When this realization spread it was earthquake – like in its consequences for human attitudes, not least peoples' attitudes towards religion

The first of the founding fathers of modern science was **Galileo** (1564-1642). He was condemned by the Inquisition (a tribunal formed by the Roman Catholic Church to uncover and suppress heresy) first privately in 1616, then publicly in 1633. His crime was in asserting that the earth rotates on its axis and that it revolves round the sun. To save himself he recanted, and promised never again to uphold the sinful view that the earth moves. However, as he came away from the table on which he had signed his recantation he was heard to mutter under his breath: “But it still moves, just the same.”

Isaac Newton (1642-1727) is generally acknowledged to be the greatest scientist who ever lived, the only possible exception being Einstein. Among many other things, he was the first human being to provide a largely accurate account of the movements of the earth through space, and of the workings of the planetary system of which the earth is part.

After human beings had lived on the earth's surface for hundreds of thousands of years without understanding the nature of their home in space, Newton revealed it. It was a unique moment of revelation in human history.

His laws applied to the movements of all objects on the earth's surface. He brought to perfection the sciences of statics and dynamics. The application of these through technology was to make the Industrial Revolution possible and thus to transform the face of the earth – not to mention the nature of human societies.

The consequences of Newton's work for philosophy were immense. Henceforth, every philosopher had to take full account of the new science, in that any description of reality had to incorporate in a plausible way the reality revealed by science. Not only that: any account of the nature of knowledge itself, and of the way it was arrived at, and its foundations, had to apply to science if it was to command credibility.

As far as science was concerned, the age-old authorities of Church and State simply did not exist. What the truth was did not depend on what they said at all: *truth was now to be established by methods that operated independently of them*. So established authorities lost their place in society's intellectual life. People began to question the fundamentals of their own beliefs.

Historical conditions of the New Age Philosophy:

- Development of capitalism;
- Social revolutions;
- Weakness of influence of church.

Specific of the New Age Philosophy:

- Philosophy start to base on science;
- Problem of perception became primary;
- Struggle between ***empiricism and rationalism.***

EMPIRICISM

"*empirio*"- Lat. "experience", the one source of knowledge is experience, when all surrounding world influences our senses (sensualism)

Representatives:

Francis Bacon *Thomas Hobbes* *John Locke*
George Berkley *David Hume*

FRANCIS BACON

(1561-1626)

was a man distinguished in politics, law, literature, philosophy, and science. His whole life was lived in and around the English court, the centre of political power, under Queen Elizabeth I and King James I. His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Elizabeth. Francis was educated at Cambridge, where he acquired an abiding hostility to Aristotle, and then went into law. He became a Member of Parliament at the age of 23, and eventually, in succession, Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal (like his father), Lord Chancellor, as well as becoming a baron and a viscount. At the age of 36 he published the collection of essays that has been his most popular book ever since. But throughout his adult life he was producing writings that were to have a historic influence on the direction taken by Western science and philosophy.

Scientific Method

Bacon was one of the first to see that scientific knowledge could give men power over nature, and therefore that the advance of science could be used to promote human plans and prosperity on an unimaginable scale. But he thought that no one had yet gone about this in the right way. The more rationalistic thinkers were like spiders who spin their webs out of matter secreted inside their own bodies: their structures are impressive but everything comes from within, and lacks sufficient contact with external

reality. The more empirical thinkers, on the other hand, were likes ants, who mindlessly collect data but have only limited ideas about what to do with it. The traditional logic of Aristotle was useless as a tool for discovery: it compels assent after the fact, but reveals nothing new. Similarly with definitions: the idea that definitions advance knowledge is an illusion. "Words are but the images of matter", said Bacon: "To fall in love with them is to fall in love with a picture".

What is required in order to advance our knowledge of the natural world, said Bacon, is the following controlled and systematic procedure. First, we must observe the facts, record our observations, and amass a body of reliable data, the more the better. This is more effectively done by many people working in communication with one another than by individuals working alone – hence the need for scientific societies and colleges. At this stage we must be careful not to impose our ideas on the facts, but to let them speak for themselves. When we have amassed enough of them they will begin to do so: regularities and patterns will begin to emerge, causal connections will reveal themselves, and we shall start to perceive the laws of nature at work in the particular instances. At this stage, however, it is important for us to keep our eyes skinned for contrary instances. We are all inclined to leap to conclusions based only on the evidence that fits them: for example, if a man has a dream that then comes true he will often announce that this proves dreams to be prophetic, thereby simply ignoring the countless number of his dreams that have not come true. Negative instances are as important as positive ones in guiding us to the right conclusions. However, if we are self-disciplined in this respect we shall begin to perceive the general laws exemplified in the individual instances. When we have formed a well-based hypothesis of this kind our next task is to test it by crucial experiment. If experiment confirms the hypothesis we shall indeed have discovered a law of nature; and once we have done that we can confidently deduce individual instances from it, in other words make accurate predictions. So in the process of discovering a scientific law we are ***moving from the particular to the general***, a process known as ***induction***; whereas in applying the law once we have got it we ***move from the general to the particular,*** a process known as ***deduction***.

This formulation of scientific method was to have a simply immense influence from the 17th century to the twentieth. Generation after generation of scientists were guided by it; and many generations of philosophers, including some of the greatest, looked on Bacon as having set humanity on the right path for distinguishing scientific knowledge from all other sorts of knowledge.

Idols of perception

Having proposed this powerful and highly disciplined method for acquiring reliable knowledge, Bacon warns us against the influences on our thinking that seduce us away from it. Because these are false notions to which we are too inclined to pay reverence he calls them "idols", and he names four as being especially dangerous.

1. "***idols of the tribe***" – they are common to all mankind. These are the distorting factors inherent in our nature as human beings: our tendency to believe the evidence of our senses when in fact it often deceives us, and to allow our judgments to be colored by our feelings, and to impose interpretations based on our own ideas and expectations on what we perceive.

2. ***"idols of the cave"***, a reference to Plato's myth of the cave: each separate individual "has his own private den or cavern, which intercepts and colors the light of nature" according to his own "peculiar and singular disposition".

3. ***"idols of the market place"*** comes from exchanges between human beings, and are therefore mediated chiefly by language. There are two special ways in which words deceive. First, the same word means different things to different people. Second, human beings have a marked tendency to confuse language with reality.

4. ***"idols of the theatre"*** **–** systematic representations of reality which are in fact not reality at all. What Bacon has chiefly in mind here are all the various systems of philosophy in terms of which people mistakenly look at reality, perhaps especially the sort that we nowadays term ideologies, the creators of false consciousness.

THOMAS HOBBES

(1588-1679)

being educated at Oxford he became tutor to the son of the future Earl of Devonshire, and this gave him three things that were greatly to promote his intellectual development: access to a first-class library, extensive foreign travel, and the opportunity to meet unusually interesting people at home and abroad. He formed connections at the highest level that were both personal and intellectual: he used to visit Francis Bacon during Bacon's years of retirement; in France he moved in the same circle as Descartes, with whom he corresponded about philosophy, and the mathematician Gassendi, who became a good friend; and in Italy he visited Galileo. For two years he was mathematics tutor to the future King CharlesII.

Materialism. Problem of perception

In an age dominated by religion, and by religious faction, when to deny belief in God brought a man foul of the law and might endanger his life, Hobbes boldly came out with a philosophy of complete **materialism**: *"The universe, that is the whole mass of things that are, is corporeal, that is to say body; and hath the dimensions of magnitude, namely, length, breadth, and depth. Also every part of body is likewise body, and hath the like dimensions. And, consequently, every part of the universe is body and that which is not body is no part of the universe. And because the universe is all, that which is no part of it is nothing, and, consequently nowhere."* He went on to argue that such philosophers' and theologians' concepts as "incorporeal substance" were self-contradictory, and could mean nothing at all. When challenged to say what, in the light of all this, his conception of God was, he replied that it was beyond the abilities of any mere human being to form a conception of God or his attributes.

Developing his assertion that only matter existed, Hobbes came to look at every moving object, including human beings, as some sort of *machine*, indeed at the *whole universe as a vast machine*. Thus, in addition to being what one might call the founder of modern metaphysical materialism, he was the first philosopher to put forward an out-and-out mechanistic view of nature. As part of this he developed a *mechanistic psychology*. This was something wholly new, to look at the *human mind as a machine* – a soft machine, of course; but nevertheless, in Hobbes' view, all mental processes were to be understood as consisting of movements of matter inside an individual's skull. All these ideas – the materialism, the mechanism, and the purely physical psychology – were to be produced and developed by many thinkers over the three ensuing centuries, and were to have great influence. For someone who is out of sympathy with them it may be difficult to appreciate how original Hobbes' ideas were, but they were important because even if ultimately mistaken they helped to further key developments in human understanding. It is, for instance, now widely agreed that there is, at the very least, an indisputable physical basis to mental processes, which therefore cannot be understood without reference to the physical level; and Hobbes did much to stop people thinking of mind as something purely abstract.

Hobbes became fascinated by motion, especially after his visit to Galileo. According to the old Aristotelian world view, which Galileo was now fighting to overthrow, rest was self-evidently the natural state for physical bodies to be in. But according to Galileo all physical bodies without exception were in motion, including the earth itself (and therefore

everything on the earth), and the natural thing was for any such body to go on moving in a straight line unless acted upon by a force. Hobbes, according to his own account, found this idea haunting. It opened up for him the idea of total reality as consisting of matter in motion, and this became his overall conception. If one were to separate out from this view of things the element that carried the greatest weight with him it was not matter but motion. He has been called a motion-intoxicated man. All causality in his material and mechanical world took the form of push; and that was how all change occurred, he believed.

He carried this over into his psychology. All psychological motivation was seen by him as some sort of push, whether in the form of an ongoing drive or in the form of a repulsion. One could dub these two directions of motivation appetite and aversion. There are many familiar forms of them: liking and disliking, love and hate, joy and grief, and so on. The first halves of such pairs denote the inherently unsatisfiable, and therefore endless, needs and wants of human beings, which cannot cease unless and until life itself ceases. The overwhelmingly dominant form of the other, aversion, and indeed a repulsion far more powerful and effective than any other, is the fear of death. Death is something that most of us will do more or less anything to avoid.

This basic view of human psychology was carried over in turn by Hobbes into his political philosophy. And it was his political philosophy which turned out in the long run to be the most influential aspect of his thought.

Political Philosophy

Hobbes believed that at bottom it is the fear of death that causes human beings to form societies. Without society, in what he calls the state of nature, where there are no rules, order, or justice, *life is "war of every man against every man"*, and all outcomes are determined by violence and cunning, or, as he puts it, *"force and fraud*". In his best-known book, ***Leviathan*** (1651), he paints a grisly picture of what such a state of affairs would be like, ending with words that are still quoted: *"and which is worst of all, continual fear, and the danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short"*. Individuals might try to get out of this by *entering into agreements or alliances* with one another; but, as Hobbes says, *"covenants without the sword are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all"*. Anyone who can get away with breaking them will break them as soon as he finds it in his interests to do so. The only way to escape from the dilemma is to establish a situation in which it is not in anyone's interest to break laws.

The way to do this, says Hobbes, is for everyone to agree to hand over power to a *central authority* whose job it is to impose law, and to punish severely any law-breakers. For such an authority to be effective it must possess more power than any individual, or association of individuals, within the society can hope to attain, and therefore to have – in effect, and as far as they are concerned – absolute power, which it is hopeless to defy. This is the only way to maximize both the liberty and the security of the individuals who make up the society; but it does mean that each man "must be contented with so much liberty against other men as he would allow other men against himself". Absolute power is given to the *sovereign* not for the gratification of the sovereign but for the good of all.

Hobbes fundamental political insight is that what populations fear most of all – more even than the most iron-fisted dictatorship – is *social chaos*, and that they will submit to almost any tyranny in preference to that.

Appendix

Thomas Hobbes
LEVIATHAN
(1651)
Fragments

CHAPTER VIII. OF THE VIRTUES COMMONLY CALLED INTELLECTUAL AND THEIR CONTRARY DEFECTS

VIRTUE generally, in all sorts of subjects, is somewhat that is valued for eminence; and consisteth in comparison. For if all things were equally in all men, nothing would be prized. And by virtues intellectual are always understood such abilities of the mind as men praise, value, and desire should be in themselves; and go commonly under the name of a good wit; though the same word, wit, be used also to distinguish one certain ability from the rest.

These virtues are of two sorts; natural and acquired. By natural, I mean not that which a man hath from his birth: for that is nothing else but sense; wherein men differ so little one from another, and from brute beasts, as it is not to be reckoned amongst virtues. But I mean that wit which is gotten by use only, and experience, without method, culture, or instruction. This natural wit consisteth principally in two things: celerity of imagining (that is, swift succession of one thought to another); and steady direction to some approved end. On the contrary, a slow imagination maketh that defect or fault of the mind which is commonly called dullness, stupidity, and sometimes by other names that signify slowness of motion, or difficulty to be moved.

And this difference of quickness is caused by the difference of men's passions; that love and dislike, some one thing, some another: and therefore

some men's thoughts run one way, some another, and are held to, observe differently the things that pass through their imagination. And whereas in this succession of men's thoughts there is nothing to observe in the things they think on, but either in what they be like one another, or in what they be unlike, or what they serve for, or how they serve to such a purpose; those that observe their similitudes, in case they be such as are but rarely observed by others, are said to have a good wit; by which, in this occasion, is meant a good fancy. But they that observe their differences, and dissimilitudes, which is called distinguishing, and discerning, and judging between thing and thing, in case such discerning be not easy, are said to have a good judgement: and particularly in matter of conversation and business, wherein times, places, and persons are to be discerned, this virtue is called discretion. The former, that is, fancy, without the help of judgement, is not commended as a virtue; but the latter which is judgement, and discretion, is commended for itself, without the help of fancy. Besides the discretion of times, places, and persons, necessary to a good fancy, there is required also an often application of his thoughts to their end; that is to say, to some use to be made of them. This done, he that hath this virtue will be easily fitted with similitudes that will please, not only by illustration of his discourse, and adorning it with new and apt metaphors, but also, by the rarity of their invention. But without steadiness, and direction to some end, great fancy is one kind of madness; such as they have that, entering into any discourse, are snatched from their purpose by everything that comes in their thought, into so many and so long digressions and parentheses, that they utterly lose themselves: which kind of folly I know no particular name for: but the cause of it is sometimes want of experience; whereby that seemeth to a man new and rare which doth not so to others: sometimes pusillanimity; by which that seems great to him which other men think a trifle: and whatsoever is new, or great, and therefore thought fit to be told, withdraws a man by degrees from the intended way of his discourse.

In a good poem, whether it be epic or dramatic, as also in sonnets, epigrams, and other pieces, both judgement and fancy are required: but the fancy must be more eminent; because they please for the extravagancy, but ought not to displease by indiscretion.

In a good history, the judgement must be eminent; because the goodness consisteth in the choice of the method, in the truth, and in the choice of the actions that are most profitable to be known. Fancy has no place, but only in adorning the style.

In orations of praise, and in invectives, the fancy is predominant; because the design is not truth, but to honour or dishonour; which is done by noble or by vile comparisons. The judgement does but suggest what circumstances make an action laudable or culpable.

In hortatives and pleadings, as truth or disguise serveth best to the design in hand, so is the judgement or the fancy most required.

In demonstration, in council, and all rigorous search of truth, sometimes does all; except sometimes the understanding have need to be opened by some apt similitude, and then there is so much use of fancy. But for metaphors, they are in this case utterly excluded. For seeing they openly profess deceit, to admit them into council, or reasoning, were manifest folly.

And in any discourse whatsoever, if the defect of discretion be apparent, how extravagant soever the fancy be, the whole discourse will be taken for a sign of want of wit; and so will it never when the discretion is manifest, though the fancy be never so ordinary.

The secret thoughts of a man run over all things holy, prophane, clean, obscene, grave, and light, without shame, or blame; which verbal discourse cannot do, farther than the judgement shall approve of the time, place, and persons. An anatomist or physician may speak or write his judgement of unclean things; because it is not to please, but profit: but for another man to write his extravagant and pleasant fancies of the same is as if a man, from being tumbled into the dirt, should come and present himself before good company. And it is the want of discretion that makes the difference. Again, in professed remissness of mind, and familiar company, a man may play with the sounds and equivocal significations of words, and that many times with encounters of extraordinary fancy; but in a sermon, or in public, or before persons unknown, or whom we ought to reverence, there is no jingling of words that will not be accounted folly: and the difference is only in the want of discretion. So that where wit is wanting, it is not fancy that is wanting, but discretion. Judgement, therefore, without fancy is wit, but fancy without judgement, not.

When the thoughts of a man that has a design in hand, running over a multitude of things, observes how they conduce to that design, or what design they may conduce unto; if his observations be such as are not easy, or usual, this wit of his is called prudence, and dependeth on much experience, and memory of the like things and their consequences heretofore. In which there is not so much difference of men as there is in their fancies and judgements; because the experience of men equal in age is not much unequal as to the quantity, but lies in different occasions, every one having his private designs.

To govern well a family and a kingdom are not different degrees of prudence, but different sorts of business; no more than to draw a picture in little, or as great or greater than the life, are different degrees of art. A plain husbandman is more prudent in affairs of his own house than a Privy Counsellor in the affairs of another man.

To prudence, if you add the use of unjust or dishonest means, such as usually are prompted to men by fear or want, you have that crooked wisdom

which is called craft; which is a sign of pusillanimity. For magnanimity is contempt of unjust or dishonest helps. And that which the Latins call versutia (translated into English, shifting), and is a putting off of a present danger or incommodity by engaging into a greater, as when a man robs one to pay another, is but a shorter-sighted craft; called versutia, from versura, which signifies taking money at usury for the present payment of interest.

As for acquired wit (I mean acquired by method and instruction), there is none but reason; which is grounded on the right use of speech, and produceth the sciences. But of reason and science, I have already spoken in the fifth and sixth chapters.

The causes of this difference of wits are in the passions, and the difference of passions proceedeth partly from the different constitution of the body, and partly from different education. For if the difference proceeded from the temper of the brain, and the organs of sense, either exterior or interior, there would be no less difference of men in their sight, hearing, or other senses than in their fancies and discretions. It proceeds, therefore, from the passions; which are different, not only from the difference of men's complexions, but also from their difference of customs and education.

The passions that most of all cause the differences of wit are principally the more or less desire of power, of riches, of knowledge, and of honour. All which may be reduced to the first, that is, desire of power. For riches, knowledge and honour are but several sorts of power.

And therefore, a man who has no great passion for any of these things, but is as men term it indifferent; though he may be so far a good man as to be free from giving offence, yet he cannot possibly have either a great fancy or much judgement. For the thoughts are to the desires as scouts and spies to range abroad and find the way to the things desired, all steadiness of the mind's motion, and all quickness of the same, proceeding from thence. For as to have no desire is to be dead; so to have weak passions is dullness; and to have passions indifferently for everything, giddiness and distraction; and to have stronger and more vehement passions for anything than is ordinarily seen in others is that which men call madness.

JOHN LOCKE

(1632-1704)

was sent to Westminster School, at that time perhaps the best school in England, and learnt not only the classics but Hebrew and Arabic. From there he passed into Oxford University, where he discovered the new philosophy and the new science, becoming eventually qualified in *medicine*. He began to get involved in public affairs at the level of secretary and

adviser. In 1667 he took up residence in the household of the Earl of Shaftesbury, leader of the parliamentary opposition to King Charles II, as his personal physician, though in fact serving him in other and more political capacities also.

He spent the four years 1675-79 in France, where he studied Descartes and came into contact with some of the greatest minds of the age. Locke left England for Holland. It was there that he wrote the bulk of his masterpiece *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, though he had been working on it since 1671. In Holland, Locke became part of a conspiratorial world of English political exiles. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, when King James II fled abroad, Locke personally escorted the Princess of Orange from Holland to England, and there she became Queen Mary to her husband's King William III.

Theory of Knowledge

Locke is a thinker of the front rank in two different areas, theory of knowledge and political philosophy. In the former he launched what many to this day regard as its most important project, namely an enquiry into what are the limits to what is intelligible to human. People before him had tended to assume that the limits to what could be known were set by the limits to what there is – that in principle, at least, we could go finding out more and more about reality until there was nothing left to find out. There had always been philosophers who understood that limits of a different sort might also exist, namely limits to what it is possible for humans to apprehend, in which case there might be aspects of reality which humans can never know or understand. This realization was almost universal among medieval philosophers. But Locke secularized it, and then took it an important stage further. If, he thought, we could analyze our own mental faculties and find out what they are capable, and what they are not capable, of dealing with, we should have discovered the limits of what is knowable by us, regardless of what happens to exist externally to ourselves. No matter how much (or little) exists over and above what is apprehensible to us, it will have no way of getting through to us.

This is why Locke called his masterpiece *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, and why, at the very beginning of the book, he says he regarded it as *"necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were, or were not, fitted to deal with"*. In doing this he launched an enquiry which was taken up after him by some of the outstanding figures in philosophy – Hume and Kant in the 18th century, Schopenhauer in the 19th; then Russell, Wittgenstein, and Popper in the 20th. Each of these individuals felt a sense of special indebtedness to others

who preceded him in this line of succession, a linked chain that can be said now to constitute a tradition.

According to Locke, the human mind at birth is a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate. It is like white paper, devoid of characteristics until it receives sense perceptions. All knowledge begins with sensory experience on which the powers of the mind operate, developing complex ideas, abstractions, and the like. In place of the absolute certainty that the rationalists sought to find, Locke says that apart from the knowledge of the self, most of what we know we know in degrees of certainty derived from inductive generalizations. For example, we see the sun rise every morning and **infer** that it is highly probable that it will rise tomorrow, but we cannot be absolutely certain.

Appendix

John Locke

An Essay Concerning Human Understanding

(London, E. Holt, 1689)

Fragments

1. Since it is the understanding that sets man above the rest of sensible beings, and gives him all the advantage and dominion which he has over them; it is certainly a subject, even for its nobleness, worth our labor to inquire into. The understanding, like the eye, whilst it makes us see and perceive all other things, takes no notice of itself; and it requires art and pains to set it at a distance and make it its own object. But whatever be the difficulties that lie in the way of this inquiry; whatever it be that keeps us so much in the dark to ourselves; sure I am that all the light we can let in upon our minds, all the acquaintance we can make with our own understandings, will not only be very pleasant, but bring us great advantage, in directing our thoughts in the search of other things.

2. Design.—This, therefore, being my purpose—to inquire into the origin, certainty, and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent—I shall not at present meddle with the physical consideration of the mind; or trouble myself to examine wherein its essence consists; or by what motions of our spirits or alterations of our bodies we come to have any sensation by our organs, or any ideas in our understandings, and whether those ideas do in their formation, any or all of them depend on matter or not. These are speculations which, however curious and entertaining I shall decline, as lying out of my way in the design I am now upon. It shall suffice to my present purpose, to consider the discerning faculties of a man, as they are employed about the object which they have to do with. And I shall imagine I have not wholly misemployed myself thoughts I shall

have on this occasion, if, in this historical, plain method, I can give any account of the ways whereby our understandings come to attain those notions of things we have; and can set down any measures of the certainty of our knowledge**;** or the grounds of those persuasion which are to be found amongst men, so various**,** different, and wholly contradictory; and yet asserted somewhere or other with such assurance and confidence, that he that shall take a view of the opinions of mankind, observe their opposition, and at the same time consider the fondness and devotion wherewith they are embraced, the resolution and eagerness where-with they are maintained, may perhaps have reason to suspect, that either there is no such thing as truth at all, or that mankind hath no sufficient means to attain a certain knowledge of it.

3. Method.—It is therefore worthwhile to search out the bounds between opinion and knowledge, and examine by what measures, in things whereof we have no certain knowledge, we ought to regulate our assent and moderate our persuasion. In order whereunto I shall pursue this following method:

First, I shall inquire into the original of those ideas**,** notions, or whatever else you please to call them**,** which a man observes, and is conscious to himself he has in his mind, and the ways whereby the understanding comes to be furnished with them**.**

Secondly, I shall endeavor to show what knowledge the understanding hath by those ideas; and the certainty, evidence, and extent of it.

Thirdly, I shall make some inquiry into the nature and grounds of faith or opinion: whereby I mean that assent which we give to any proposition as true, of whose truth yet we have no certain knowledge. And here we shall have occasion to examine the reasons and degrees of assent.

BOOK I

Chapter I

1. It is an established opinion amongst some men, that there are in the understanding certain innate principles, some primary notions, characters, as it were stamped upon the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being, and brings into the world with it. It would be sufficient to convince unprejudiced readers of the falseness of this supposition, if I should only show (as I hope I shall in the following parts of this Discourse) how men, barely by the use of their natural faculties, may attain to all the knowledge they have, without the help of any innate impressions, and may arrive at certainty, without any such original notions or principles. For I imagine anyone will easily grant that it would be impertinent to suppose the ideas of colors innate in a creature to whom god hath given sight, and a power to receive them by the eyes from external objects: and no less unreasonable would it be to attribute several truths to the impressions of nature, and innate characters, when we may observe in ourselves faculties fit to attain as easy and certain knowledge of them as if they were originally imprinted on the mind.

But because a man is not permitted without censure to follow his own thoughts in the search of truth, when they lead him ever so little out of the common road, I shall set down the reasons that made me doubt of the truth of that opinion, as an excuse for my mistake, if I be in one, which I leave to be considered by those who, with me, dispose themselves to embrace truth wherever they find it.

2. There is nothing more commonly taken for granted than that there are certain principles, both speculative and practical (for they speak of both), universally agreed upon by all mankind, which therefore, they argue, must needs be the constant impressions which the souls of men receive in their first beings, and which they bring into the world with them, as necessarily and really as they do any of their inherent faculties.

3. This argument, drawn from universal consent, has this misfortune in it, that if it were true in matter of fact, that there were certain truths wherein all mankind agreed, it would not prove them innate, if there can be any other way shown how men may come to that universal agreement, in the things they do consent in, which I presume may be done.

4. But, which is worse, this argument of universal consent, which is made use of to prove innate principles, seems to me a demonstration that there are none such because there are none to which all mankind give an universal assent. I shall begin with the speculative, and instance in those magnified principles of demonstration, "Whatsoever is, is," and "It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be," which, of all others, I think have the most allowed title to innate. These have so settled a reputation of maxims universally received, that it will no doubt be thought strange if any one should seem to question it. But yet I take liberty to say, that these propositions are so far from having an universal assent, that there are a great part of mankind to whom they are not so much as known.

5. For, first, it is evident, that all children and idiots have not the least apprehension or thought of them. And the want of that is enough to destroy that universal assent which must needs be the necessary concomitant of all innate truths: it seeming to me near a contradiction to say, that there are truths imprinted on the soul, which it perceives or understands not: imprinting, if it signify anything, being nothing else but the making certain truths to be perceived. For to imprint anything on the mind without the mind's perceiving it, seems to me hardly intelligible. If therefore children and idiots have souls, have minds, with those impressions upon them, they must unavoidably perceive them, and necessarily know and assent to these truths; which since they do not, it is evident that there are no such impressions. For if they are not notions naturally imprinted, how can they be innate? and if they are notions imprinted, how can they be unknown? To say a notion is imprinted on the mind, and yet at the same time to say that the mind is ignorant of it, and never yet took notice of

it, is to make this impression nothing. No proposition can be said to be in the mind which it never yet knew, which it was never yet conscious of. For if any one may, then, by the same reason, all propositions that are true, and the mind is capable ever of assenting to, may be said to be in the mind, and to be imprinted: since, if any one can be said to be in the mind, which it never yet knew, it must be only because it is capable of knowing it, and so the mind is of all truths it ever shall know. Nay, thus truths may be imprinted on the mind which it never did, nor ever shall know; for a man may live long, and die at last in ignorance of many truths which his mind was capable of knowing, and that with certainty. So that if the capacity of knowing be the natural impression contended for, all the truths a man ever comes to know will, by this account, be every one of them innate; and this great point will amount to no more, but only to a very improper way of speaking; which, whilst it pretends to assert the contrary, says nothing different from those who deny innate principles. For nobody, I think, ever denied that the mind was capable of knowing several truths. The capacity, they say, is innate; the knowledge acquired. But then to what end such contest for certain innate maxims? If truths can be imprinted on the understanding without being perceived, I can see no difference there can be between any truths the mind is capable of knowing in respect of their original: they must all be innate or all adventitious: in vain shall a man go about to distinguish them. He therefore that talks of innate notions in the understanding cannot (if he intend thereby any distinct sort of truths) mean such truths to be in the understanding as it never perceived, and is yet wholly ignorant of. For if these words "to be in the understanding" have any propriety, they signify to be understood. So that to be in the understanding, and not to be understood; to be in the mind and never to be perceived, is all one as to say anything is and is not in the mind or understanding. If therefore these two propositions, "Whatsoever is, is," and "It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be," are by nature imprinted, children cannot be ignorant of them: infants, and all that have souls, must necessarily have them in their understandings, know the truth of them, and assent to it…

BOOK II

Chapter I

1. Every man being conscious to himself that he thinks and that which his mind is applied about whilst thinking being the ideas that are there, it is past doubt that men have in their minds several ideas—such as are those expressed by the words whiteness, hardness, sweetness, thinking, motion, man, elephant, army, drunkenness, and others; it is in the first place then to be inquired, How he comes by them ?

I know it is a received doctrine, that men have native ideas, and original characters, stamped upon their minds in their very first being. This opinion I have at large examined already; and, I suppose what I have said in the

foregoing Book will be much more easily admitted, when I have shown whence the understanding may get all the ideas it has; and by what ways and degrees they may come into the mind—for which I shall appeal to every one's own observation and experience.

2. Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas:—How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on I with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE. In that all our knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself. Our observation employed either, about external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understandings with all the materials of thinking. These two are the fountains of knowledge, from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring.

3. First, our Senses, conversant about particular sensible objects, do convey into the mind several distinct perceptions of things, according to those various ways wherein those objects do affect them. And thus we come by those ideas we have of yellow, white, heat, cold, soft, hard, bitter, sweet, and all those which we call sensible qualities, which when I say the senses convey into the mind, I mean, they from external objects convey into the mind what produces- there those perceptions. This great source of most of the ideas we have, depending wholly upon our senses, and derived by them to the understanding, I call SENSATION.

4. Secondly, the other fountain from which experience furnishes the understanding with ideas is—the perception of the operations of our own mind within us, as it is employed about the ideas it has got—which operations, when the soul comes to reflect on and consider, do furnish the understanding with another set of ideas, which could not be had from things without. And such are perception, thinking, doubting, believing, reasoning, knowing, willing, and all the different actings of our own minds, which we being conscious of, and observing in ourselves, do from these receive into our understandings as distinct ideas as we do from bodies affecting our senses. This source of ideas every man has wholly in himself, and though it be not sense, as having nothing to do with external objects, yet it is very like it, and might properly enough be called internal sense. But as I call the other Sensation, so I call this reflection, the ideas it affords being such only as the mind gets by reflecting on its own operations within itself. By reflection then, in the following part of this discourse, I would be understood to mean, that notice which the mind takes of its own operations, and the manner of them, by reason whereof there come to be ideas of these operations in the understanding. These two, I say, viz. external material things, as the objects of sensation, and the operations of our own

minds within, as the objects of reflection, are to me the only originals from whence all our ideas take their beginnings. The term operations here I use in a large sense, as comprehending not barely the actions of the mind about its ideas, but some sort of passions arising sometimes from them, such as is the satisfaction or uneasiness arising from any thought.

5. The understanding seems to me not to have the least glimmering of any ideas which it doth not receive from one of these two. External objects furnish the mind with the ideas of sensible qualities, which are all those different perceptions they produce in us, and the mind furnishes the understanding with ideas of its own operations.

These, when we have taken a full survey of them, and their several modes, combinations, and relations, we shall find to contain all our whole stock of ideas, and that we have nothing in our minds which did not come in one of these two ways. Let any one examine his own thoughts, and thoroughly search into his understanding, and then let him tell me, whether all the original ideas he has there, are any other than of the objects of his senses, or of the operations of his mind, considered as objects of his reflection. And how great a mass of knowledge soever he imagines to be lodged there, he will, upon taking a strict view, see that he has not any idea in his mind but what one of these two have imprinted—though perhaps, with infinite variety compounded and enlarged by the understanding, as we shall see hereafter.

6. He that attentively considers the state of a child, at his first coming into the world, will have little reason to think him stored with plenty of ideas, that are to be the matter of his future knowledge. It is by degrees he comes to be furnished with them. And though the ideas of obvious and familiar qualities imprint themselves before the memory begins to keep a register of time or order, yet it is often so late before some unusual qualities come in the way, that there are few men that cannot recollect the beginning of their acquaintance with them. And if it were worth while, no doubt a child might be so ordered as to have but a very few, even of the ordinary ideas, till he were grown up to a man. But all that are born into the world, being surrounded with bodies that perpetually and diversely affect them, variety of ideas, whether care be taken of it or not, are imprinted on the minds of children. Light and colours are busy at hand everywhere, when the eye is but open; sounds and some tangible qualities fail not to solicit their proper senses, and force an entrance to the mind—but yet, I think, it will be granted easily, that if a child were kept in a place where he never saw any other but black and white till he were a man, he would have no more ideas of scarlet or green, than he that from his childhood never tasted an oyster, or a pineapple, has of those particular relishes."

What we have direct experience of, said Locke, are the contents of our own consciousness – sensory images, thoughts, feelings, memories, and so on, in enormous profusion. To these contents of consciousness he gave the name "ideas", regardless of whether they are intellectual, sensory, emotional, or anything else: what Locke means by an idea is simply anything that is immediately present to conscious awareness. As regards our knowledge of the external world, he insists, the raw data, the basic input, comes to us through our senses: we are increasingly in receipt of specific impressions of light or dark; red, yellow, or blue; hot or cold; rough or smooth; hard or soft, and so on and so forth; to which in the early stages of our conscious lives, we are not even able to give names. But we register them from the beginning, and remember some of them, and begin to associate some with others, until eventually we begin to form general notions and expectations about them. We start to acquire the general idea of *things*, objects outside ourselves from which we are receiving these impressions; and then we begin the process of learning to distinguish one thing from another. We begin to discriminate, say, a furry object that is always around the place and moves about on four legs and makes a particular kind of noise: eventually we will learn to call it a dog. From beginnings such as these our minds and our memories build up ever more complex and sophisticated ideas on the ultimate basis of our sensory input, and gradually we acquire an intelligible view of the world; and we develop also the ability to think about it.

One thing Locke emphasizes is that our senses constitute the only direct interface between ourselves and the reality external to us: it is only through our senses that anything of which we can ever become aware is able to get into us from outside. We develop the capacity to do all sorts of marvellous and complicated things inside our heads with these data; but if we start performing those operations on material which does *not* come from our (or somebody's) sensory input we have forfeited the mind's only link with external reality. In that case, whatever the mind's operations may or may not be doing, they are not connecting up with anything that exists in the external world. Of course, the mind can produce, from within its own resources, dreams and all sorts of other fictions to which nothing in the external world corresponds; and there are many circumstances in which they do that. But Locke came to the conclusion that our notions about what actually exists – and therefore our understanding of reality, of the world – must always derive ultimately from what has been experienced through the senses, or else has to be constructed out of elements that derive in the end from such experience.

This is the nub of empiricism. As usual with any philosophical doctrine, an essential part of the point lies in what it rules out. It denies, for instance, the notion (accepted by Plato) that we are born with a certain amount of knowledge of the world that we have acquired in a previous existence.

Political Philosophy: liberal capitalism

Mankind began, says Locke, in a state of nature. As a creature made by God in His own image man was not, even in a state of nature, a jungle beast, for God had given him reason and conscience. So Locke's view of the state of nature is very different from Hobbes'. Even so, the absence of any such things as government or civil order is so greatly to the detriment of human beings that, Locke believed, individuals came together voluntarily to create society. As with Hobbes, the social contract is seen as being not between government and the governed but between free men. Unlike Hobbes, however, Locke sees the governed as retaining their individual rights even after government has been set up. Sovereignty ultimately remains with the people. The securing of their rights – the *protection of the life, liberty, and property* of all – is the sole legitimate purpose of government. If a government begins to abuse those rights (i.e. becomes tyrannical) or ceases to defend them effectively (i.e. becomes ineffectual) the governed retain a moral right – after seeking redress through normal procedures and failing to obtain it – to overthrow the government and replace it with one that does the job properly.

Locke believed that what *gives us the right to our property* is, first of all, the *labour we put* into it; and then, following on from that, our freedom to do what we like with our own. If I work to produce something, and in doing so do no harm to anyone else, then I have a right to the fruits of my labour. If someone seizes it from me he is, literally, stealing my labour. Given, then, that I have this right to it, I can dispose of it as I wish: I can give it to someone else if I so choose, or sell it to a willing buyer. Thus a society develops that is based on voluntary transactions entered into independently of government. These constitute the elementary foundations of *liberal capitalism.*

One of the ways in which Locke's political philosophy connects up with his theory of knowledge gives rise to a *belief in tolerance*. It will be remembered that in his view certainty in our knowledge of the empirical world is not available, but only a kind of working probability. This being so, he sees it as both mistaken and morally wrong for political and religious authorities to impose their beliefs. His views in this matter have had such momentous historical influence that it is worth quoting an example of them in his own words.

"Where is the man that has incontestable evidence of the truth of all that he holds, or of the falsehood of all he condemns, or can say that he has examined to the bottom all his own, or other men's, opinions? The necessity of believing without knowledge, nay often upon very slight grounds, in this fleeting state of action and blindness we are in, should make us more busy and careful to inform ourselves than constrain others."

RATIONALISM

"ratio" – Lat. "Mind", real knowledge possible only from reason (mind), not from experience. Existing of' "inborn ideas", from which logically all knowledge can be taken out.

Representatives:

Rene Descartes *Baruch B. Spinoza* *Wilhelm Leibniz*

RENE DESCARTES
(1596 - 1650)

He received an excellent education which included philosophy and mathematics at the hands of the Jesuits; then he took a degree in law at the University of Poitiers, his home town. As a brilliant student he perceived that many of the arguments put forward by the various authorities he was studying were invalid, and often he did not know what to believe. In order to complete his education, he says, he joined the army, and travelled widely in Europe as a soldier, though without seeing any fighting. His travels taught him that the world of human beings was even more varied and mutually contradictory than the world of books. He became obsessed by the question whether there was anything we could be sure of, anything we could know for certain.

He settled down in Holland, which allowed the greatest freedom of expression of any country in Europe, and proceeded to examine the foundations of human thought, his investigations taking the form of philosophy, mathematics, and science. In 1649 Queen Christina of Sweden invited him to Stockholm to tutor her in philosophy.

Cogito ergo sum

Descartes was a mathematician of genius, and invented a new branch of the subject which consists in the application of algebra to geometry: it is known variously as *analytic geometry or coordinate geometry*. He also invented the graph. Those two familiar lines on a graph are named after him: they are called Cartesian co-ordinates, the word Cartesian being the adjective; from the name Descartes.

Descartes came to the conclusion that mathematics owed its certainty to the following set of reasons. Mathematical demonstrations began from a minimal number of premises of the uttermost simplicity, a simplicity so basic and so obvious that it was impossible to doubt them, such as that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. The demonstrations then proceeded deductively by one logical step at a time, each step being irrefutable, and usually very simple, again indubitable. And then – the thing that entranced everyone who came under the spell of mathematics – you found that in moving only by logical steps, each of which was simple and obvious, from premises each of which was also simple and obvious, you began to reach conclusions that were not at all simple and not at all obvious: whole worlds of unanticipated discoveries started opening up before you, many of them amazing, many of them of great practical usefulness, and all of them reliably true. And there seemed to be no end of these undiscovered worlds: mathematicians were forever opening up the way to unexpectedly new ones, as Descartes himself had done.

In his search for indubitable premises Descartes journeyed through three stages. First, he considered the experience of direct and immediate observation. If I look head-on at this church spire, or that tree dipping in the water, surely I can trust the immediate evidence of my senses? Alas, on investigation it turns out that direct observation deceives us frequently. This church spire that flashes golden in the noonday sun, and glows red at sunset, looks grey the rest of the time. That branch that looks bent at the point where it enters the water turns out to be straight when I lift it out. So I can never be sure that things are in fact as they appear to me. However head-on I may be looking at them, and however awake and alert my state of mind.

This brings us to Descartes' second set of considerations. Often, he says, he had believed himself with complete certainty to be doing something or other, and then woken to find that he had been dreaming. Sometimes these dreams had been homely dreams about his everyday activities: he had dreamt he was sitting at his fireside reading, or at the desk in his study writing, when all the time he had really been in bed sleeping. How could he be sure he was not dreaming at this very instant? By this token it appeared that he could never be *absolutely* sure he was not dreaming, or hallucinating, or something of that sort.

At this point of apparent despair in his search for indubitability Descartes gave the knife an additional and malign twist, and this was his third phase. Suppose he said, that all the errors and illusions on my part were due to the fact that there exists, unknown to me, a higher spirit whose

sole aim is to deceive me, and who can exercise superhuman power over me – can make me sleep and then dream vividly that I am awake, or make everything I look at look to me like something else, or make me believe that two and two add up to five. Is there anything at all about which even a malignant spirit such as this would be unable to deceive me? And he comes to the conclusion that there is, namely the fact that the deliverances of my consciousness are whatever it is they are. I can always make false inferences from them – I may suppose myself to be sitting beside a fire when in fact there is no fire and I am in bed dreaming, and yet *that* I suppose myself to be sitting beside a fire is an inescapable fact. So the one thing in this and every other case that I can be unshakably sure of is that I am having the experiences I am having. And from this there are things I can infer with absolute certitude. First of all it means I know myself to be some sort of existing being. I may not know my own nature, indeed I may have completely mistaken views about what it is, but *that* I exist is indubitable; and what is more I know with absolute certitude that I am a being which at the very least, if nothing else, has conscious experiences, the particular conscious experiences I have. Descartes encapsulated this conclusion in a Latin tag that has become very famous: *Cogito ergo sum*, usually translated rather ineptly as *"I think, therefore I am."*

So, he says, there actually are things outside mathematics and logic, things about the world of fact, that I can know with absolute certitude. But is there anything that can be inferred from those things with the same degree of certitude? At this point he uses a new version of an old argument, a new version of the ontological argument for the existence of God. I know myself, he says, to be a very imperfect being, ephemeral and perishable, and finite, and yet I have in my mind the concept of an infinite being, eternal and immortal, perfect in every way; and it is impossible that anything should be able to create something greater than itself out of its own resources; therefore this perfect being must exist, and must have implanted in me an awareness of itself, like a craftsman's signature inscribed on an example of his handiwork.

The fact that I know that God exists, and is perfect, means that I can put my trust in him: he will not, unlike the malicious demon, deceive me. So provided I play my full part, pay serious attention, and do all the disciplined thinking required of me, I can be certain of the truth of whatever is then presented clearly and distinctly to me as being true – not by my senses, of course, which I already know to deceive, but by my mind, that part of me that apprehends God and also mathematics, neither of which the senses can do; the mind that I irreducibly am.

Descartes' Dualizm

Descartes' conclusion that what human beings irreducibly are is minds led him to develop a view of the world as consisting ultimately of two different kinds of substance, namely mind and matter. He saw human beings as experiencing subjects whose world, apart from themselves, consists of material objects which they observe. This bifurcation of nature into two kinds of entity – mind and matter, subject and object, observer and observed – became a built-in part of Western man's way of looking at the world. To this day it is referred to by philosophers as "Cartesian dualism". Between Descartes and the 20th century there were few leading philosophers who dissented from it, perhaps the most effective being Spinoza and Schopenhauer. Only in the 20th century did dissent from it become widespread – and even then it was by no means universal; some leading philosophers continue to subscribe to it.

Even more than Francis Bacon and Galileo, Descartes was a key figure in persuading people in the West that certainty was available in our knowledge of the world. To obtain it you needed to follow the right method, but if you did that you could build up an impregnable science that would give you rock-hard, reliable knowledge. He, more than anyone else, "sold" science to educated Western man. It was largely under his influence that the pursuit of certainty came to dominate intellectual activity in the West, and that considerations of method became central to that pursuit, for he regarded himself not as giving us such knowledge with certainty but as showing us how to get it.

It will be remembered that the earliest philosophers, the pre-Socratics, had taken their fundamental question to be: "What is there?" or "What does the world consist of?" Socrates had replaced this with a different question, namely "How ought we to live?" These questions and their derivations dominated philosophy for many hundreds of years. But then along came Descartes and displaced them with one that was different yet again: "What can I know?" It put epistemology, which is the theory of knowledge, at the centre of philosophy, where it remained for three hundred years, so much so that many subsequent philosophers came to think of philosophy as being, essentially, epistemology. For this reason Descartes is generally thought of as the first modern philosopher, and it often happens that students going to university to study philosophy are required to begin their course with his work. There is another reason for this. By using doubt as a method – systematically suspending commitment to anything that it is logically possible to doubt, thereby stripping away layer after layer of our

accustomed ideas and suppositions – he takes us right back to square one, and attempts to begin again from scratch. The first-person-singular form of the question sharpens its cutting edge – not "What is it possible for us human beings to know?" but "What can I know?" This appeals to the young, and rightly so.

Appendix

Descartes

Meditations on First Philosophy

trans. Donald A. Cress (Cambridge University Press, 1931).

Fragments

MEDITATION ONE: CONCERNING THOSE THINGS THAT CAN BE CALLED INTO DOUBT

Several years have no passed since I first realized how many were the false opinions that in my youth I took to be true, and thus how doubtful were all the things that I subsequently built upon these opinions. From the time I became aware of this, I realized that for once I had to raze everything in my life, down to the very bottom, so as to begin again from the first foundations, if I wanted to establish anything firm and lasting in the sciences. But the task seemed so enormous that I waited for a point in my life that was so ripe that no more suitable a time for laying hold of these disciplines would come to pass. For this reason, I have delayed so long that I would be at faults were I to waste on deliberation the time that is left for action. Therefore, now that I have liberated my mind from all cares, and I have secured for myself some leisurely and carefree time, I withdraw in solitude. I will, in short, apply myself earnestly and openly to the general destruction of my former opinions.

Yet to this end it will not be necessary that I show that all my opinions are false, which perhaps I could never accomplish anyway. But because reason now persuades me that I should withhold my assent no less carefully from things which are not plainly certain and indubitable than I would to what is patently false, it will be sufficient justification for rejecting them all, if I find a reason for doubting even the least of them. Nor therefore need one survey each opinion one after the other, a task of endless proportion. Rather—because undermining the foundations will cause whatever has been built upon them to fall down of its own accord—I will at once attack those principles which supported everything that I once believed.

Whatever I had admitted until now as most true I took in either from the senses or through the senses; however, I noticed that they sometimes deceived me. And it is a mark of prudence never to trust wholly in those things which have once deceived us.

But perhaps, although the senses sometimes deceived us when it is a question of very small and distant things, still there are many other matters which one certainly cannot doubt, although they are derived from the very same senses: that I am sitting here before the fireplace wearing my dressing gown, that I feel this sheet of paper in my hands, and so on. But how could one deny that these hands and that my whole body exist? Unless perhaps I should compare myself to insane people whose brains are so impaired by a stubborn vapor from a black bile that they continually insist that they are kings when they are in utter poverty, or that they are wearing purple robes when they are naked, or that they have a head made of clay, or that they are gourds, or that they are made of glass. But they are all demented, and I would appear no less demented if I were to take their conduct as a model for myself.

All of this would be well and good, were I not a man who is accustomed to sleeping at night, and to undergoing in my sleep the very same things—or now and then even less likely ones— as do these insane people when they are awake. How often has my evening slumber persuaded me of such customary things as these: that I am here, clothed in my dressing gown, seated at the fireplace, when in fact I am lying undressed between the blankets! But right now I certainly an gazing upon this piece of paper with eyes wide awake. This head which I am moving is not heavy with sleep. I extend this hand consciously and deliberately and I feel it. These things would not be so distinct for one who is asleep. But this all seems as if I do not recall having been deceived by similar thoughts on other occasions in my dreams. As I consider these cases more intently, I see so plainly that I am quite astonished, and this astonishment almost convinces me that I am sleeping.

Let us say, then, for the sake of argument, that we are sleeping and that such particulars as this are not true: that we open our eyes, move our heads, extend our hands. Perhaps we do not even have these hands or any such body at all. Nevertheless, it really must be admitted that things seen in sleep are, as it were, like painted images, which could have been produced only in the likeness of true things. Therefore at least, this general things (eyes, had, hands, the whole body) are not imaginary things, but are true and exist. For indeed when painters wish to represent sirens and satyrs by means of bizarre and unusual forms, they surely cannot ascribe utterly new natures to these creatures. Rather, they simply intermingle the members of various animals. And even if they concoct something so utterly novel that its likes have never been seen before (being utterly fictitious and false), certainly at the very minimum the colors from which the painters compose the thing ought to be true. And for the same reason, although even these general things (eyes, head, hands, and the like) can be imaginary, still one must necessarily admit that at least other things that are even more simple and universal are true, from which, as from true colors, all

these things—be they true or false—which in our thought are images of things, are constructed.

To this class seems to belong corporeal nature in general, together with its extension; likewise the shape of extended things, their quantity or size, their number; as well as the place where they exist, the time of their duration, and other such things.

Hence perhaps we do not conclude improperly that physics, astronomy, medicine, and all the other disciplines that are dependent upon the consideration of composite things are all doubtful. But arithmetic, geometry, and other such disciplines—which treat of nothing but the simplest and most general things and which are indifferent as to whether these composite things do or do not exist—contain something certain and indubitable. For whether I be awake or asleep, two plus three makes five, and a square does not have more than four sides; nor does it seem possible that such obvious truths can fall under the suspicion of falsity.

All the same, a certain opinion of long standing has been fixed in my mind, namely that there exists a God who is able to do anything and by whom I, such as I am, have been created. How do I know that he did not bring it about that there be no earth at all, no heavens, no extended thing, no figure, no size, no place, and yet all these things should seem to me to exist precisely as they appear to do now? Moreover—for I judge that others sometimes make mistakes in matters that they believe they know most perfectly—how do I know that I am not deceived every time I add two and three or count the sides of a square or perform an even simpler operation, if such can be imagined? But perhaps God has not willed that I be thus deceived, for it is said that he is good in the highest degree. Nonetheless, if it were repugnant to his goodness that he should have created me such that I be deceived all the time, it would seem, from this same consideration, to be foreign to him to permit me to be deceived occasionally. But we cannot make this last assertion.

Perhaps there are some who would rather deny such a powerful God, than believe that all other matters are uncertain. Let us not put these people off just yet; rather, let us grant that everything said here about God is fictitious. Now they suppose that I came to be what I am either by fate or by chance or by a continuous series of events or by some other way. But because being deceived and being mistaken seem to be imperfections, the less powerful they take the author of my being to be, the more probable it will be that I would be so imperfect as to be deceived perpetually. I have nothing to say in response to these arguments. At length I am forced to admit that there is nothing, among the things 1 once believed to be true, which it is not permissible to doubt—not for reasons of frivolity or a lack of forethought, but because of valid and considered arguments. Thus I must carefully withhold assent no less from these things than from the patently false, if I wish to find anything certain.

But it is not enough simply to have made a note of this; I must take care to keep it before my mind. For long-standing opinions keep coming back again and again, almost against my will; they seize upon my credulity, as if it were bound over to them by long use and the claims of intimacy. Nor will I get out of the habit of assenting to them and believing in them, so long as I take them to be exactly what they are, namely, in some respects doubtful as by now is obvious, but nevertheless highly probable, so that it is much more consonant with reason to believe them than to deny them. Hence, it seems to me, I would do well to turn my will in the opposite direction, to deceive myself and pretend for a considerable period that they are wholly false and imaginary, until finally, as if with equal weight of prejudice on both sides, no bad habit should turn my judgment from the correct perception of things. For indeed I know that no danger or error will follow and that it is impossible for me to indulge in too much distrust, since I now am concentrating only on knowledge, not on action.

Thus I will suppose not a supremely good God, the source of truth, but rather an evil genius, as clever and deceitful as he is powerful, who has directed his entire effort to misleading me. I will regard the heavens, the air, the earth, colors, shapes, sounds, and all external things as nothing but the deceptive games of my dreams, with which he lays snares for my credulity.

I will regard myself as having no hands, no eyes, no flesh, no blood, no senses, but as nevertheless falsely believing that I possess all these things. I will remain resolutely fixed in this meditation, and, even if it be out of my power to know anything true, certainly it is within my power to take care resolutely to withhold my assent to what is false, lest this deceiver, powerful and clever as he is, have an effect on me. But this undertaking is arduous, and laziness brings me back to my customary way of living. I am not unlike a prisoner who might enjoy an imaginary freedom in his sleep. When he later begins to suspect that he is sleeping, he fears being awakened and conspires slowly with these pleasant illusions. In just this way, I spontaneously fall back into my old beliefs, and dread being awakened, lest the toilsome wakefulness which follows upon a peaceful rest, have to be spent thenceforward not in the light but among the inextricable shadows of the difficulties now brought forward.

BENEDICT SPINOZA
(1632-1677)

He had an orthodox Jewish upbringing and education; but because of his heterodox opinions he was expelled from the Jewish community at the age of 24. He proceeded to live a solitary life, earning his living by grinding and polishing lenses for spectacles, microscopes, and telescopes – at that time a new profession. His writings made him famous even so; but when he was offered a Professorship of Philosophy at Heidelberg University in 1673 he

turned it down because he wanted to be left alone to do his philosophizing "in accordance with his own mind", as he put it.

Apart from his philosophy he was the first scholar of note to examine the scriptures as historical documents that were of problematic authorship and embodied the intellectual limitations of their time. In doing this he inaugurated the so-called higher criticism that was to come to full flower in the 19th and 20th centuries. He was engaged in translating the Old Testament into Dutch

He was mightily impressed by science, and he accepted from Descartes the view that the right way to build up the edifice of our scientific knowledge was to start from indubitable premises and deduce the consequences of these by logical reasoning. But at the same time he saw that Descartes' philosophy left certain fundamental problems unsolved. If total reality consists of two different sorts of substance that are ultimately distinct, namely material substance and mental substance, or matter and mind, how is it possible for mind to move matter around in space? Descartes' own answer to this was so feeble that no-one was convinced by it, and his successors considered it scarcely worth discussing. But there were other unsolved problems which were of equal moment to Spinoza. He was a deeply moral human being and also, by temperament, a deeply religious one, and this raised all sorts of difficulties for him as regards the new science. If total reality is the instantiation of a deductive system in which everything that is or happens can be deduced with all the necessity of logic from self-evident premises, what room is there for moral choice, or indeed free will at all – how can there be free will if everything is scientifically determined?

Also, what place is there for God in such a system? If everything that happens in the universe can be explained in terms of scientific laws and mathematical equations, it would seem that we no longer need God to function as any part of the explanation.

Against dualism

Spinoza's solutions to these problems started with the bold stroke of denying the basic premise, denying the fundamental distinction between mind and matter. We know, he said, for the reasons given by Descartes, that God exists, and is an infinite and perfect being. *But if God is infinite then he cannot have boundaries, cannot have limits, for if he had he would be finite. So there cannot be anything that God is not. So it cannot, for instance, be the case that God is one entity and the world quite another, for this would*

be to place limits on God's being. So God must be co-extensive with everything there is.

There is another good Cartesian reason why this should be so. Descartes had defined substance as that which needs nothing outside itself in order to exist. But Spinoza pointed out that the totality of everything is the only thing that has nothing outside itself. Within this totality everything that we seek to understand has to be explained, at least partially, in terms of something else – our explanations always take, at least to some extent, the form of linking things with other things. The only entity of which this is not, and can not, be so is the totality of everything. This must simply *be*, in and for itself, unexplained by anything else, unconnected with anything else; for there is nothing else. This means that it is the only true substance, the one and only self-subsistent thing, the only uncaused cause. But these things are what is meant by God. Therefore – again, but for a different reason – God must be co-equivalent with everything.

This means that whether we describe the cosmos in terms of our religious conceptions or in terms of planets and other material objects we are describing the same thing. One set of categories is abstract or mental, the other material, but these are merely two different ways of describing the same reality. The same existent entity is being seen under two different aspects. So God is not outside the world, but he is not in the world either: he is the world. The physical universe is his body, you might say, though that would be merely one way of looking at it: a spiritual apprehension of God would be simply a different way of knowing the same being. We ourselves, although we are finite creatures and not infinite, have the same dual character in one being: we are our physical bodies, but we are also our souls, and these are not two different people, they are one and the same person: it is as if, as an ancient Jewish teaching had it, the body is the soul in its outward form.

GOTTFRIED WILHELM LEIBNITZ

(1646 – 1716)

The last of the great Continental Rationalists was Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. Known in his own time as a legal advisor to the Court of Hanover and as a practicing mathematician who co-invented the calculus, Leibniz applied the rigorous standards of formal reasoning in an effort to comprehend everything. A suitably sophisticated logical scheme, he believed, can serve as a reliable guide to the ultimate structure of reality.

But Leibniz published little of his philosophical work during his own lifetime. For an understanding of the technical logical foundations of his

system, we must rely upon letters and notebooks which became available only centuries later and upon the aphoristic summary of its results in *La Monadologie (Monadology)* (1714). *His Discours de Metaphysique (Discourse on Metaphysics)* (1686) and *Théodicée (Theodicy)* (1710) present to the general public more popular expositions of Leibniz's central themes.

The basis for Leibniz's philosophy is pure logical analysis. Every proposition, he believed, can be expressed in subject-predicate form. What is more, every true proposition is a statement of identity whose predicate is wholly contained in its subject, like "2 + 3 = 5." In this sense, all propositions are analytic for Leibniz. But since the required analysis may be difficult, he distinguished two kinds of true propositions: (Monadology 33)

Truths of Reason are explicit statements of identity, or reducible to explicit identities by a substitution of the definitions of their terms. Since a finite analysis always reveals the identity-structure of such truths, they cannot be denied without contradiction and are perfectly necessary.

Truths of Fact, on the other hand, are implicit statements of identity, the grounds for whose truth may not be evident to us. These truths are merely contingent and may be subject to dispute, since only an infinite analysis could show them to be identities.

Anything that human beings can believe or know, Leibniz held, must be expressed in one or the other of these two basic forms. The central insight of Leibniz's system is that all existential propositions are truths of fact, not truths of reason. This simple doctrine has many significant consequences.

Complete Individual Substances (Monads)

Consider next how this logic of propositions applies to the structure of reality itself for Leibniz. The subject of any proposition signifies a complete individual substance, a simple, indivisible, dimensionless being or monad, while the predicate signifies some quality, property, or power. Thus, each true proposition represents the fact that some feature is actually contained in this substance.

Each **monad** is a complete individual substance in the sense that it contains all of its features—past, present, and future. Because statements of identity are timeless, the facts they express perpetually obtain. (Thus, for example, I am the person whose daughter was born in 1982 and the person who now develops this web site and the person who will vacation in Manitoba next summer; since each of these predicates can be truly affirmed of me, each of these features is contained in me.) Everything that was, is, or will ever be true of any substance is already contained in it. (Monadology 22)

Moreover, each monad is a complete individual substance in the sense that its being is utterly independent of everything else. Because statements of identity are self-contained, any apparent relation between substances must actually be a matching pair of features that each possesses alone. (Thus, for example, I happen to have the property of being Aaron's father, and Aaron happens to have the property of being my son, but these are two facts, not one.) Hence, on Leibniz's view, there can be no interaction between substances, each of which is purely active. Monads are "windowless." (Monadology 7)

Where Spinoza saw the world as a single comprehensive substance like Descartes's extended matter, then, Leibniz supposed that the world is composed of many discrete particles, each of which is simple, active, and independent of every other, like Descartes's minds or souls. The rationalists' common reliance upon mathematical models of reasoning led to startlingly different conceptions of the universe. Yet the rationality, consistency, and necessity within each system is clear.

Logic

Another way of summing up the structure of the universe on Leibniz's view is by reviewing the great logical principles from which all truths are said to flow:

The Principle of Contradiction generates the truths of reason, each of which states the connection between an individual substance and one of its finite number of essential features. (Monadology 31) It would be a contradiction to deny any of these propositions, since the substance would not be what it is unless it had all of these features. Truths of reason, then, are not influenced by any contingent fact about the world; they are true "in all possible worlds." Thus, for example, "Garth Kemerling is a human being" would be necessarily true even if my parents had been childless.

The Principle of Sufficient Reason generates the truths of fact, each of which states the connection between an existing individual substance and one of its infinitely many accidental features or relations. (Monadology 32) The sufficient reason for the truth of each of these propositions is that this substance does exist as a member of the consistent set of monads which constitutes the actual world. Truths of fact, then, depend upon the reciprocal mirroring of each existing substance by every other. Thus, for example, "Garth Kemerling is an oldest child" is contingently true only because my parents had no children before I was born.

The Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles establishes the fact that, within the set of monads that constitutes any possible world, no two can be exactly alike. (Monadology 9) If, on the contrary, there were two distinct

but perfectly identical substances, Leibniz argued, then there could be no sufficient reason for each to occupy its own location rather than that of the other. More positively, since each monad mirrors the entire structure of the world, each must reflect a unique set of relations to every other.

The Principle of the Plenum (or principle of plenitude) affirms that the actual world, considered as a set of monads, is as full as it can possibly be. Since there is no genuine interaction among distinct substances, there would be no sufficient reason for the non-existence of any monad that would be consistent with the others within a possible world. Hence, anything that can happen will; every possibility within this world must be actualized. The world in which we live, then, is but one among the infinitely many possible worlds that might have existed. What makes this one special?

Since we experience the actual world as full of physical objects, Leibniz provided a detailed account of the nature of bodies. As Descartes had correctly noted, the essence of matter is that it is spatially extended. But since every extended thing, no matter how small, is in principle divisible into even smaller parts, it is apparent that all material objects are compound beings made up of simple elements. But from this Leibniz concluded that the ultimate constitutents of the world must be simple, indivisible, and therefore unextended, particles—dimensionless mathematical points. So the entire world of extended matter is in reality constructed from simple immaterial substances, monads, or entelechies.

In fact, Leibniz held that neither space nor time is a fundamental feature of reality. Of course individual substances stand in spatial relation to each other, but relations of this sort are reducible in logic to the non-relational features of windowless monads. In exactly the same way, temporal relations can be logically analyzed as the timeless properties of individual monads. Space and time are unreal, but references to spatial location and temporal duration provide a convenient short-hand for keeping track of the relations among the consistent set of monads which is the actual world.

What is at work here again is Leibniz's notion of complete individual substances, each of which mirrors every other. A monad not only contains all of its own past, present, and future features but also, by virtue of a complex web of spatio-temporal references, some representation of every other monad, each of which in turn contains . . . . In a universe of windowless mirrors, each reflects any other, along with its reflections of every other, and so on ad infinitum. It is for this reason that an infinite analysis would be required to reveal the otherwise implicit identity at the heart of every truth of fact. In order fully to understand the simple fact that

my eyes are brown, one would have to consider the eye-color of all of my ancestors, the anatomical structure of the iris, my personal opthalmological history, the culturally-defined concept of color, the poetical associations of dark eyes, etc., etc., etc.; the slightest difference in any one of these things would undermine the truth of this matter of fact. Existential assertions presuppose the reality of just this one among all possible worlds as the actual world.

The Best of All Possible Worlds

Both in the Monadology and at the more popular level of presentation that characterizes the Discourse on Metaphysics, Leibniz (like Descartes) resolved some of the most thorny philosophical problems by reference to god. God (alone) exists necessarily, and everything else flows from the divine nature. Limited only by contradiction, god first conceives of every possible world—the world with just one monad; the worlds with exactly two monads; those with three, with seventeen, with five billion, etc. Then god simply chooses which of them to create.

Of course even god must have a sufficient reason for actualizing this world rather than any other. The most direct advantage of this world is that (as the plenum principle requires) it is the fullest. That is, more things exist and/or more events actually take place in this world than in any other consistent set of interrelated monads. In a more lofty tone, Leibniz declared that a benevolent god would choose to create whatever possible world contained the smallest amount of evil; hence (in a phrase that would later be mocked by Voltaire) this is "the best of all possible worlds," according to Leibniz. Nothing about it could be changed without making things worse rather than better on the whole.

Similarly, the existence of a benevolent god can be used to account for the smooth operation of a universe that consists of indefinitely many distinct individual substances, none of which have any causal influence over any other. (Monadology 51) A crucial element of god's creative activity, Leibniz held, is the establishment of a "pre-established harmony" among all existing things. Like well-made clocks that have been synchronized, wound, and set in motion together, the monads that make up our world are independent, self-contained, purely active beings whose features coincide without any genuine interaction among them.

One special case of this pre-established harmony, of course, accounts for the apparent interaction of mind and body in a human being as nothing more than the perfect parallelism of thier functions. In fact, the human mind is just the dominant member of a local cluster of monads which collectively constitute the associated human body. (Monadology 63) Neither has any

real effect on the other, but these monads are most clearly reflected in each others' foreground. Thus, in both sensation and volition, the divinely-ordained coincidence of bodily movements and mental thoughts creates an illusion of genuine causal influence.

The possibility of human knowledge emerges more clearly from a slightly more technical account of Leibniz's position. All monads have the capacity for perception of the external world in the sense that, as complete individual substances, each of them contains as properties unconscious images of its spatio-temporal relations to everything else. (Monadology 19) These innate ideas constitute the unique point of view from which any monad may be said to represent the world as a whole.

But Leibniz held that some monads—namely, the souls of animals and human beings—also have conscious apperception in the sense that they are capable of employing sensory ideas as representations of physical things outside themselves. And a very few monads—namely, spirits such as ourselves and god—possess the even greater capacity of self-consciousness, of which genuine knowledge is the finest example. Although Leibniz himself did not draw the inference directly, notice that if a cluster of dimensionless monads can make up an extended body, it might be equally possible for a cluster of unconscious monads to constitute a thinking thing.

What Leibniz did claim is that we have the free will required for moral responsibility even though all of our future actions are already contained in us (along with the future of the entire actual world). Any awareness of those contingent future actions would follow from the principle of sufficient reason only upon an infinite analysis of my nature. Hence, since I lack knowledge of what I will do tomorrow, it will seem to me as if I act freely when I do it. Like space and time, freedom is a benevolent illusion that adequately provides for life in an uncertain world.

Appendix

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz
THE MONADOLOGY
translated by Robert Latta

1. The Monad, of which we shall here speak, is nothing but a simple substance, which enters into compounds. By 'simple' is meant 'without parts.'

2. And there must be simple substances, since there are compounds; for a compound is nothing but a collection or aggregatum of simple things.

3. Now where there are no parts, there can be neither extension nor form [figure] nor divisibility. These Monads are the real atoms of nature and, in a word, the elements of things.

4. No dissolution of these elements need be feared, and there is no conceivable way in which a simple substance can be destroyed by natural means.

5. For the same reason there is no conceivable way in which a simple substance can come into being by natural means, since it cannot be formed by the combination of parts [composition].

6. Thus it may be said that a Monad can only come into being or come to an end all at once; that is to say, it can come into being only by creation and come to an end only by annihilation, while that which is compound comes into being or comes to an end by parts.

7. Further, there is no way of explaining how a Monad can be altered in quality or internally changed by any other created thing; since it is impossible to change the place of anything in it or to conceive in it any internal motion which could be produced, directed, increased or diminished therein, although all this is possible in the case of compounds, in which there are changes among the parts. The Monads have no windows, through which anything could come in or go out. Accidents cannot separate themselves from substances nor go about outside of them, as the 'sensible species' of the Scholastics used to do. Thus neither substance nor accident can come into a Monad from outside.

8. Yet the Monads must have some qualities, otherwise they would not even be existing things. And if simple substances did not differ in quality, there would be absolutely no means of perceiving any change in things. For what is in the compound can come only from the simple elements it contains, and the Monads, if they had no qualities, would be indistinguishable from one another, since they do not differ in quantity. Consequently, space being a plenum, each part of space would always receive, in any motion, exactly the equivalent of what it already had, and no one state of things would be discernible from another.

9. Indeed, each Monad must be different from every other. For in nature there are never two beings which are perfectly alike and in which it is not possible to find an internal difference, or at least a difference founded upon an intrinsic quality [denomination].

10. I assume also as admitted that every created being, and consequently the created Monad, is subject to change, and further that this change is continuous in each.

11. It follows from what has just been said, that the natural changes of the Monads come from an internal principle, since an external cause can have no influence upon their inner being.

12. But, besides the principle of the change, there must be a particular series of changes [un detail de ce qui change], which constitutes, so to speak, the specific nature and variety of the simple substances.

13. This particular series of changes should involve a multiplicity in the unit [unite] or in that which is simple. For, as every natural change takes place gradually, something changes and something remains unchanged; and consequently a simple substance must be affected and related in many ways, although it has no parts.

14. The passing condition, which involves and represents a multiplicity in the unit [unite] or in the simple substance, is nothing but what is called Perception, which is to be distinguished from Apperception or Consciousness, as will afterwards appear. In this matter the Cartesian view is extremely defective, for it treats as non-existent those perceptions of which we are not consciously aware. This has also led them to believe that minds [esprits] alone are Monads, and that there are no souls of animals nor other Entelechies. Thus, like the crowd, they have failed to distinguish between a prolonged unconsciousness and absolute death, which has made them fall again into the Scholastic prejudice of souls entirely separate [from bodies], and has even confirmed ill-balanced minds in the opinion that souls are mortal.

15. The activity of the internal principle which produces change or passage from one perception to another may be called Appetition. It is true that desire [l'appetit] cannot always fully attain to the whole perception at which it aims, but it always obtains some of it and attains to new perceptions.

16. We have in ourselves experience of a multiplicity in simple substance, when we find that the least thought of which we are conscious involves variety in its object. Thus all those who admit that the soul is a simple substance should admit this multiplicity in the Monad; and M. Bayle ought not to have found any difficulty in this, as he has done in his Dictionary, article 'Rorarius.'

17. Moreover, it must be confessed that perception and that which depends upon it are inexplicable on mechanical grounds, that is to say, by means of figures and motions. And supposing there were a machine, so constructed as to think, feel, and have perception, it might be conceived as increased in size, while keeping the same proportions, so that one might go into it as into a mill. That being so, we should, on examining its interior,

find only parts which work one upon another, and never anything by which to explain a perception. Thus it is in a simple substance, and not in a compound or in a machine, that perception must be sought for. Further, nothing but this (namely, perceptions and their changes) can be found in a simple substance. It is also in this alone that all the internal activities of simple substances can consist.

18. All simple substances or created Monads might be called Entelechies, for they have in them a certain perfection (echousi to enteles); they have a certain self-sufficiency (autarkeia) which makes them the sources of their internal activities and, so to speak, incorporeal automata.

19. If we are to give the name of Soul to everything which has perceptions and desires [appetits] in the general sense which I have explained, then all simple substances or created Monads might be called souls; but as feeling [le sentiment] is something more than a bare perception, I think it right that the general name of Monads or Entelechies should suffice for simple substances which have perception only, and that the name of Souls should be given only to those in which perception is more distinct, and is accompanied by memory.

20. For we experience in ourselves a condition in which we remember nothing and have no distinguishable perception; as when we fall into a swoon or when we are overcome with a profound dreamless sleep. In this state the soul does not perceptibly differ from a bare Monad; but as this state is not lasting, and the soul comes out of it, the soul is something more than a bare Monad.

21. And it does not follow that in this state the simple substance is without any perception. That, indeed, cannot be, for the reasons already given; for it cannot perish, and it cannot continue to exist without being affected in some way, and this affection is nothing but its perception. But when there is a great multitude of little perceptions, in which there is nothing distinct, one is stunned; as when one turns continuously round in the same way several times in succession, whence comes a giddiness which may make us swoon, and which keeps us from distinguishing anything. Death can for a time put animals into this condition.

22. And as every present state of a simple substance is naturally a consequence of its preceding state, in such a way that its present is big with its future; (Theod. 350.)

23. And as, on waking from stupor, we are conscious of our perceptions, we must have had perceptions immediately before we awoke, although we were not at all conscious of them; for one perception can in a

natural way come only from another perception, as a motion can in a natural way come only from a motion.

24. It thus appears that if we had in our perceptions nothing marked and, so to speak, striking and highly-flavoured, we should always be in a state of stupor. And this is the state in which the bare Monads are.

25. We see also that nature has given heightened perceptions to animals, from the care she has taken to provide them with organs, which collect numerous rays of light, or numerous undulations of the air, in order, by uniting them, to make them have greater effect. Something similar to this takes place in smell, in taste and in touch, and perhaps in a number of other senses, which are unknown to us. And I will explain presently how that which takes place in the soul represents what happens in the bodily organs.

26. Memory provides the soul with a kind of consecutiveness, which resembles [imite] reason, but which is to be distinguished from it. Thus we see that when animals have a perception of something which strikes them and of which they have formerly had a similar perception, they are led, by means of representation in their memory, to expect what was combined with the thing in this previous perception, and they come to have feelings similar to those they had on the former occasion. For instance, when a stick is shown to dogs, they remember the pain it has caused them, and howl and run away.

27. And the strength of the mental image which impresses and moves them comes either from the magnitude or the number of the preceding perceptions. For often a strong impression produces all at once the same effect as a long-formed habit, or as many and oft-repeated ordinary perceptions.

28. In so far as the concatenation of their perceptions is due to the principle of memory alone, men act like the lower animals, resembling the empirical physicians, whose methods are those of mere practice without theory. Indeed, in three-fourths of our actions we are nothing but empirics. For instance, when we expect that there will be daylight to-morrow, we do so empirically, because it has always so happened until now. It is only the astronomer who thinks it on rational grounds.

29. But it is the knowledge of necessary and eternal truths that distinguishes us from the mere animals and gives us Reason and the sciences, raising us to the knowledge of ourselves and of God. And it is this in us that is called the rational soul or mind [esprit].

30. It is also through the knowledge of necessary truths, and through their abstract expression, that we rise to acts of reflexion, which make us think of what is called I, and observe that this or that is within us: and thus,

thinking of ourselves, we think of being, of substance, of the simple and the compound, of the immaterial, and of God Himself, conceiving that what is limited in us is in Him without limits. And these acts of reflexion furnish the chief objects of our reasonings.

31. Our reasonings are grounded upon two great principles, that of contradiction, in virtue of which we judge false that which involves a contradiction, and true that which is opposed or contradictory to the false.

32. And that of sufficient reason, in virtue of which we hold that there can be no fact real or existing, no statement true, unless there be a sufficient reason, why it should be so and not otherwise, although these reasons usually cannot be known by us. (Theod. 44, 196.)

33. There are also two kinds of truths, those of reasoning and those of fact. Truths of reasoning are necessary and their opposite is impossible: truths of fact are contingent and their opposite is possible. When a truth is necessary, its reason can be found by analysis, resolving it into more simple ideas and truths, until we come to those which are primary.

34. It is thus that in Mathematics speculative Theorems and practical Canons are reduced by analysis to Definitions, Axioms and Postulates.

35. In short, there are simple ideas, of which no definition can be given; there are also axioms and postulates, in a word, primary principles, which cannot be proved, and indeed have no need of proof; and these are identical propositions, whose opposite involves an express contradiction.

36. But there must also be a sufficient reason for contingent truths or truths of fact, that is to say, for the sequence or connexion of the things which are dispersed throughout the universe of created beings, in which the analyzing into particular reasons might go on into endless detail, because of the immense variety of things in nature and the infinite division of bodies. There is an infinity of present and past forms and motions which go to make up the efficient cause of my present writing; and there is an infinity of minute tendencies and dispositions of my soul, which go to make its final cause.

37. And as all this detail again involves other prior or more detailed contingent things, each of which still needs a similar analysis to yield its reason, we are no further forward: and the sufficient or final reason must be outside of the sequence or series of particular contingent things, however infinite this series may be.

38. Thus the final reason of things must be in a necessary substance, in which the variety of particular changes exists only eminently, as in its source; and this substance we call God.

39. Now as this substance is a sufficient reason of all this variety of particulars, which are also connected together throughout; there is only one God, and this God is sufficient.

40. We may also hold that this supreme substance, which is unique, universal and necessary, nothing outside of it being independent of it,- this substance, which is a pure sequence of possible being, must be illimitable and must contain as much reality as is possible.

41. Whence it follows that God is absolutely perfect; for perfection is nothing but amount of positive reality, in the strict sense, leaving out of account the limits or bounds in things which are limited. And where there are no bounds, that is to say in God, perfection is absolutely infinite.

42. It follows also that created beings derive their perfections from the influence of God, but that their imperfections come from their own nature, which is incapable of being without limits. For it is in this that they differ from God. An instance of this original imperfection of created beings may be seen in the natural inertia of bodies. (Theod. 20, 27-30, 153, 167, 377 sqq.)

43. It is farther true that in God there is not only the source of existences but also that of essences, in so far as they are real, that is to say, the source of what is real in the possible. For the understanding of God is the region of eternal truths or of the ideas on which they depend, and without Him there would be nothing real in the possibilities of things, and not only would there be nothing in existence, but nothing would even be possible. (Theod. 20.)

44. For if there is a reality in essences or possibilities, or rather in eternal truths, this reality must needs be founded in something existing and actual, and consequently in the existence of the necessary Being, in whom essence involves existence, or in whom to be possible is to be actual.

45. Thus God alone (or the necessary Being) has this prerogative that He must necessarily exist, if He is possible. And as nothing can interfere with the possibility of that which involves no limits, no negation and consequently no contradiction, this [His possibility] is sufficient of itself to make known the existence of God a priori. We have thus proved it, through the reality of eternal truths. But a little while ago we proved it also a posteriori, since there exist contingent beings, which can have their final or sufficient reason only in the necessary Being, which has the reason of its existence in itself.

46. We must not, however, imagine, as some do, that eternal truths, being dependent on God, are arbitrary and depend on His will, as Descartes, and afterwards M. Poiret, appear to have held. That is true only of

contingent truths, of which the principle is fitness [convenance] or choice of the best, whereas necessary truths depend solely on His understanding and are its inner object.

47. Thus God alone is the primary unity or original simple substance, of which all created or derivative Monads are products and have their birth, so to speak, through continual fulgurations of the Divinity from moment to moment, limited by the receptivity of the created being, of whose essence it is to have limits.

48. In God there is Power, which is the source of all, also Knowledge, whose content is the variety of the ideas, and finally Will, which makes changes or products according to the principle of the best. These characteristics correspond to what in the created Monads forms the ground or basis, to the faculty of Perception and to the faculty of Appetition. But in God these attributes are absolutely infinite or perfect; and in the created Monads or the Entelechies (or perfectihabiae, as Hermolaus Barbarus translated the word) there are only imitations of these attributes, according to the degree of perfection of the Monad.

49. A created thing is said to act outwardly in so far as it has perfection, and to suffer [or be passive, patir] in relation to another, in so far as it is imperfect. Thus activity [action] is attributed to a Monad, in so far as it has distinct perceptions, and passivity [passion] in so far as its perceptions are confused.

50. And one created thing is more perfect than another, in this, that there is found in the more perfect that which serves to explain a priori what takes place in the less perfect, and it is on this account that the former is said to act upon the latter.

51. But in simple substances the influence of one Monad upon another is only ideal, and it can have its effect only through the mediation of God, in so far as in the ideas of God any Monad rightly claims that God, in regulating the others from the beginning of things, should have regard to it. For since one created Monad cannot have any physical influence upon the inner being of another, it is only by this means that the one can be dependent upon the other.

52. Accordingly, among created things, activities and passivities are mutual. For God, comparing two simple substances, finds in each reasons which oblige Him to adapt the other to it, and consequently what is active in certain respects is passive from another point of view; active in so far as what we distinctly know in it serves to explain [rendre raison de] what takes place in another, and passive in so far as the explanation [raison] of what takes place in it is to be found in that which is distinctly known in another.

53. Now, as in the Ideas of God there is an infinite number of possible universes, and as only one of them can be actual, there must be a sufficient reason for the choice of God, which leads Him to decide upon one rather than another.

54. And this reason can be found only in the fitness [convenance], or in the degrees of perfection, that these worlds possess, since each possible thing has the right to aspire to existence in proportion to the amount of perfection it contains in germ.

55. Thus the actual existence of the best that wisdom makes known to God is due to this, that His goodness makes Him choose it, and His power makes Him produce it.

56. Now this connexion or adaptation of all created things to each and of each to all, means that each simple substance has relations which express all the others, and, consequently, that it is a perpetual living mirror of the universe.

57. And as the same town, looked at from various sides, appears quite different and becomes as it were numerous in aspects [perspectivement]; even so, as a result of the infinite number of simple substances, it is as if there were so many different universes, which, nevertheless are nothing but aspects [perspectives] of a single universe, according to the special point of view of each Monad.

58. And by this means there is obtained as great variety as possible, along with the greatest possible order; that is to say, it is the way to get as much perfection as possible.

59. Besides, no hypothesis but this (which I venture to call proved) fittingly exalts the greatness of God; and this Monsieur Bayle recognized when, in his Dictionary (article Rorarius), he raised objections to it, in which indeed he was inclined to think that I was attributing too much to God- more than it is possible to attribute. But he was unable to give any reason which could show the impossibility of this universal harmony, according to which every substance exactly expresses all others through the relations it has with them.

60. Further, in what I have just said there may be seen the reasons a priori why things could not be otherwise than they are. For God in regulating the whole has had regard to each part, and in particular to each Monad, whose nature being to represent, nothing can confine it to the representing of only one part of things; though it is true that this representation is merely confused as regards the variety of particular things [le detail] in the whole universe, and can be distinct only as regards a small part of things, namely, those which are either nearest or greatest in relation

to each of the Monads; otherwise each Monad would be a deity. It is not as regards their object, but as regards the different ways in which they have knowledge of their object, that the Monads are limited. In a confused way they all strive after [vont a] the infinite, the whole; but they are limited and differentiated through the degrees of their distinct perceptions.

61. And compounds are in this respect analogous with [symbolisent avec] simple substances. For all is a plenum (and thus all matter is connected together) and in the plenum every motion has an effect upon distant bodies in proportion to their distance, so that each body not only is affected by those which are in contact with it and in some way feels the effect of everything that happens to them, but also is mediately affected by bodies adjoining those with which it itself is in immediate contact. Wherefore it follows that this inter-communication of things extends to any distance, however great. And consequently every body feels the effect of all that takes place in the universe, so that he who sees all might read in each what is happening everywhere, and even what has happened or shall happen, observing in the present that which is far off as well in time as in place: sympnoia panta, as Hippocrates said. But a soul can read in itself only that which is there represented distinctly; it cannot all at once unroll everything that is enfolded in it, for its complexity is infinite.

62. Thus, although each created Monad represents the whole universe, it represents more distinctly the body which specially pertains to it, and of which it is the entelechy; and as this body expresses the whole universe through the connexion of all matter in the plenum, the soul also represents the whole universe in representing this body, which belongs to it in a special way.

63. The body belonging to a Monad (which is its entelechy or its soul) constitutes along with the entelechy what may be called a living being, and along with the soul what is called an animal. Now this body of living being or of an animal is always organic; for, as every Monad is, in its own way, a mirror of the universe, and as the universe is ruled according to a perfect order, there must also be order in that which represents it, i.e. in the perceptions of the soul, and consequently there must be order in the body, through which the universe is represented in the soul.

64. Thus the organic body of each living being is a kind of divine machine or natural automaton, which infinitely surpasses all artificial automata. For a machine made by the skill of man is not a machine in each of its parts. For instance, the tooth of a brass wheel has parts or fragments which for us are not artificial products, and which do not have the special characteristics of the machine, for they give no indication of the use for

which the wheel was intended. But the machines of nature, namely, living bodies, are still machines in their smallest parts ad infinitum. It is this that constitutes the difference between nature and art, that is to say, between the divine art and ours.

65. And the Author of nature has been able to employ this divine and infinitely wonderful power of art, because each portion of matter is not only infinitely divisible, as the ancients observed, but is also actually subdivided without end, each part into further parts, of which each has some motion of its own; otherwise it would be impossible for each portion of matter to express the whole universe.

66. Whence it appears that in the smallest particle of matter there is a world of creatures, living beings, animals, entelechies, souls.

67. Each portion of matter may be conceived as like a garden full of plants and like a pond full of fishes. But each branch of every plant, each member of every animal, each drop of its liquid parts is also some such garden or pond.

68. And though the earth and the air which are between the plants of the garden, or the water which is between the fish of the pond, be neither plant nor fish; yet they also contain plants and fishes, but mostly so minute as to be imperceptible to us.

69. Thus there is nothing fallow, nothing sterile, nothing dead in the universe, no chaos, no confusion save in appearance, somewhat as it might appear to be in a pond at a distance, in which one would see a confused movement and, as it were, a swarming of fish in the pond, without separately distinguishing the fish themselves.

70. Hence it appears that each living body has a dominant entelechy, which in an animal is the soul; but the members of this living body are full of other living beings, plants, animals, each of which has also its dominant entelechy or soul.

71. But it must not be imagined, as has been done by some who have misunderstood my thought, that each soul has a quantity or portion of matter belonging exclusively to itself or attached to it for ever, and that it consequently owns other inferior living beings, which are devoted for ever to its service. For all bodies are in a perpetual flux like rivers, and parts are entering into them and passing out of them continually.

72. Thus the soul changes its body only by degrees, little by little, so that it is never all at once deprived of all its organs; and there is often metamorphosis in animals, but never metempsychosis or transmigration of souls; nor are there souls entirely separate [from bodies] nor unembodied

spirits [genies sans corps]. God alone is completely without body. (Theod. 90, 124.)

73. It also follows from this that there never is absolute birth [generation] nor complete death, in the strict sense, consisting in the separation of the soul from the body. What we call births [generations] are developments and growths, while what we call deaths are envelopments and diminutions.

74. Philosophers have been much perplexed about the origin of forms, entelechies, or souls; but nowadays it has become known, through careful studies of plants, insects, and animals, that the organic bodies of nature are never products of chaos or putrefaction, but always come from seeds, in which there was undoubtedly some preformation; and it is held that not only the organic body was already there before conception, but also a soul in this body, and, in short, the animal itself; and that by means of conception this animal has merely been prepared for the great transformation involved in its becoming an animal of another kind. Something like this is indeed seen apart from birth [generation], as when worms become flies and caterpillars become butterflies.

75. The animals, of which some are raised by means of conception to the rank of larger animals, may be called spermatic, but those among them which are not so raised but remain in their own kind (that is, the majority) are born, multiply, and are destroyed like the large animals, and it is only a few chosen ones [elus] that pass to a greater theatre.

76. But this is only half of the truth, and accordingly I hold that if an animal never comes into being by natural means [naturellement], no more does it come to an end by natural means; and that not only will there be no birth [generation], but also no complete destruction or death in the strict sense. And these reasonings, made a posteriori and drawn from experience are in perfect agreement with my principles deduced a priori, as above.

77. Thus it may be said that not only the soul (mirror of an indestructible universe) is indestructible, but also the animal itself, though its mechanism [machine] may often perish in part and take off or put on an organic slough [des depouilles organiques].

78. These principles have given me a way of explaining naturally the union or rather the mutual agreement [conformite] of the soul and the organic body. The soul follows its own laws, and the body likewise follows its own laws; and they agree with each other in virtue of the pre-established harmony between all substances, since they are all representations of one and the same universe.

79. Souls act according to the laws of final causes through appetitions, ends, and means. Bodies act according to the laws of efficient causes or motions. And the two realms, that of efficient causes and that of final causes, are in harmony with one another.

80. Descartes recognized that souls cannot impart any force to bodies, because there is always the same quantity of force in matter. Nevertheless he was of opinion that the soul could change the direction of bodies. But that is because in his time it was not known that there is a law of nature which affirms also the conservation of the same total direction in matter. Had Descartes noticed this he would have come upon my system of pre-established harmony.

81. According to this system bodies act as if (to suppose the impossible) there were no souls, and souls act as if there were no bodies, and both act as if each influenced the other.

82. As regards minds [esprits] or rational souls, though I find that what I have just been saying is true of all living beings and animals (namely that animals and souls come into being when the world begins and no more come to an end that the world does), yet there is this peculiarity in rational animals, that their spermatic animalcules, so long as they are only spermatic, have merely ordinary or sensuous [sensitive] souls; but when those which are chosen [elus], so to speak, attain to human nature through an actual conception, their sensuous souls are raised to the rank of reason and to the prerogative of minds [esprits].

83. Among other differences which exist between ordinary souls and minds [esprits], some of which differences I have already noted, there is also this: that souls in general are living mirrors or images of the universe of created things, but that minds are also images of the Deity or Author of nature Himself, capable of knowing the system of the universe, and to some extent of imitating it through architectonic ensamples [echantillons], each mind being like a small divinity in its own sphere.

84. It is this that enables spirits [or minds- esprits] to enter into a kind of fellowship with God, and brings it about that in relation to them He is not only what an inventor is to his machine (which is the relation of God to other created things), but also what a prince is to his subjects, and, indeed, what a father is to his children.

85. Whence it is easy to conclude that the totality [assemblage] of all spirits [esprits] must compose the City of God, that is to say, the most perfect State that is possible, under the most perfect of Monarchs.

86. This City of God, this truly universal monarchy, is a moral world in the natural world, and is the most exalted and most divine among the works

of God; and it is in it that the glory of God really consists, for He would have no glory were not His greatness and His goodness known and admired by spirits [esprits]. It is also in relation to this divine City that God specially has goodness, while His wisdom and His power are manifested everywhere.

87. As we have shown above that there is a perfect harmony between the two realms in nature, one of efficient, and the other of final causes, we should here notice also another harmony between the physical realm of nature and the moral realm of grace, that is to say, between God, considered as Architect of the mechanism [machine] of the universe and God considered as Monarch of the divine City of spirits [esprits].

88. A result of this harmony is that things lead to grace by the very ways of nature, and that this globe, for instance, must be destroyed and renewed by natural means at the very time when the government of spirits requires it, for the punishment of some and the reward of others.

89. It may also be said that God as Architect satisfies in all respects God as Lawgiver, and thus that sins must bear their penalty with them, through the order of nature, and even in virtue of the mechanical structure of things; and similarly that noble actions will attain their rewards by ways which, on the bodily side, are mechanical, although this cannot and ought not always to happen immediately.

90. Finally, under this perfect government no good action would be unrewarded and no bad one unpunished, and all should issue in the well-being of the good, that is to say, of those who are not malcontents in this great state, but who trust in Providence, after having done their duty, and who love and imitate, as is meet, the Author of all good, finding pleasure in the contemplation of His perfections, as is the way of genuine 'pure love,' which takes pleasure in the happiness of the beloved. This it is which leads wise and virtuous people to devote their energies to everything which appears in harmony with the presumptive or antecedent will of God, and yet makes them content with what God actually brings to pass by His secret, consequent and positive [decisive] will, recognizing that if we could sufficiently understand the order of the universe, we should find that it exceeds all the desires of the wisest men, and that it is impossible to make it better than it is, not only as a whole and in general but also for ourselves in particular, if we are attached, as we ought to be, to the Author of all, not only as to the architect and efficient cause of our being, but as to our master and to the final cause, which ought to be the whole aim of our will, and which can alone make our happiness.

§5. GERMAN CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHY

"German classical philosophy" is the name given by German philosophed of the middle of XIX century Friedrih Engels to philosophy of most important German thinkers from the end of VIII century to the first half of XIX century. It includes such philosophers as Immanuel Kant, Iogan Fichte, Friedrich Shelling, George Hegel and Ludvig Feuerbach.

Plan

1. Philosophy of Immanuel Kant
2. Philosophy of Fichte, Shelling and Hegel
3. Philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach

1. Philosophy of Immanuel Kant

In philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) two periods are usually distinguished – precritical and critical.

In precritical period Kant was in philosophy follower of Leibniz and Wolf (follower of Leibniz whose doctrine has become in the mid of XVIII century "official philosophy" in German universities), and admirers of Newton's physical science. The important Kant's achievement of this period was original theory of evolutionary origin and development of the Universe (based of laws of Newton's physics).

Transition to critical period was due to familiarization with David Hume's philosophical works, in which Hume strongly argues that most ideas and methods, on which our understanding of the world and all scientific knowledge is based – such as causality and induction – can't be inferred from experience or rationally proven in any other way. Hence, on Hume argument, it follows that all aur beliefs about existence of causal relations between events, and all our beliefs get abtained through induction – such, for example, as all scientific laws of nature, or belief that tomorrow morning Sun will rise, as it had risen every days many centuries before – has no rational foundation, are irrational. Kant had said that Hume's works have awakened him from dogmatic slumber.

Kant's "critical" philosophy was, primarily, the attempt to counter Hume's conclusions, to "justify" scientific knowledge – especially such seemingly certain knowledge as Newton's physics – in view of Hume's skepticism.

The adjective "critical" comes from titles of three Kant's works: "The Critique of Pure Reason", "The Critique of Practical Reason", "The Critique of Judgment", which cover such main fields of human activities as

knowledge, ethics and estetics, correspondingly. First two of these books are universally recognized as two most important Kant's works. There were also other important works, which elucidated, explained and developed ideas of three Critiques.

The most famous book of Kant is "The Critique of Pure Reason". In this book, Kant formulates his ***theory of knowledge***.

"The Critique of Pure Reason" is very difficult for understanding. To make understanding of its ideas easier, Kant have written another book – "Prolegomena" where main ideas of his theory of knowledhe are explained in a more understandable style.

In his theory, Kant distinguishes *things-in-themselves* (nounema), as they are independently of our perception and thinking, and *phenomena* – how things necessary appear in structures of human perception and reason. Kant maintains that things-in-themselves, though they exist, are unknowable. As we have no access to them, except through our perceptions and reason, we can't know anything about them as they are independently of our perceptions and reason. So, our knowledge, including all science is knowledge not about things-in-themselves, but about phenomena. This phenomena, far from being independent of us, incorporate basic structures of human perception and reason. All most important general concepts, in which we structure our perception and understanding of the world, – such as space, time, causality, unity, plurality, chance, necessity etc., – belong not to the world itself; they are basic forms of human perception and reason. Space and time are two basic forms of perception; categories of causality, unity, plurality, chance, necessity etc. (Kant lists 12 such categories, grouped in 4 "triades") are basic forms of reason.

This theory was very influential; but there are serious criticisms of it. It is really not less skeptical then Hume's for it says that we really know nothing about the world as it really is; all we know is how it seems, appears (to us) to be.

It may be objected to Kant's theory that it is unable to explain satisfactorily why different people percieve spatial relationships between things ant temporal relationships between event in a consentaneous way. For it to be possible there must be *real* spatial relations between things and temporal relations between events in the world itself, not only in structures of perception. (Te only alternative way to explain consentaneousness of perceptions of spatial and temporal relations between different people is the theory of "preordained harmony" – that we are all "programmed" by God

into forming, independently of the world, structurally equivalent pictures of the world.)

Also, Kant's theory may be criticized that it does not really solves the problem it was intended to solve – Hume's problem. Really, Kant's "explaination" about causal relations is that they belong not to the world itself, but to human reason. But Hume has said principally the same: he said that we have no good reasons to believe that there are causal relations in the world; it is just our psychology which makes us to believe it.

One interesting aspect of Kant's theory of knowledge, explainat in last chapters of "The Critique of Pure Reason" is that human ability of knowledge, being limited to the world of phenomena, can't be properly applied to such important philosophic qestions as: If there is a freedom in human actions? If the world is finite or infinite in space and time? If the God, as omnipotent creator of the world exists? When human reason tries to answer these questions, it gets into unresolvable contradictions – *antinomies of speculative reason.* We really don't know and *can't know* answers to these questions. They are beyond the competence of human ability of knowledge. This, Kant states, sets principal limits to reason and leaves the place for (religious) faith.

But Kunt understands faith very differently from how it is usually understood by people and as it is preached in Churches. Usually, religious faith is believed and preached as a peculiar (higher) kind of knowledge which comes from supernatural source (God's Revelation). On Kant's view it is very different: faith is sort of belief-hope which originates from our moral capacity.

At the end of "The Critique of Pure Reason" Kant formulates three main questions of philosophy, which express this view:

> "The whole interest of reason, speculative as well as practical, is centred in the three following questions:
> 1. WHAT CAN I KNOW?
> 2. WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?
> 3. WHAT MAY I HOPE?"

"The Critique of Pure Reason" and "Prologemona" was Kant's attempt to answer the first question. Other main works of critical period, such as "Introduction to the Metaphysic of Morals", "Foundations of the Metaphysic of Morals", "The Critique of Practical Reason" and "Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone" are purported to answer the second and

the third questions. Religious faith, on Kant's view, concerns with the third question "What May I Hope?"

The second most important Kant's book – "The Critique of Practical Reason" – is, primarily, philosophy of morality ("WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?"). Besides, it gives the general outline of Kant's philosophy of religion (WHAT MAY I HOPE?).[5]

The main ideas of Kant's philosophy of morality are practical reason, moral autonomy and categorical imperative.

In Kant's philosophy, '***practical reason***' means the capacity of moral judgement. (Capacity of knowledge, discussed in "The Critique of Pure Reason" and "Prolegomena", Kant calls '***speculative reason***'.)

Moral autonomy means that morality – moral distinction between good and evil – is not derivative neither from psychology (human wishes, inclinations, emotions) or nor from social institutions (customs, laws, moral ideas of people etc.). True morality is somehow independent and above psychology or social institutions, for we may give moral evaluation both to psychological inclinations and social institutions. We may sensibly ask whether certain our moral inclinations, or certain institutions of our society, are morally good or evil. Such questions could have no sense if morality was derivative from moral inclinations or institutions of our society.

Neither can morality be derivative from God's will. If morality was derivative from God's will, this would mean that God could as well give, instead of commandments "Don't kill", "Don't steal" *etc.*, opposite commandments "Do kill", "Do steal" *etc.* – and this would make killing and stealing morally good actions.

In Kant's philosophy, autonomous morality is inherent in the very idea of moral law. Moral law, by the very meaning of the word "law", is to be universal. Hence, those and only those rules of behaviour which are universalizable – which we would wish to become rules of behavior of all humans – are true moral principles. They constitute our moral duty – ***categorical imperative***.

Adjective 'categorical' means here *absolute, unconditional, not relative to your aims*. 'Imperative' means sort of *rule, directive, what a person ought to do*. Kant distinguished two kinds of imperatives – hypothetical imperative and categorical imperative. *Hypothetical imperative* has a form "If you want to achieve the purpose *P*, you ought to do *A*." (It means just

[5] In more details, Kant's philosophy of religion is developed in the book "Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone"

that if you won't do *A*, you won't succeed to achieve the purpose *P*.) *Categorical imperative* has a form: "You ought to do *A*." It is unconditional demand. You ought to do it not as mean to some purpose, but as your moral duty, which is purpose-in-itself.

What is the content of our moral duty, categorical imperative? In *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* Kant give's two formulation. Bot don't give concrete rules (principles) of behaviour, but say how we are to distinguish true moral principles from false ones.

The first formulation of categorical imperative is based on the idea of universalizability, as described above:

> "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law."

The second formulation of categorical imperative says:

> "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only."

As we see, Kant's formulations of categorical imperative are not concrete rules, but guiding principles which leave it to a person to define (on their guidance) concrete rules of moral behaviour.

Nevertheless, Kant was famous for his extreme rigidity about concrete moral rules. For example, Kant contended that, as lying is forbidden by moral law, you are morally forbidden to lie even in situations such as: you know where some person is hiding from a killer, and the killer asks you where that person is hiding. This was the feature of Kant's moral philosophy for which many other philosophers have criticized him.

German philosopher of the end of XX century Vittorio Gosle suggests that this extreme rigidity of Kant's moral philosophy was due to the confusion of two different senses in which our *imperative* may be conditional: it may be conditional with respect to purpose (Kant's 'hypotetical imperative') or conditional with respect to situation. The second kind of conditional impersative Gosle proposes to call ***implicative imperative***. Implicative imperative has a form: "In situation *S* you ought to do *A*". Our moral duty may often be better conveyed by implicative imperatives then by categorical imperatives.

Or, possibly, we can get more flexible and adequate moral theory if we admit that particular laws (rules) which constitute the moral law may in some situations conflict with one onother; that these laws have different priorities, so that in sutuations of conflict laws of higher priority overrule

laws of lower priority. (So, the law prescribing to save human life may have a priority over the law forbidding lying.)

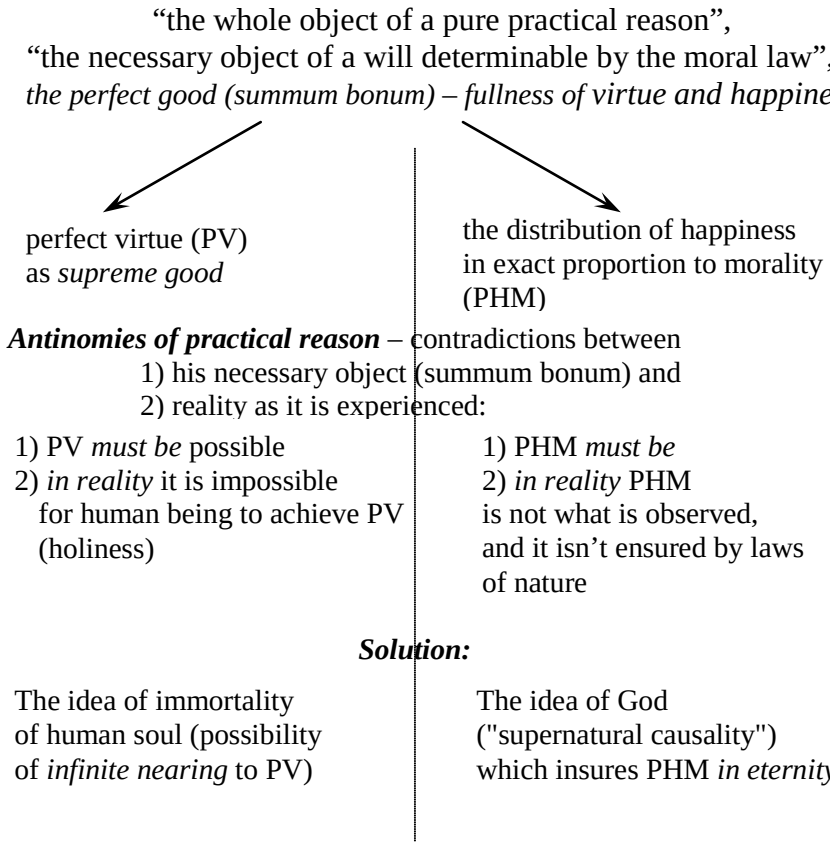
Yet one important idea of Kant's moral philosophy is the distinction between ***moral actions*** and ***legal actions***. This main idea behind this distinction is that morality of person's actions depends not only on their conformity with a moral law, but also on their motives.

A person may behave in conformity with a moral law, but this behaviour may still be not moral. It is so when a person behaves in conformity with a moral law, but is motivated by non-moral motives. For example, a person behaves in conformity with a moral law motivated by a fear of punishment or reproach and wish to get reward or praise. To take an example from religion: a person behaves in conformity with a moral law motivated by a fear of getting to hell and wish to get into a paradise. Such behaviour is not really moral, for if those non-moral motives were removed, that person would behave quite otherwise, contrary to a moral law. If a person don't kill because he is afraid to get into jail or hell, but would kill if he wasn't threatened with jail or hell, his behaviour is not truly moral. Kant proposes to call such behaviour – in conformity with a moral law, but motivated by non-moral motives – ***legal actions***.

Moral actions are those which not only conform to a moral law, but are morally motivated – i.e. motivated by respect to a moral law.

Kant's ***philosophy of religion*** is based on the idea that religious faith-hope is derivative from morality. It is not morality that derives from religion, but vice versa. On Kant's view, main ideas of religious faith – God and immortality of soul – express hopes which are necessarily suggested by practical reason, moral consciousness. Kant argued that man don't know and can't know if God exists and if human souls are immortal, but moral development necessarily suggests these beliefs-hopes.

First, practical reason demands-postulates existence of a freedom, free will, for without it no choice and no morality is possible. As about God and afterlife, Kan't theory can be illustrated by the scheme:



This scheme can be explained as follows.

On Kant's view, practical (≡moral) necessity of immortality of human soul and of God's existence follows from the idea of *moral purpose of human nature*.

The necessary eventual purpose of a will determinable by the moral law is *summum bonum* (Latin) – perfect, consummate good, which is *fullness of virtue and happiness*.

The main constituent of perfect good (*summum bonum*) is a *perfect virtue*. The second constituent is *the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality*. In the idea of perfect, consummate good, (summum bonum), as the necessary object of a will determinable by the moral law, virtue and happiness are united in such a way that virtue has a priority; it is *supreme good*; while happiness is subordinate – as necessary, from the viewpoint of practical reason (≡morality), complement: "to need

happiness, to deserve it, and yet at the same time not to participate in it, cannot be consistent with the perfect volition of a rational being …"[6]

The relationship between the perfect good (*summum bonum*), virtue and happiness may be expressed in the form of the system of equations:

$$\begin{cases} \textit{summum bonum} = \text{perfect virtue} + \\ \qquad\qquad \text{the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality} \\ \text{perfect virtue} \equiv \text{supreme good} \\ \text{happiness in proportion to perfect value} = \text{perfect happiness} \end{cases}$$

As *summum bonum* is "the necessary object of a will determinable by the moral law", it must be achievable. The faith in this achievability is a practical (≡moral) necessity. And as the main, supreme constituent of *summum bonum* is a perfect virtue, i.e. full, perfect accordance with the moral law, it must be achievable. But it is not achievable at any moment of time: "Now, the perfect accordance of the will with the moral law is holiness, a perfection of which no rational being of the sensible world is capable at any moment of his existence."[7]

So, we get into "antinomy of practical reason" – contradiction between the demand of practical reason (≡moral capacity) and possibilities of human beings as belonging to the sensible world. This antinomy can be solved only on assumption of immortality of human souls: though achievement of a perfect virtue (holiness) is impossible in any moment of human existence, it is in a sense possible in eternity – as never-ending process of nearing to a moral perfection: "Since, nevertheless, it {the perfect accordance of the will with the moral law} is required as practically necessary, it can only be found in a progress in infinitum towards that perfect accordance..."[8]

So, immortality of human soul is, according to Kant, "a postulate of pure practical reason", i.e. "a theoretical proposition, not demonstrable as such, but which is an inseparable result of an unconditional a priori practical law".[9]

Likewise, Kant argues for the practical (moral) necessity of the idea of God's existence.

According to Kand, the idea of God is the idea of Supreme Being that is a guarantor of eventual fulfillment, in eternity (not in time – not in some

[6] Kant I. The Critique of Practical Reason
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.

concrete, definite interval of time, such as human earthly life), of the second constituent of *summum bonum* – the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality. Existence of such Supreme Being (God) is a guarantee that human beings will eventually get exactly as much happiness as they deserve. In other words, the idea of God is the idea of unfailable guarantor of justice.

Fulfillment of such justice is necessarily presupposed by practical reasom in the idea of *summum bonum*. The idea of the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality is not confirmed by our experience, as beings in the sensinle world within certain temporal limits. Rather, our experience rund against this idea: within our experience we may observe quite a many cases when virtuous people weren't happy while vicious people seem not unhappy.

To solve this antinomy, "the existence of a cause of all nature, distinct from nature itself and containing the principle of this connection, namely, of the exact harmony of happiness with morality, is also postulated." The idea of God is the idea of "the supreme cause of nature, which must be presupposed as a condition of the *summum bonum*": "the *summum bonum* is possible in the world only on the supposition of a Supreme Being having a causality corresponding to moral character."[10]

So, faith in God as Supreme Being that is the cause of nature, – is practically (morally) demanded, since rational moral being needs to believe (hope) that, despite appearances to the contrary, the world is arranged in accordance with moral character – so that all cases of injustice (disproportion between happiness and virtue), observable on any limited time-interval, are temporary and will be eliminated (compensated) in eternity of existence og human soul; that virtue will eventually (whether in this life or in afterlife) get a reward it deserves, and vice will be punished as justice demands.

It is worth reminding that in Kant's philosophy faith is not supernatural knowledge (got through Revelation); instead, it is identified with hope. We may hope that our souls are immortal and that justice (personified in God) eventually rules the world. This hope fits our moral capacity and supports it. But we don't know if our souls are immortal and if God exists.

Kant argues that this lack of knowledge is itself necessary for morality; it makes human freedom and truly moral motivation possible. If we knew that God exists, then moral motivation would be suppressed by legal

[10] Ibid.

motivation (fear of punishment, hell, and wish to get reward, paradise). – See Appendix “Of the Wise Adaptation of Man's Cognitive Faculties to his Practical Destination”.

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It is interesting to note that, dsespites Kant’s own explanations about relationship between his philosophy and Christian doctrine (Kant stated that his philosophy is in harmony with Christian doctrine on its deeper, philosophical understanding), his explanation about two main religious ideas – of immortality of soul and of God – are much at odds with what the Bible and what Church teaches. Instead, they seem well in keeping with Hindu doctrine:

• Immortality of soul in its relation to *summum bonum*. In Christian doctrine there is a huge difference between earthly life and afterlife. Earthly life is preparation, afterlife is fulfillment. Fot those, who get into heaven (paradise) it is *summum bonum*. For those, who get into hell, it is eternal suffering without hope for deliverance. In Kant’s philosophy, like in Hindu doctrine (reincarnations), there is no principal difference between this earthly life and afterlife (next life or lives) – both are considered as possibilities for infinite moral improvement, nearing to moral perfection and *summum bonum*.

• The idea of God. In Kant’s philosophy, the role of God is completely reduced to supreme “causality corresponding to moral character”, as necessary condition and guarantee of justice (“the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality”) in eternity. If so, then God is devoid of the main characteristic of a person – freedom of will and action, capability of making decisions and acting this or that way. God as Being whose will-causality entirely accords the moral law, the aim of fulfillment of *summum bonum*, can’t, in principle, will and act in any other way than that which is the best for this purpose. If he could will or act otherwise, this would mean that his will-causality doesn’t entirely accords the moral law, the aim of fulfillment of *summum bonum*. But Kant’s philosophy excludes such possibility, for in it the idea of God follows from the ideas of moral law and *summum bonum*, and is entirely subordinate to these ideas. So Kant’s God has no choice, but to will and act always in the best – the most just and promoting *summum bonum* – way. He can’t by His wish punish some sinners while pardoning others, endow some people with grace while not endowing others, can’t be moved by feelings (even of love). All his acts must be entirely subordinate to fulfillment of justice (the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality) in eternity – awarding the virtue

and punishing the vice. If so, it is hardly consistent with Christian idea of God as a person. Rather, Kant's God is analogous to Hindu impersonal concept of *karma* – law of retribution, "causality corresponding to moral character" of impersonal nature.

Appendix

IMMANUEL KANT

The Critique of Practical Reason

Fragments

But if it is asked: "What, then, is really pure morality, by which as a touchstone we must test the moral significance of every action," then I must admit that it is only philosophers that can make the decision of this question doubtful, for to common sense it has been decided long ago, not indeed by abstract general formulae, but by habitual use, like the distinction between the right and left hand. We will then point out the criterion of pure virtue in an example first, and, imagining that it is set before a boy, of say ten years old, for his judgement, we will see whether he would necessarily judge so of himself without being guided by his teacher. Tell him the history of an honest man whom men want to persuade to join the calumniators of an innocent and powerless person (say Anne Boleyn, accused by Henry VIII of England). He is offered advantages, great gifts, or high rank; he rejects them. This will excite mere approbation and applause in the mind of the hearer. Now begins the threatening of loss. Amongst these traducers are his best friends, who now renounce his friendship; near kinsfolk, who threaten to disinherit him (he being without fortune); powerful persons, who can persecute and harass him in all places and circumstances; a prince, who threatens him with loss of freedom, yea, loss of life. Then to fill the measure of suffering, and that he may feel the pain that only the morally good heart can feel very deeply, let us conceive his family threatened with extreme distress and want, entreating him to yield; conceive himself, though upright, yet with feelings not hard or insensible either to compassion or to his own distress; conceive him, I say, at the moment when he wishes that he had never lived to see the day that exposed him to such unutterable anguish, yet remaining true to his uprightness of purpose, without wavering or even doubting; then will my youthful hearer be raised gradually from mere approval to admiration, from that to amazement, and finally to the greatest veneration, and a lively wish that be himself could be such a man (though certainly not in such circumstances). Yet virtue is here worth so

much only because it costs so much, not because it brings any profit. All the admiration, and even the endeavour to resemble this character, rest wholly on the purity of the moral principle, which can only be strikingly shown by removing from the springs of action everything that men may regard as part of happiness. Morality, then, must have the more power over the human heart the more purely it is exhibited. Whence it follows that, if the law of morality and the image of holiness and virtue are to exercise any influence at all on our souls, they can do so only so far as they are laid to heart in their purity as motives, unmixed with any view to prosperity, for it is in suffering that they display themselves most nobly. Now that whose removal strengthens the effect of a moving force must have been a hindrance, consequently every admixture of motives taken from our own happiness is a hindrance to the influence of the moral law on the heart. I affirm further that even in that admired action, if the motive from which it was done was a high regard for duty, then it is just this respect for the law that has the greatest influence on the mind of the spectator, not any pretension to a supposed inward greatness of mind or noble meritorious sentiments; consequently duty, not merit, must have not only the most definite, but, when it is represented in the true light of its inviolability, the most penetrating, influence on the mind.

…..……

IX. Of the Wise Adaptation of Man's Cognitive Faculties to his Practical Destination.

If human nature is destined to endeavour after the summum bonum, we must suppose also that the measure of its cognitive faculties, and particularly their relation to one another, is suitable to this end. Now the Critique of Pure Speculative Reason proves that this is incapable of solving satisfactorily the most weighty problems that are proposed to it, although it does not ignore the natural and important hints received from the same reason, nor the great steps that it can make to approach to this great goal that is set before it, which, however, it can never reach of itself, even with the help of the greatest knowledge of nature. Nature then seems here to have provided us only in a stepmotherly fashion with the faculty required for our end.

Suppose, now, that in this matter nature had conformed to our wish and had given us that capacity of discernment or that enlightenment which we would gladly possess, or which some imagine they actually possess, what would in all probability be the consequence? Unless our whole nature were at the same time changed, our inclinations, which always have the first

word, would first of all demand their own satisfaction, and, joined with rational reflection, the greatest possible and most lasting satisfaction, under the name of happiness; the moral law would afterwards speak, in order to keep them within their proper bounds, and even to subject them all to a higher end, which has no regard to inclination. But instead of the conflict that the moral disposition has now to carry on with the inclinations, in which, though after some defeats, moral strength of mind may be gradually acquired, God and eternity with their awful majesty would stand unceasingly before our eyes (for what we can prove perfectly is to us as certain as that of which we are assured by the sight of our eyes). Transgression of the law, would, no doubt, be avoided; what is commanded would be done; but the mental disposition, from which actions ought to proceed, cannot be infused by any command, and in this case the spur of action is ever active and external, so that reason has no need to exert itself in order to gather strength to resist the inclinations by a lively representation of the dignity of the law: hence most of the actions that conformed to the law would be done from fear, a few only from hope, and none at all from duty, and the moral worth of actions, on which alone in the eyes of supreme wisdom the worth of the person and even that of the world depends, would cease to exist. As long as the nature of man remains what it is, his conduct would thus be changed into mere mechanism, in which, as in a puppet-show, everything would gesticulate well, but there would be no life in the figures. Now, when it is quite otherwise with us, when with all the effort of our reason we have only a very obscure and doubtful view into the future, when the Governor of the world allows us only to conjecture his existence and his majesty, not to behold them or prove them clearly; and on the other hand, the moral law within us, without promising or threatening anything with certainty, demands of us disinterested respect; and only when this respect has become active and dominant, does it allow us by means of it a prospect into the world of the supersensible, and then only with weak glances: all this being so, there is room for true moral disposition, immediately devoted to the law, and a rational creature can become worthy of sharing in the summum bonum that corresponds to the worth of his person and not merely to his actions. Thus what the study of nature and of man teaches us sufficiently elsewhere may well be true here also; that the unsearchable wisdom by which we exist is not less worthy of admiration in what it has denied than in what it has granted.

IMMANUEL KANT

An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment?"

Konigsberg in Prussia, 30th September, 1784.

Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: Sapere aude! Have courage to use your own understanding!

Laziness and cowardice are the reasons why such a large proportion of men, even when nature has long emancipated them from alien guidance (naturaliter maiorennes), nevertheless gladly remain immature for life. For the same reasons, it is all too easy for others to set themselves up as their guardians. It is so convenient to be immature! If I have a book to have understanding in place of me, a spiritual adviser to have a conscience for me, a doctor to judge my diet for me, and so on, I need not make any efforts at all. I need not think, so long as I can pay; others will soon enough take the tiresome job over for me. The guardians who have kindly taken upon themselves the work of supervision will soon see to it that by far the largest part of mankind (including the entire fair sex) should consider the step forward to maturity not only as difficult but also as highly dangerous. Having first infatuated their domesticated animals, and carefully prevented the docile creatures from daring to take a single step without the leading-strings to which they are tied, they next show them the danger which threatens them if they try to walk unaided. Now this danger is not in fact so very great, for they would certainly learn to walk eventually after a few falls. But an example of this kind is intimidating, and usually frightens them off from further attempts.

Thus it is difficult for each separate individual to work his way out of the immaturity which has become almost second nature to him. He has even grown fond of it and is really incapable for the time being of using his own understanding, because he was never allowed to make the attempt. Dogmas and formulas, those mechanical instruments for rational use (or rather misuse) of his natural endowments, are the ball and chain of his permanent immaturity. And if anyone did throw them off, he would still be uncertain about jumping over even the narrowest of trenches, for he would be unaccustomed to free movement of this kind. Thus only a few, by cultivating their own minds, have succeeded in freeing themselves from immaturity and in continuing boldly on their way.

There is more chance of an entire public enlightening itself. This is indeed almost inevitable, if only the public concerned is left in freedom. For there will always be a few who think for themselves, even among those appointed as guardians of the common mass. Such guardians, once they have themselves thrown off the yoke of immaturity, will disseminate the spirit of rational respect for personal value and for the duty of all men to think for themselves. The remarkable thing about this is that if the public, which was previously put under this yoke by the guardians, is suitably stirred up by some of the latter who are incapable of enlightenment, it may subsequently compel the guardians themselves to remain under the yoke. For it is very harmful to propagate prejudices, because they finally avenge themselves on the very people who first encouraged them (or whose predecessors did so). Thus a public can only achieve enlightenment slowly. A revolution may well put an end to autocratic despotism and to rapacious or power-seeking oppression, but it will never produce a true reform in ways of thinking. Instead, new prejudices, like the ones they replaced, will serve as a leash to control the great unthinking mass.

For enlightenment of this kind, all that is needed is freedom. And the freedom in question is the most innocuous form of all freedom to make public use of one's reason in all matters. But I hear on all sides the cry: Don't argue! The officer says: Don't argue, get on parade! The tax-official: Don't argue, pay! The clergyman: Don't argue, believe! (Only one ruler in the world says: Argue as much as you like and about whatever you like, but obey!). All this means restrictions on freedom everywhere. But which sort of restriction prevents enlightenment, and which, instead of hindering it, can actually promote it? I reply: The public use of man's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among men; the private use of reason may quite often be very narrowly restricted, however, without undue hindrance to the progress of enlightenment. But by the public use of one's own reason I mean that use which anyone may make of it as a man of learning addressing the entire reading public. What I term the private use of reason is that which a person may make of it in a particular civil post or office with which he is entrusted.

Now in some affairs which affect the interests of the commonwealth, we require a certain mechanism whereby some members of the commonwealth must behave purely passively, so that they may, by an artificial common agreement, be employed by the government for public ends (or at least deterred from vitiating them). It is, of course, impermissible to argue in such cases; obedience is imperative. But in so far as this or that individual who acts as part of the machine also considers himself as a member of a

complete commonwealth or even of cosmopolitan society, and thence as a man of learning who may through his writings address a public in the truest sense of the word, he may 'indeed argue without harming the affairs in which he is employed for some of the time in a passive capacity. Thus it would be very harmful if an officer receiving an order from his superiors were to quibble openly, while on duty, about the appropriateness or usefulness of the order in question. He must simply obey. But he cannot reasonably be banned from making observations as a man of learning on the errors in the military service, and from submitting these to his public for judgement. The citizen cannot refuse to pay the taxes imposed upon him; presumptuous criticisms of such taxes, where someone is called upon to pay them, may be punished as an outrage which could lead to general insubordination. Nonetheless, the same citizen does not contravene his civil obligations if, as a learned individual, he publicly voices his thoughts on the impropriety or even injustice of such fiscal measures. In the same way, a clergyman is bound to instruct his pupils and his congregation in accordance with the doctrines of the church he serves, for he was employed by it on that condition. But as a scholar, he is completely free as well as obliged to impart to the public all his carefully considered, well-intentioned thoughts on the mistaken aspects of those doctrines, and to offer suggestions for a better arrangement of religious and ecclesiastical affairs. And there is nothing in this which need trouble the conscience. For what he teaches in pursuit of his duties as an active servant of the church is presented by him as something which he is not empowered to teach at his own discretion, but which he is employed to expound in a prescribed manner and in someone else's name. He will say: Our church teaches this or that, and these are the arguments it uses. He then extracts as much practical value as possible for his congregation from precepts to which he would not himself subscribe with full conviction, but which he can nevertheless undertake to expound, since it is not in fact wholly impossible that they may contain truth. At all events, nothing opposed to the essence of religion is present in such doctrines. For if the clergyman thought he could find anything of this sort in them, he would not be able to carry out his official duties in good conscience, and would have to resign. Thus the use which someone employed as a teacher makes of his reason in the presence of his congregation is purely private, since a congregation, however large it is, is never any more than a domestic gathering. In view of this, he is not and cannot be free as a priest, sin¦ he is acting on a commission imposed from outside. Conversely, as a scholar addressing the real public (i.e. the world at large) through his writings, the clergyman making public use of his reason

enjoys unlimited freedom to use his own reason and to speak in his own person. For to maintain that the guardians of the people in spiritual matters should themselves be immature, is an absurdity which amounts to making absurdities permanent.

But should not a society of clergymen, for example an ecclesiastical synod or a venerable presbytery (as the Dutch call it), be entitled to commit itself by oath to a certain unalterable set of doctrines, in order to secure for all time a constant guardianship over each of its members, and through them over the people? I reply that this is quite impossible. A contract of this kind, concluded with a view to preventing all further enlightenment of mankind for ever, is absolutely null and void, even if it is ratified by the supreme power, by Imperial Diets and the most solemn peace treaties. One age cannot enter into an alliance on oath to put the next age in a position where it would be impossible for it to extend and correct its knowledge, particularly on such important matters, or to make any progress whatsoever in enlightenment. This would be a crime against human nature, whose original destiny lies precisely in such progress. Later generations are thus perfectly entitled to dismiss these agreements as unauthorised and criminal. To test whether any particular measure can be agreed upon as a law for a people, we need only ask whether a people could well impose such a law upon itself. This might well be possible for a specified short period as a means of introducing a certain order, pending, as it were, a better solution. This would also mean that each citizen, particularly the clergyman, would be given a free hand as a scholar to comment publicly, i.e. in his writings, on the inadequacies of current institutions. Meanwhile, the newly established order would continue to exist, until public insight into the nature of such matters had progressed and proved itself to the point where, by general consent (if not unanimously), a proposal could be submitted to the crown. This would seek to protect the congregations who had, for instance, agreed to alter their religious establishment in accordance with their own notions of what higher insight is, but it would not try to obstruct those who wanted to let things remain as before. But it is absolutely impermissible to agree, even for a single lifetime, to a permanent religious constitution which no-one might publicly question. For this would virtually nullify a phase in man's upward progress, thus making it fruitless and even detrimental to subsequent generations. A man may for his own person, and even then only for a limited period, postpone enlightening himself in matters he ought to know about. But to renounce such enlightenment completely, whether for his own person or even more so for later generations, means violating and trampling underfoot the sacred rights of mankind. But something which a

people may not even impose upon itself can still less be imposed upon it by a monarch; for his legislative authority depends precisely upon his uniting the collective will of the people in his own. So long as he sees to it that all true or imagined improvements are compatible with the civil order, he can otherwise leave his subjects to do whatever they find necessary for their salvation, which is none of his business. But it is his business to stop anyone forcibly hindering others from working as best they can to define and promote their salvation. It indeed detracts from his majesty if he interferes in these affairs by subjecting the writings in which his subjects attempt to clarify their religious ideas to governmental supervision. This applies if he does so acting upon his own exalted opinions, in which case he exposes himself to the reproach: Caesar non est supra Grammaticos, but much more so if he demeans his high authority so far as to support the spiritual despotism of a few tyrants within his state against the rest of his subjects.

If it is now asked whether we at present live in an enlightened age, the answer is: No, but we do live in an age of enlightenment. As things are at present, we still have a long way to go before men as a whole can be in a position (or can ever be put into a position) of using their own understanding confidently and well in religious matters, without outside guidance. But we do have distinct indications that the way is now being cleared for them to work freely in this direction, and that the obstacles to universal enlightenment, to man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity, are gradually becoming fewer. In this respect our age is the age of enlightenment, the century of Frederick.

A prince who does not regard it as beneath him to say that he considers it his duty, in religious matters, not to prescribe anything to his people, but to allow them complete freedom, a prince who thus even declines to accept the presumptuous title of tolerant, is himself enlightened. He deserves to be praised by a grateful present and posterity as the man who first liberated mankind from immaturity (as far as government is concerned), and who left all men free to use their own reason in all matters of conscience. Under his rule, ecclesiastical dignitaries, notwithstanding their official duties, may in their capacity as scholars freely and publicly submit to the judgement of the world their verdicts and opinions, even if these deviate here and there from orthodox doctrine. This applies even more to all others who are not restricted by any official duties. This spirit of freedom is also spreading abroad, even where it has to struggle with outward obstacles imposed by governments which misunderstand their own function. For such governments an now witness a shining example of how freedom may exist

without in the least jeopardising public concord and the unity of the commonwealth. Men will of their own accord gradually work their way out of barbarism so long as artificial measures are not deliberately adopted to keep them in it.

I have portrayed matters of religion as the focal point of enlightenment, i.e. of man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. This is firstly because our rulers have no interest in assuming the role of guardians over their subjects so fir as the arts and sciences are concerned, and secondly, because religious immaturity is the most pernicious and dishonourable variety of all. But the attitude of mind of a head of state who favours freedom in the arts and sciences extends even further, for he realises that there is no danger even to his legislation if he allows his subjects to make public use of their own reason and to put before the public their thoughts on better ways of drawing up laws, even if this entails forthright criticism of the current legislation. We have before us a brilliant example of this kind, in which no monarch has yet surpassed the one to whom we now pay tribute.

But only a ruler who is himself enlightened and has no far of phantoms, yet who likewise has at hand a well-disciplined and numerous army to guarantee public security, may say what no republic would dare to say: Argue as much as you like and about whatever you like, but obey! This reveals to us a strange and unexpected pattern in human affairs (such as we shall always find if we consider them in the widest sense, in which nearly everything is paradoxical). A high degree of civil freedom seems advantageous to a people's intellectual freedom, yet it also sets up insuperable barriers to it. Conversely, a lesser degree of civil freedom gives intellectual freedom enough room to expand to its fullest extent. Thus once the germ on which nature has lavished most care, - man's inclination and vocation to think freely, - has developed within this hard shell, it gradually reacts upon the mentality of the people, who thus gradually become increasingly able to act freely Eventually, it even influences the principles of governments, which find that they can themselves profit by treating man, who is more than a machine, in a manner appropriate to his dignity.

2. Philosophy of Fichte, Shelling and Hegel

Kant’s philosophy has aquired very high reputation for its deepness. Unfortunately this deepness was associated with a style very difficult for understanding, which was especially characteristic of Kant’s most renowned book “The Critique of Pure Reason”. This connection and Kant’s success encouraged other philosophers to write in a style near-to-impossible for understanding – and this was readily greeted by public as indication of a

deepness of thought according with a maxim "Incomprehensible, hence very deep and great". Such a style was characteristic for most famous German philosophers-idealists in next half-century after Kant – Fichte, Shelling and Hegel.

Iogann Gotlib Fichte (1762-1814) has began his philosophical career as admirer and extremely successful imitator if Kant. He has written a book *The Critique of All Revelation* and asked Kant for promotion. Kant has recommended it to some publisher and it was published. It so happened (accidentally) that the book was published without naming its author. As its title bas beginning with "The Critique …" and its style was very much like Kant's, public accepted and greeted it as a new masterpiece of Kant. After Kant has informed who was the real author, Fichte became famous and got a high office of professor in Jena University.

Later, Fichte developed his philosophy in the direction which made Kant to publish "Public Explanation Regarding Fichte" to dissociate from him. In "Explanations" Kant characterized Fichte's philosophical system as "totally untenable" and consisting of "barren subtleties". As for Fichte's declarations that his philosophy is developing Kant's, Kant wrote: "May God protect us from our friends. From our enemies, we can try to protect ourselves… For there may be also … fraudulent and perfidious friends who are scheming for our ruin, although they speak the language of benevolence; one cannot be sufficiently cautious in order to avoid the traps they set for us."[11]

Fichte have abandoned Kant's division into the reality of "things-in-itself" and phenomena, and formulated, instead, his own philosophical system of subjective idealism. According to Fichte, there is no reality beyond the consciousness of the subject. The only reality is the subject of cognition and action – "pure Me". This "pure Me" is by its essence active entity which by its own actions – like Christian God – creates the world out of nothing or out of Himself. This creation is three-phased: 1) "Me" creates ('posits') self; 2) "Me" creates ('contraposits' to self) its antothesis "not-Me" (what we perceive as the world); 3) "Me" and "not-Me" constitute opposition inside "Me" and reciprocally limit one another. (This three phases correspond to Kant's triade of categories of quality: affirmation-negation-limitation.)

Fichte contended that his theory proves absolute freedom: as all reality is activity of "Me", so there is nothing to limit its freedom. Fichte replaces

[11] Цит. за: [П2, 63, 351]

intellectually-cognitive attitude toward reality (which were prevalent in past philosophy) by voluntarism – extollation of active will.

Though, it is quite unclear what this Fichthe's "Me" is supposed to be. Can it be identified with concrete human self (Fichte himself)? If so, Fichte's philosophy is sollipsism: there is only Fichte-Me, and all the world is just the world of his imaginations. Or is "Me" some universal subject of will and consciousness – sort of God, such that all the world and all our selves do exist only as phenomena of His consciousness (as objects of His imagination)? On this interpretation, Fichte's philosophy turns into objective idealism of the sort more consistently developed by Shelling and Hegel.

In politics, Fichte has become influential ideologist of the earlier German nationalism, imbuing it with voluntarism, cult of active will, struggle and self-affirmation of his philosophy. In his "patriotic" speeches, Fichte identified "Me" with nation, national spirit, national will.

Next renowned German philosopher-idealist, ***Shelling*** (1775-1854), influenced by Fichte's doctrine, have transformed it into objective idealism ny replacing Fiche's "Me" with universal spiritual entity − Absolute, One, Reason.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) – was far the most influential German philosopher-idealist, author of the huge philosophical system in a great many volumes of books.

Hegel postulates that reality is the Absolute Spirit, Idea, Reason, which, in the process of thinking itself, deploys itself

- first (thesis) into the system of categories, logics,
- then (antithesis) into nature as its own else-being,
- and finally finds a synthesis in human history and consciousness (which is Absolute Spirit's consciousness of itself).

This is, principally, modification of Fichte's scheme where "Me" is replaced with Absolute Spirit.

There are many other subdivisions in Hegel's scheme of self-unrolling (logically and historically) reality of Absolute Spirit, and they all follow the same pattern: thesis-antithesis-synthesis.

So, self-deployment of Spirit begins in the sphere of pure logics from 'nothing' – which is empty being, having no content. Then, as its antithesis 'something' is posited; then, as their synthesis – 'coming into being', then its antithesis – 'disappearance', then, as their syntesis – 'the balance of coming into being and disappearance' and so on.

Hegel's phylosophy of spiritis is divided, on the same thesis-antithesys-synthesis pattern, into three parts, each of which is divided into three further parts:

- the doctrine of subjective spirit (anthropology, phenomenology, psychology),
- the doctrine of objective spirit (right, morality, morals),
- the doctrine of absolute spirit (art, religion, philosophy).

Likewise, Hegel's philosophy of history distinquishes three main periods: 1) of ancient East, 2) of ancient Rome and 3) German.

According to Hegel, all reality and its development is unity (synthesis) of opposites (thesis and antithesis). This doctrine off omnipresent unity of opposites is called ***dialectics***.[12] Hegel's philosophy is a system of dialectical absolute idealism.

Hegel taught that the whole reality, human history in particular, is nothing but self-deployment of Absolute Spirit, Idea, Reason. Hence, the famous Hegel's dictum: "***All real is reasonable, all reasonable is real***". Hence, whatever happens in the history is reasonable, it had to happen as it did according with the purpose of Absolute Reason. Historical events often bring great sufferings to (millions of) living human beings; so they may, on this account, seem unreasonable. But they are reasonable from the highest viewpoint of Absolute Reason and of philosophers who are able to understand it. This higher reason and purpose isn't concerned with concrete living human beings with their sufferings; it is concerned with self-deployment of the Absolute (Spirit, Idea, Reason) and its earthly embodiment – the state. Hegel states that "***the state is the pace of God in history***", "***real God***".

Hegel states also that political activity of historical significance is beyond moral appraisal:

> "…the History of the World occupies a higher ground than that morality which is personal in character—the conscience of individuals... What the absolute aim of Spirit requires and accomplishes, what Providence does, transcends … the imputation of good and bad motives ... Consequently it is only formal rectitude, deserted by the living Spirit and by God, which those who take their stand upon ancient right and

[12] In western philosophy, the first full-fledged dialectical doctrine, in this sense, was the doctrine of Heraclitus. The word "dialectics" is used also in another, very different philosophic meaning: search for truth in the process of dialogue, rational discussion, − dialectics of Socrates. It is important to distinguish these two meanings of the word "dialectics".

> order maintain. The deeds of Great Men, of the Personalities of World History, .. must not be brought into collision with irrelevant moral claims. The Litany of private virtues, of modesty, humility, philanthropy, and forbearance, must not be raised against them. The History of the World can, in principle, entirely ignore the circle within which morality .. lies."[13]

If translated into simple language, this means that if some political leader (king, or dictator or chief of revolutionary party) has organized slaughtering millions of people for some "historical" purpose and has succeeded to achieve this purpose, he is not bloody murderer, but a great man, for his actions are approved by the History of the World.

Hegel's discussion of international wars and conquests is both hypocritical and cinical. On the one hand, he states that encroachment upon freedom of nation is "a crime against Spirit". But, on the other hand, Hegel writes that (as the history is guided by Absolute Reason-Spirit) such an encroachment can't possibly be successful. If the conquest is successful, it is not encroachment on the freedom of the nation conquested. It is just a historical process in which older nations which have completed their historical task give way to younger nations which are entering the scene of the World History. In simple language, this means that the winner is always right, just because he is a winner (given the victory by Absolute Reason-Spirit guiding the History of the World).

Similarly, Hegel explains that true freedom is nothing but right to obey the law… True freedom is not the freedom of individual from interference; true freedom is … the state.

These features if Hegel's philosophy – deification of the state, seeing the purpose of indivitual lives in serving this deity, setting history above morality, absolvation of "great men" from conciderations of morality, excuse of conquest of "nations left by Spirit", distortion of the concept of freedom – were picked up by totalitarian movements and political regimes of XIX-XX centuries, bith right (fascist) and left (marxist). That is why hegel was held in especially high esteem by ideologusts ot these movements and political regimes.

3. Philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach

Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) studied Hegel and much admired his philosophy; but at the same time he disagreed with much of it and criticized

[13] Hegel G.W.F. Philosophy of History.

it. Feuerbach was materialist, though he preferred not to call his philosophy ‘materialism’ because this name was much discredited bu vulgar materialists. He emphasised that philosophy has to make its center a human being as corporal-sensual being. Feuerbach’s style is very unlike Hegel’s; it is much more understandable and alive.

The spiritual situation to which Feuerbach responded was general secularisation of intellectual, political, social life, decline of religion. Like many his contemporaries, Feuerbach was sure that Christianity is becomes obsolete, dies out.

But what worldview is to replace it?

At first, Feuerbach sought for answers to modern spiritual problems in Hegel’s philosophy which replaced Christian God with Absolute Spirit (Reason, Idea) which deploys itself in logics, nature and human history. But later he have become critical of it and developed his own – very different – approach.

One important concept which Feuerbach takes out from Hegel is “alienation”. In Hegel’s philosophy Absolute Spirit, after deployment in the sphere of pure logics, “alienates” itself into nature – creates from itself the nature, material world which is his own “else-being”; finally, it returns to itself through self-consciousness aquired by humans in the process of history. Feuerbach turned over this concept. He interpreted religion, as well as idealistic philosophy, as ***alienation of humans from their own generic essense***. In religion, humans transfers their best qualities to imaginary being – God. In idealistic philosophy reality of human reason is replaced with the abstract idealised fiction of nobody’s Absolute Reason.

In his main book *Essence of Christianity* Feuerbach expounds in details the idea that essence of christianity is alienated generic essence of humans transferred to imaginary being – God. Feurbach explains how the most important human wants, proclivites, feelings, qualities, life surcumstances gets reflected and transformed into the notion of God. Such transfer, alienation has ambivalent effects: on the one hand, it makes religion to be expression of the best in humans – reason, will, love *etc.*; but these properties get distorted in religion.

The most glaring example is the idea of love in Christianity. On the one hand, Christianity, more then any other religion, exalts the idea of love as the highest, sacred, divine quality. But on the other hand, Christianity distorts the idea of love: love in Christianity loses its essential property of universality; instead, it becomes “partizan”, conditional upon membership in Christian religioun. It divides humans into Christians, who are proper

object of love, and "infidels" who are objects of love only in so far as they may become Christians. Hence, religious fanaticism, religious wars, tortures and burning humans alive by Inquisition and other well known atrocities in the history of religion which calls itself "the religion of love":

> "Faith gives man a peculiar sense of his own dignity and importance. The believer finds himself distinguished above other men, exalted above the natural man; he knows himself to be a person of distinction. in the possession of peculiar privileges; believers are aristocrats, unbelievers plebeians…
>
> The believer has God for him, the unbeliever, against him; – it is only as a possible believer that the unbeliever has God not against Him; – and therein precisely lies the ground of the requirement that he should leave the ranks of unbelief. But that which has God against it is worthless, rejected, reprobate; for that which has God against it is itself against God. To believe, is synonymous with goodness; not to believe, with wickedness. Faith, narrow and prejudiced refers all unbelief to the moral disposition. In its view the unbeliever is an enemy to Christ out of obduracy, out of wickedness.
>
> The believer is blessed, well-pleasing to God, a partaker of everlasting, felicity; the unbeliever is accursed, rejected of God and abjured by men: for what God rejects man must not receive, must not indulge; – that would be a criticism of the divine judgment… To love the man who does not believe in Christ, is a sin against Christ, is to love the enemy of Christ. That which God, which Christ does not love, man must not love; his love would be a contradiction of the divine will, consequently a sin. God, it is true, loves all men; but only when and because they are Christians, or at least may be and desire to be such.
>
> To be a Christian is to be beloved by God; not to be a Christian is to be hated by God, an object of the divine anger. The Christian must therefore love only Christians – others only as possible Christians; he must only love what faith hallows and blesses… Love to man as man is only natural love. Christian love is supernatural, glorified, sanctified love; therefore it loves only what is Christian. The maxim, "Love your enemies," has reference only to personal enemies, not to public enemies, the enemies of God, the enemies of faith, unbelievers. He who loves the men whom Christ denies, does not believe Christ, denies his Lord and God. Faith abolishes the natural ties of humanity; to universal, natural unity, it substitutes a particular unity…
>
> To faith, the man is merged in the believer; to it, the essential difference between man and the brute rests only on religious belief. Faith alone comprehends in itself all virtues which can make man pleasing to God; and

God is the absolute measure, his pleasure the highest law the believer is thus alone the legitimate, normal man, man as he ought to be, man as he is recognised by God…

Thus faith is essentially a spirit of partisanship. He who is not for Christ is against Him… Faith knows only friends or enemies, it understands no neutrality; it is preoccupied only with itself. Faith is essentially intolerant; essentially, because with faith is always associated the illusion that its cause is the cause of God, its honour his honour…

Faith necessarily passes into hatred, hatred into persecution, where the power of faith meets with no contradiction, where it does not find itself in collision with a power foreign to faith, the power of love, of humanity, of the sense of justice…

…in Christianity love is tainted by faith, it is not free, it is not apprehended truly. A love which is limited by faith is an untrue love…

Love knows no law but itself; it is divine through itself; it needs not the sanction of faith; it is its own basis. The love which is bound by faith is a narrow-hearted, false love, contradicting the idea of love, i.e., self-contradictory, – a love which has only a semblance of holiness, for it hides in itself the hatred that belongs to faith; it is only benevolent so long as faith is not injured…

Love is in itself unbelieving, faith unloving. And love is unbelieving because it knows nothing more divine than itself, because it believes only in itself as absolute truth.

Christian love is already signalised as a particular, limited love, by the very epithet, Christian. But love is in its nature universal. So long as Christian love does not renounce its qualification of Christian, does not make love, simply, its highest law, so long is it a love which is injurous to the sense of truth…, − so long it is a love which by its particularity is in contradiction with the nature of love, an abnormal, loveless love… True love is sufficient to itself; it needs no special title, no authority …

To found this love on the name of a person, is only possible by the association of supersticious ideas... For with superstitions is always associated particularism, and with particularism, fanaticism… The love of Christ was itself … by virtue of our common nature. A love which is based on his person is a particular; exclusive love, which extends only so far as the acknowledgment of this person extends, a love which does not rest on the proper ground of love. Are we to love each other because Christ loved us? Such love would be an affected, imitative love. Can we trully love each other only if we love Christ? Is Christ the cause of love? Is he not rather the apostle of love?.. What ennobled Christ was love; whatever qualities he had, he held in fealty to love; he was not the proprietor of love... The idea of love is an independent idea; I don't first deduce it from the life of Christ; on the

contrary, I revere that life only because I find it accordant with the law, the idea of love...

All love founded on a special historical phenomenon contradicts, as has been said, the nature of love, which endures no limits, which triumphs over all particularity. Man is to be loved for man's sake. Man is an object of love because he is an end in himself, because he is a rational and loving being… Love should be immediate, undetermined by anything else than its object; – nay, only as such is it love… In love, in reason, the need of an intermediate person disappears… [Active love is and must of course always be particular and limited, i.e., directed to one's neighbour. But it is yet in its nature universal, since it loves man for man's sake, in the name of the race. Christian love, on the contrary, is in its nature exclusive.**]"**[14]

Feuerbach supports this view of Christian love by the multitude of quotations taken from the Bible and the most authoritative Catholic and protestant theologists, such as St. Augustinus, St. Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Kalvin and others.

Feuerbach believed that decline of Christianity will make room for a new philosophical worldview, which will mean returning of humans to their own essence. Its dictum is to be: ***"For Human Being Human Being is God."***

[14] Feuerbach L. Essence of Christianity.

§6. NONCLASSIC PHILOSOPHY

Plan

1. A. Shopenhauer
2. F Nietzche and Voluntarism
3. Existentionalism: S. Kierkegaard, A. Camus, J-P. Sartre
4. Psychoanalysis: Sigmund Freud

Non-classical philosophy was formed not only as the opposition to classical philosophy, but as the constructive reflection on it, that is, an attempt to solve the problems posed by the previous epoch. In the end, non-classical philosophy became not so much an overcoming of classical thinking traditions, as continuation of it.

Non-classical philosophy does not reject these principles, but puts the same question in another perspective. This aspiration for re-comprehension of history from un-scientific positions has been criticized by classical philosophers for its destruction of scientific values. Knowledge is not necessarily rational or, put more specifically, scientific; knowledge and science are not identical terms. Therefore, as non-classical philosophy postulates a position outside the scientific sphere, all arguments coming from critics working within the scientific position, who thereby deprecate anti-scientific values from that point of view, are off the point.

- **Irrationality -** man has been guided by ***senses; will; subconsciousness*** not by reason; pure reason lost its primary determinative position of human life**.** Irrational can't be forecasted, life can be percepted by **intuition.**
- At the first place – in-depth study of one mans` life. Notion "**life**" and "**existence**" more primary than "being" with its classical categories "subject"-"object", "matter"-"consciousness". Life is a "living stream" and it can't be formulated by categories of classical philosophy.
- Non-classical philosophy, being more concrete in its approach, does not aspire to answer the global questions which look for a unique answer.
- Philosophers of the 20th century adopt different forms of writing: fiction, poetry, and literary criticism. Albert Camus, for instance, expressed such an idea, that the philosopher has to write novels.
- The main principle of non-classical reading: the text is formed by the reader rather than by the author. There are no limits or completion to the text, because it is created by the process of reading, which is as endless as the present itself.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) was, as a philosopher, a pessimist; he was a follower of Kant's Idealist school. He was the first Western philosopher to have access to translations of philosophical material from India, both Vedic and Buddhist, by which he was profoundly affected, to the great interest of many, and, his concerns were with the dilemmas and tragedies, in a religious or existential sense, of real life, not just with abstract philosophical problems. As Jung said: *"He was the first to speak of the suffering of the world, which visibly and glaringly surrounds us, and of confusion, passion, evil -- all those things which the [other philosophers] hardly seemed to notice and always tried to resolve into all-embracing harmony and comprehensiblility. Here at last was a philosopher who had the courage to see that all was not for the best in the fundaments of the universe."* [Memories, Dreams, Reflections, Vintage Books, 1961, p. 69]

To Schopenhauer life was a painful process, relief for which, might be achieved through art or through denial. *"The good man will practice complete chastity, voluntary poverty, fasting, and self-torture."* It was Schopenhauer's view that through the contemplation of art, one *"might lose contact with the turbulent stream of detailed existence around us"*; and that permanent relief came through "*the denial of the will to live, by the eradication of our desires, of our instincts, by the renunciation of all we consider worth while in practical life."* Presumably any little bits of happiness we might snatch would only make us that more miserable, such real and full happiness was not possible, "a Utopian Ideal which we must not entertain even in our dreams." It is not difficult to understand that this "ascetic mysticism" of Schopenhauer's is one that appeals to the starving artist.

Schopenhauer was "a lonely and unbefriended man, who shared his bachelor's existence with a poodle. ... [He was of the view that the world was simply an idea in his head] *a mere phantasmagoria of my brain, that therefore in itself is nothing.*"

Philosophers upon whom Schopenhauer did have a strong effect, like Nietzsche and even Wittgenstein, nevertheless could not put him to good use since they did not accept his moral, aesthetic, and religious realism. Schopenhauer is all but unique in intellectual history for being both an atheist and sympathetic to Christianity. Schopenhauer's system, indeed, will not make any sense except in the context of Kant's metaphysics. For the purposes of the Proceedings of the Friesian School, Schopenhauer may be said to have made three great contributions to the Kantian tradition, which supplement the contemporary contributions of Fries:

He retained Kant's notion of the *thing-in-itself* but recognized that it could not exist as a separate order of "real" objects over and above the phenomenal objects of experience. Hence Schopenhauer's careful use of the singular rather than the plural when referring to the "thing-in-itself." Kant left his "Copernican Revolution" incomplete by describing the ordinary objects of experience as phenomena while leaving the impression that in an absolute sense they were only subjective, with things-in-themselves as the "real" objects. Schopenhauer favorably compares Kant to Berkeley, even though both Kant and Schopenhauer reject a true "subjective idealism" in which objects exist in no way apart from consciousness. Schopenhauer's point was that, like Berkeley, phenomena are all there are when it comes to objects as objects. What stands over and above objects is something else. For Berkeley that was only God. For Schopenhauer it was the *Will as thing-in-itself*.

Schopenhauer abolished Kant's machinery of synthesis through the pure concepts of the understanding, substituting his fourfold "Principle of Sufficient Reason." This misses much of the point of Kant's argument in the First Edition Transcendental Deduction and would not count as an advance on Kant if it did not also abolish the mistaken idea in Kant that Reason, as he conceived it, could produce out of the mere formalism of logic a substantive content to morality, aesthetics, etc. Schopenhauer does not have a very good substitute when it comes to morality (as do Fries and Nelson), but he does in aesthetics, which leads to,

Schopenhauer's strong sense of aesthetic value, to which he gives an intuitive, perceptual, and Platonic cast in his theory of Ideas. Schopenhauer gave *aesthetics* and *beauty* a central place in his thought such as few other philosophers have done. His *aesthetic realism* is a great advance over Kant's moralistic denial of an objective foundation for aesthetic reality. Beyond that lies a realistic appreciation of many religious phenomena that is superior to Kant and conformable to insights that will later be found in Otto and Jung. Schopenhauer could take religion seriously in ways that others could not because of his pessimistic rejection of the value of life. This, indeed, embodies its own distortions, but it is a welcome corrective, as Jung noted, to the shallow optimism of most other philosophers. And it does faithfully highlight the world-denying trend of important religions like Christianity, Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism, which must be addressed by any responsible philosophy of religion.

Schopenhauer's metaphysics, as stated in his classic ***The World as Will and Representation*** (Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung), is structured through a small set of dichotomous divisions, displayed and color coded in

the following table. Schopenhauer prided himself on the simplicity of this in comparison to Kant, whose system he compared to a Gothic cathedral. Hegel's metaphysics, which produced a potentially infinite elaboration of Kant's threefold structures, Schopenhauer regarded as, of course, nonsense.

The basic distinction in Schopenhauer's metaphysics is between representation and the thing-in-itself. *The thing-in-itself turns out to be will.* The will is introduced in Book II of The World as Will and Representation, where its manifestations in nature are also examined. That supplies, in effect, Schopenhauer's philosophy of science, which has its embarrassing aspects: Schopenhauer did not understand the new physics of light and electricity that had been developed by Thomas Young (1773-1829) and Michael Faraday (1791-1867). He disparaged the wave theory of light, which Young had definitively established, as a "crude materialism," and "mechanical, Democritean, ponderous, and truly clumsy". Unfortunately, Schopenhauer does not seem to have understood the evidence for Young's discoveries about light, or even for Newton's -- he still clung to Goethe's clever but clueless theory of colors. Schopenhauer also required that there be a "vital force," though that would still be part of respectable science for a while to come yet. Nevertheless, Schopenhauer would have been happy to learn how his beloved qualitates occultae would return in force with quantum mechanics: Things like strangeness, charm, baryon number, lepton number, etc., are exactly the kinds of irreducible types he demanded.

The denial of will, self, and self-interest produce for Schopenhauer a theory both of morality and of holiness, the former by which self-interest is curtailed for the sake of others, the latter by which all will-to-live ceases. Schopenhauer's greatest eloquence about the evils, sufferings, and futility of life, and its redemption through self-denial, occur there.

In *Book III of The World as Will and Representation* Schopenhauer turns to his theory of Ideas, which he says are the same as Plato's Ideas, and which are also free of the forms of space, time, and causality. For Schopenhauer, it is through the Ideas that all beauty is manifest in art and nature. Again, it would not be surprising if Schopenhauer took the Ideas to be transcendent realities, especially when that is precisely what Plato thought about his own Ideas; but, as with the Subject, Schopenhauer keeps them in representation, as the nature of Objects in so far as they are free of the Principle of Sufficient Reason.

The final distinction, although it is one of the earliest made, is that between the body and the other objects of representation in space and time. For Schopenhauer, the body is known immediately and the perception of other objects is spontaneously projected, in a remaining fragment of Kant's

theory of synthesis and perception, from the sensations present in the sense organs of the body onto the external objects understood as the causes of those sensations. The body itself, becomes the most immediate manifestation of the will, a direct embodiment of the will-to-live.

One might say that the most interesting aspect of Schopenhauer's metaphysics consists of the turns not taken. The reason why the Subject and the Ideas should be held separate from the Will sometimes seems only to be that this is necessary to produce the degree of pessimism that Schopenhauer requires: The will must be blind and purposeless; but as the Subject it would not be blind, and as the Ideas it would consist of all the meaning and beauty of the Platonic World of Ideas.

Appendix

Arthur Schopenhauer

The Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer: the Wisdom of Life

CHAPTER II. PERSONALITY, OR WHAT A MAN IS.

What a man is, and so what he has in his own person, is always the chief thing to consider; for his individuality accompanies him always and everywhere, and gives its color to all his experiences. In every kind of enjoyment, for instance, the pleasure depends principally upon the man himself. Every one admits this in regard to physical, and how much truer it is of intellectual, pleasure. When we use that English expression, "to enjoy one's self," we are employing a very striking and appropriate phrase; for observe—one says, not "he enjoys Paris," but "he enjoys himself in Paris." To a man possessed of an ill-conditioned individuality, all pleasure is like delicate wine in a mouth made bitter with gall. Therefore, in the blessings as well as in the ills of life, less depends upon what befalls us than upon the way in which it is met, that is, upon the kind and degree of our general susceptibility. What a man is and has in himself,—in a word personality, with all it entails, is the only immediate and direct factor in his happiness and welfare. All else is mediate and indirect, and its influence can be neutralized and frustrated; but the influence of personality never. This is why the envy which personal qualities excite is the most implacable of all,—as it is also the most carefully dissembled.

Further, the constitution of our consciousness is the ever present and lasting element in all we do or suffer; our individuality is persistently at work, more or less, at every moment of our life: all other influences are

temporal, incidental, fleeting, and subject to every kind of chance and change. This is why Aristotle says: It is not wealth but character that lasts.

And just for the same reason we can more easily bear a misfortune which comes to us entirely from without, than one which we have drawn upon ourselves; for fortune may always change, but not character. Therefore, subjective blessings,—a noble nature, a capable head, a joyful temperament, bright spirits, a well-constituted, perfectly sound physique, in a word, mens sana in corpore sano, are the first and most important elements in happiness; so that we should be more intent on promoting and preserving such qualities than on the possession of external wealth and external honor.

And of all these, the one which makes us the most directly happy is a genial flow of good spirits; for this excellent quality is its own immediate reward. The man who is cheerful and merry has always a good reason for being so,—the fact, namely, that he is so. There is nothing which, like this quality, can so completely replace the loss of every other blessing. If you know anyone who is young, handsome, rich and esteemed, and you want to know, further, if he is happy, ask, Is he cheerful and genial?—and if he is, what does it matter whether he is young or old, straight or humpbacked, poor or rich?—he is happy. In my early days I once opened an old book and found these words: If you laugh a great deal, you are happy; if you cry a great deal, you are unhappy;—a very simple remark, no doubt; but just because it is so simple I have never been able to forget it, even though it is in the last degree a truism. So if cheerfulness knocks at our door, we should throw it wide open, for it never comes inopportunely; instead of that, we often make scruples about letting it in. We want to be quite sure that we have every reason to be contented; then we are afraid that cheerfulness of spirits may interfere with serious reflections or weighty cares. Cheerfulness is a direct and immediate gain,—the very coin, as it were, of happiness, and not, like all else, merely a cheque upon the bank; for it alone makes us immediately happy in the present moment, and that is the highest blessing for beings like us, whose existence is but an infinitesimal moment between two eternities. To secure and promote this feeling of cheerfulness should be the supreme aim of all our endeavors after happiness.

Now it is certain that nothing contributes so little to cheerfulness as riches, or so much, as health. Is it not in the lower classes, the so-called working classes, more especially those of them who live in the country, that we see cheerful and contented faces? and is it not amongst the rich, the upper classes, that we find faces full of ill-humor and vexation? Consequently we should try as much as possible to maintain a high degree

of health; for cheerfulness is the very flower of it. I need hardly say what one must do to be healthy—avoid every kind of excess, all violent and unpleasant emotion, all mental overstrain, take daily exercise in the open air, cold baths and such like hygienic measures. For without a proper amount of daily exercise no one can remain healthy; all the processes of life demand exercise for the due performance of their functions, exercise not only of the parts more immediately concerned, but also of the whole body. For, as Aristotle rightly says, Life is movement; it is its very essence. Ceaseless and rapid motion goes on in every part of the organism. The heart, with its complicated double systole and diastole, beats strongly and untiringly; with twenty-eight beats it has to drive the whole of the blood through arteries, veins and capillaries; the lungs pump like a steam-engine, without intermission; the intestines are always in peristaltic action; the glands are all constantly absorbing and secreting; even the brain has a double motion of its own, with every beat of the pulse and every breath we draw. When people can get no exercise at all, as is the case with the countless numbers who are condemned to a sedentary life, there is a glaring and fatal disproportion between outward inactivity and inner tumult. For this ceaseless internal motion requires some external counterpart, and the want of it produces effects like those of emotion which we are obliged to suppress. Even trees must be shaken by the wind, if they are to thrive. The rule which finds its application here may be most briefly expressed in Latin: omnis motus, quo celerior, eo magis motus.

How much our happiness depends upon our spirits, and these again upon our state of health, may be seen by comparing the influence which the same external circumstances or events have upon us when we are well and strong with the effects which they have when we are depressed and troubled with ill-health. It is not what things are objectively and in themselves, but what they are for us, in our way of looking at them, that makes us happy or the reverse. As Epictetus says, Men are not influenced by things, but by their thoughts about things. And, in general, nine-tenths of our happiness depends upon health alone. With health, everything is a source of pleasure; without it, nothing else, whatever it may be, is enjoyable; even the other personal blessings,—a great mind, a happy temperament—are degraded and dwarfed for want of it. So it is really with good reason that, when two people meet, the first thing they do is to inquire after each other's health, and to express the hope that it is good; for good health is by far the most important element in human happiness. It follows from all this that the greatest of follies is to sacrifice health for any other kind of happiness, whatever it may be, for gain, advancement, learning or fame, let alone,

then, for fleeting sensual pleasures. Everything else should rather be postponed to it.

But however much health may contribute to that flow of good spirits which is so essential to our happiness, good spirits do not entirely depend upon health; for a man may be perfectly sound in his physique and still possess a melancholy temperament and be generally given up to sad thoughts. The ultimate cause of this is undoubtedly to be found in innate, and therefore unalterable, physical constitution, especially in the more or less normal relation of a man's sensitiveness to his muscular and vital energy. Abnormal sensitiveness produces inequality of spirits, a predominating melancholy, with periodical fits of unrestrained liveliness. A genius is one whose nervous power or sensitiveness is largely in excess; as Aristotle has very correctly observed, Men distinguished in philosophy, politics, poetry or art appear to be all of a melancholy temperament. This is doubtless the passage which Cicero has in his mind when he says, as he often does, Aristoteles ait omnes ingeniosos melancholicos esse. Shakespeare has very neatly expressed this radical and innate diversity of temperament in those lines in The Merchant of Venice:

Nature has framed strange fellows in her time;
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh, like parrots at a bag-piper;
And others of such vinegar aspect,
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

This is the difference which Plato draws between [Greek: eukolos] and [Greek: dyskolos]—the man of easy, and the man of difficult disposition—in proof of which he refers to the varying degrees of susceptibility which different people show to pleasurable and painful impressions; so that one man will laugh at what makes another despair. As a rule, the stronger the susceptibility to unpleasant impressions, the weaker is the susceptibility to pleasant ones, and vice versa. If it is equally possible for an event to turn out well or ill, the [Greek: dyskolos] will be annoyed or grieved if the issue is unfavorable, and will not rejoice, should it be happy. On the other hand, the [Greek: eukolos] will neither worry nor fret over an unfavorable issue, but rejoice if it turns out well. If the one is successful in nine out of ten undertakings, he will not be pleased, but rather annoyed that one has miscarried; whilst the other, if only a single one succeeds, will manage to find consolation in the fact and remain cheerful. But here is another instance of the truth, that hardly any evil is entirely without its compensation; for the misfortunes and sufferings which the [Greek:

auskoloi], that is, people of gloomy and anxious character, have to overcome, are, on the whole, more imaginary and therefore less real than those which befall the gay and careless; for a man who paints everything black, who constantly fears the worst and takes measures accordingly, will not be disappointed so often in this world, as one who always looks upon the bright side of things. And when a morbid affection of the nerves, or a derangement of the digestive organs, plays into the hands of an innate tendency to gloom, this tendency may reach such a height that permanent discomfort produces a weariness of life. So arises an inclination to suicide, which even the most trivial unpleasantness may actually bring about; nay, when the tendency attains its worst form, it may be occasioned by nothing in particular, but a man may resolve to put an end to his existence, simply because he is permanently unhappy, and then coolly and firmly carry out his determination; as may be seen by the way in which the sufferer, when placed under supervision, as he usually is, eagerly waits to seize the first unguarded moment, when, without a shudder, without a struggle or recoil, he may use the now natural and welcome means of effecting his release. Even the healthiest, perhaps even the most cheerful man, may resolve upon death under certain circumstances; when, for instance, his sufferings, or his fears of some inevitable misfortune, reach such a pitch as to outweigh the terrors of death. The only difference lies in the degree of suffering necessary to bring about the fatal act, a degree which will be high in the case of a cheerful, and low in that of a gloomy man. The greater the melancholy, the lower need the degree be; in the end, it may even sink to zero. But if a man is cheerful, and his spirits are supported by good health, it requires a high degree of suffering to make him lay hands upon himself. There are countless steps in the scale between the two extremes of suicide, the suicide which springs merely from a morbid intensification of innate gloom, and the suicide of the healthy and cheerful man, who has entirely objective grounds for putting an end to his existence.

Beauty is partly an affair of health. It may be reckoned as a personal advantage; though it does not, properly speaking, contribute directly to our happiness. It does so indirectly, by impressing other people; and it is no unimportant advantage, even in man. Beauty is an open letter of recommendation, predisposing the heart to favor the person who presents it. As is well said in these lines of Homer, the gift of beauty is not lightly to be thrown away, that glorious gift which none can bestow save the gods alone.

The most general survey shows us that the two foes of human happiness are pain and boredom. We may go further, and say that in the degree in which we are fortunate enough to get away from the one, we

approach the other. Life presents, in fact, a more or less violent oscillation between the two. The reason of this is that each of these two poles stands in a double antagonism to the other, external or objective, and inner or subjective. Needy surroundings and poverty produce pain; while, if a man is more than well off, he is bored. Accordingly, while the lower classes are engaged in a ceaseless struggle with need, in other words, with pain, the upper carry on a constant and often desperate battle with boredom. The inner or subjective antagonism arises from the fact that, in the individual, susceptibility to pain varies inversely with susceptibility to boredom, because susceptibility is directly proportionate to mental power. Let me explain. A dull mind is, as a rule, associated with dull sensibilities, nerves which no stimulus can affect, a temperament, in short, which does not feel pain or anxiety very much, however great or terrible it may be. Now, intellectual dullness is at the bottom of that vacuity of soul which is stamped on so many faces, a state of mind which betrays itself by a constant and lively attention to all the trivial circumstances in the external world. This is the true source of boredom—a continual panting after excitement, in order to have a pretext for giving the mind and spirits something to occupy them. The kind of things people choose for this purpose shows that they are not very particular, as witness the miserable pastimes they have recourse to, and their ideas of social pleasure and conversation: or again, the number of people who gossip on the doorstep or gape out of the window. It is mainly because of this inner vacuity of soul that people go in quest of society, diversion, amusement, luxury of every sort, which lead many to extravagance and misery. Nothing is so good a protection against such misery as inward wealth, the wealth of the mind, because the greater it grows, the less room it leaves for boredom. The inexhaustible activity of thought! Finding ever new material to work upon in the multifarious phenomena of self and nature, and able and ready to form new combinations of them, there you have something that invigorates the mind, and apart from moments of relaxation, sets it far above the reach of boredom.

But, on the other hand, this high degree of intelligence is rooted in a high degree of susceptibility, greater strength of will, greater passionateness; and from the union of these qualities comes an increased capacity for emotion, an enhanced sensibility to all mental and even bodily pain, greater impatience of obstacles, greater resentment of interruption; all of which tendencies are augmented by the power of the imagination, the vivid character of the whole range of thought, including what is disagreeable. This applies, in various degrees, to every step in the long scale

of mental power, from the veriest dunce to the greatest genius that ever lived. Therefore the nearer anyone is, either from a subjective or from an objective point of view, to one of those sources of suffering in human life, the farther he is from the other. And so a man's natural bent will lead him to make his objective world conform to his subjective as much as possible; that is to say, he will take the greatest measures against that form of suffering to which he is most liable. The wise man will, above all, strive after freedom from pain and annoyance, quiet and leisure, consequently a tranquil, modest life, with as few encounters as may be; and so, after a little experience of his so-called fellowmen, he will elect to live in retirement, or even, if he is a man of great intellect, in solitude. For the more a man has in himself, the less he will want from other people, the less, indeed, other people can be to him. This is why a high degree of intellect tends to make a man unsocial. True, if quality of intellect could be made up for by quantity, it might be worth while to live even in the great world; but unfortunately, a hundred fools together will not make one wise man.

….

Great intellectual gifts mean an activity pre-eminently nervous in its character, and consequently a very high degree of susceptibility to pain in every form. Further, such gifts imply an intense temperament, larger and more vivid ideas, which, as the inseparable accompaniment of great intellectual power, entail on its possessor a corresponding intensity of the emotions, making them incomparably more violent than those to which the ordinary man is a prey. Now, there are more things in the world productive of pain than of pleasure. Again, a large endowment of intellect tends to estrange the man who has it from other people and their doings; for the more a man has in himself, the less he will be able to find in them; and the hundred things in which they take delight, he will think shallow and insipid. Here, then, perhaps, is another instance of that law of compensation which makes itself felt everywhere. How often one hears it said, and said, too, with some plausibility, that the narrow-minded man is at bottom the happiest, even though his fortune is unenviable. I shall make no attempt to forestall the reader's own judgment on this point; more especially as Sophocles himself has given utterance to two diametrically opposite opinions: he says in one place—wisdom is the greatest part of happiness; and again, in another passage, he declares that the life of the thoughtless is the most pleasant of all—

The philosophers of the Old Testament find themselves in a like contradiction.

The life of a fool is worse than death and

In much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

I may remark, however, that a man who has no mental needs, because his intellect is of the narrow and normal amount, is, in the strict sense of the word, what is called a philistine—an expression at first peculiar to the German language, a kind of slang term at the Universities, afterwards used, by analogy, in a higher sense, though still in its original meaning, as denoting one who is not a Son of the Muses. A philistine is and remains [Greek: amousos anaer]. I should prefer to take a higher point of view, and apply the term philistine to people who are always seriously occupied with realities which are no realities; but as such a definition would be a transcendental one, and therefore not generally intelligible, it would hardly be in place in the present treatise, which aims at being popular. The other definition can be more easily elucidated, indicating, as it does, satisfactorily enough, the essential nature of all those qualities which distinguish the philistine. He is defined to be a man without mental needs. From this is follows, firstly, in relation to himself, that he has no intellectual pleasures; for, as was remarked before, there are no real pleasures without real needs. The philistine's life is animated by no desire to gain knowledge and insight for their own sake, or to experience that true aeesthetic pleasure which is so nearly akin to them. If pleasures of this kind are fashionable, and the philistine finds himself compelled to pay attention to them, he will force himself to do so, but he will take as little interest in them as possible. His only real pleasures are of a sensual kind, and he thinks that these indemnify him for the loss of the others. To him oysters and champagne are the height of existence; the aim of his life is to procure what will contribute to his bodily welfare, and he is indeed in a happy way if this causes him some trouble. If the luxuries of life are heaped upon him, he will inevitably be bored, and against boredom he has a great many fancied remedies, balls, theatres, parties, cards, gambling, horses, women, drinking, traveling and so on; all of which can not protect a man from being bored, for where there are no intellectual needs, no intellectual pleasures are possible. The peculiar characteristic of the philistine is a dull, dry kind of gravity, akin to that of animals. Nothing really pleases, or excites, or interests him, for sensual pleasure is quickly exhausted, and the society of philistines soon becomes burdensome, and one may even get tired of playing cards. True, the pleasures of vanity are left, pleasures which he enjoys in his own way, either by feeling himself superior in point of wealth, or rank, or influence and power to other people, who thereupon pay him honor; or, at any rate, by

going about with those who have a superfluity of these blessings, sunning himself in the reflection of their splendor—what the English call a snob

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FRIEDRICH NIETZCHE

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) was a German philosopher of the late 19th century who challenged the foundations of Christianity and traditional morality. He was interested in the enhancement of individual and cultural health, and believed in life, creativity, power, and the realities of the world we live in, rather than those situated in a world beyond. Central to his philosophy is the idea of "life-affirmation," which involves an honest questioning of all doctrines that drain life's expansive energies, however socially prevalent those views might be. Often referred to as one of the first existentialist philosophers along with Soren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), Nietzsche's revitalizing philosophy has inspired leading figures in all walks of cultural life, including dancers, poets, novelists, painters, psychologists, philosophers, sociologists and social revolutionaries.

Thus Spoke Zarathustra (1883-1885).

The title itself is a bit of a puzzle. "Zarathustra" is a German rendering of *Zarathushtra*, the name in the language of the *Avesta* (Avestan), the sacred scripture of Zoroastrianism, of the founder of that religion, the Prophet **Zoroaster** (his name in Greek). Since Zoroaster preached a great cosmic conflict between Good and Evil, this is perplexing: Nietzsche denies the reality of good and evil. But that may be the point. What Zoroaster started, he has now been brought back to end.

One of the most famous Nietzsche's statements is: "God is dead".

Nietzsche's replacement for God is the **Übermensch**. This was originally translated "Superman", "Overman." since the Latin *super* means "over," as does German *über*. The Superman is supposed to be the next evolutionary step beyond mere man -- where we really must say "man," and not "humanity" or any of the politically correct alternatives, since Nietzsche was not very interested in women and clearly despised the sort of liberal culture where equality for women was coming to hand. The Superman is not vulnerable to taming and domesticity. He has broken free of it entirely.

The Superman is free because all his own values flow from his own will. Value is a matter of decision, a matter of will. Because the Superman is free, he takes what he wants and does what he likes. He is authentic. And since what everyone really wants, if they could have their way, is *power*,

the Superman will seize power without remorse, regret, or apology. The Superman, indeed, is like the Sophist Thrasymachus in Plato's *Republic*: Justice is what he wants, and he will take it. The "*slave morality*" of altruism and self-denial, which the weak, miserable, crippled, envious, and resentful have formulated into Judeo-Christian ethics, in an attempt to deceive the strong into being weak like themselves, is contemptuously rejected and ignored by the Superman, in whom we find the triumphant *"will to power."*

Nietzsche's own critique of Christianity, that the doctrine of love of others actually translates into resentful hatred of others, applies with full force to his most ardent devotees, whose talk about freedom and creativity translates into constant assaults on the freedom and preferences of others, and deep resentment for those, the industralists and inventors, who have created the modern world and a better life for all.

What Nietzsche's Superman gets is a little more durable than the decisions of Sisyphus, since Nietzsche always saw systems of value, like traditional religions, as persistent and living, endowing things with real value, if only for a time. The Superman thus need not suffer from the nausea and dread. But this is really less honest than the later fears. Making up values doesn't make them so, and Nietzsche himself made it possible for this to be felt so intensely later. After the Superman has "transvalued" his own values a few times, he may begin to detect an arbitrariness and emptiness in them. As Nietzsche himself said, you stare into the Void long enough and the Void begins to stare back. Thus, by the time we get to Camus, we get the Stranger, not the Superman.

One more point to speak about, which is advanced as the greatest teaching of the *Zarathustra*, does the same job as Sartre's redefinition of "responsibility." This is the *"Eternal Recurrence*." The doctrine is based on a kind of metaphysical parable, that in an eternity of time, all possible things will have happened, which means that in the present, with an eternity of time behind us, everything has already happened, including what is happening now. Since every point where a time like the present has happened, or will happen, itself also has an eternity of time before it, then what is happening now has already happened an infinite number of times and will happen an infinite number of times again. How seriously Nietzsche takes the actual metaphysics of this is a good question, since it implies a fatalism that is otherwise contrary to Nietzsche's view of will. But the metaphysics is secondary. Since actions to Nietzsche are no longer good or evil, he feels the same loss of *weight* as does Sartre and wants some way to make actions seem more *serious* than they would be for your ordinary

Nihilist. With the Eternal Recurrence, actions become weightier because one must be prepared to do them over and over again for eternity (like, indeed, Sisyphus). This still doesn't, after all, mean that they are right or wrong; it simply means that before you do something, you must determine that you *really* want to do it.

Within Nietzsche's corpus, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* has a controversial place, owing mainly to its thoroughly literary style. Nietzsche speaks in parables and short narratives populated by fictional characters — "the hunchback," "the ugliest man," "the soothsayer," "the saint," "the tightrope walker," "the jester," and "the Last Man," to name a few — leaving his inherent messages open to a variety of interpretations. One of Nietzsche's most well-known and morally troubling figures — the superhuman — also appears substantially only in this work, rendering it questionable to some interpreters whether this ideal for the earth's future meaning is indeed central to Nietzsche's thought as a whole.

Appendix

Friedrich Nietzsche

THUS SPAKE ZARATHUSTRA

(1891, translated by Thomas Common)

Fragments

Zarathustra's Prologue

3.

When Zarathustra arrived at the nearest town which adjoineth the forest, he found many people assembled in the market-place; for it had been announced that a rope-dancer would give a performance. And Zarathustra spake thus unto the people:

I teach you the Superman. Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass man? All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and ye want to be the ebb of that great tide, and would rather go back to the beast than surpass man?

What is the ape to man? A laughing-stock, a thing of shame. And just the same shall man be to the Superman: a laughing-stock, a thing of shame. Ye have made your way from the worm to man, and much within you is still worm. Once were ye apes, and even yet man is more of an ape than any of the apes. Even the wisest among you is only a disharmony and hybrid of plant and phantom. But do I bid you become phantoms or plants?

Lo, I teach you the Superman!

The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman shall he the meaning of the earth! I conjure you, my brethren, remain true to the earth, and believe not those who speak unto you of superearthly hopes!

Poisoners are they, whether they know it or not. Despisers of life are they, decaying ones and poisoned ones themselves, of whom the earth is weary: so away with them!

Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy; but God died, and therewith also those blasphemers. To blaspheme the earth is now the dreadfulest sin, and to rate the heart of the unknowable higher than the meaning of the earth!

Once the soul looked contemptuously on the body, and then that contempt was the supreme thing:- the soul wished the body meagre, ghastly, and famished. Thus it thought to escape from the body and the earth.

Oh, that soul was itself meagre, ghastly, and famished; and cruelty was the delight of that soul! But ye, also, my brethren, tell me: What doth your body say about your soul? Is your soul not poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency? Verily, a polluted stream is man. One must be a sea, to receive a polluted stream without becoming impure.

Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that sea; in him can your great contempt be submerged. What is the greatest thing ye can experience? It is the hour of great contempt. The hour in which even your happiness becometh loathsome unto you, and so also your reason and virtue.

The hour when ye say: "What good is my happiness! It is poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency. But my happiness should justify existence itself!" The hour when ye say: "What good is my reason! Doth it long for knowledge as the lion for his food? It is poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency!" The hour when ye say: "What good is my virtue! As yet it hath not made me passionate. How weary I am of my good and my bad! It is all poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency!"

The hour when ye say: "What good is my justice! I do not see that I am fervour and fuel. The just, however, are fervour and fuel!" The hour when we say: "What good is my pity! Is not pity the cross on which he is nailed who loveth man? But my pity is not a crucifixion."

Have ye ever spoken thus? Have ye ever cried thus? Ah! would that I had heard you crying thus!

It is not your sin- it is your self-satisfaction that crieth unto heaven; your very sparingness in sin crieth unto heaven! Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is the frenzy with which ye should be inoculated?

Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that lightning, he is that

frenzy!-

When Zarathustra had thus spoken, one of the people called out:

"We have now heard enough of the rope-dancer; it is time now for us to. see him!" And all the people laughed at Zarathustra. But the rope-dancer, who thought the words applied to him, began his performance.

4.

Zarathustra, however, looked at the people and wondered. Then he spake thus:

Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman- a rope over an abyss. A dangerous crossing, a dangerous wayfaring, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous trembling and halting.

What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what is lovable in man is that he is an over-going and a down-going.

I love those that know not how to live except as down-goers, for they are the over-goers. I love the great despisers, because they are the great adorers, and arrows of longing for the other shore.

I love those who do not first seek a reason beyond the stars for going down and being sacrifices, but sacrifice themselves to the earth, that the earth of the Superman may hereafter arrive.

I love him who liveth in order to know, and seeketh to know in order that the Superman may hereafter live. Thus seeketh he his own down-going.

I love him who laboureth and inventeth, that he may build the house for the Superman, and prepare for him earth, animal, and plant: for thus seeketh he his own down-going.

I love him who loveth his virtue: for virtue is the will to down-going, and an arrow of longing.

I love him who reserveth no share of spirit for himself, but wanteth to be wholly the spirit of his virtue: thus walketh he as spirit over the bridge.

I love him who maketh his virtue his inclination and destiny: thus, for the sake of his virtue, he is willing to live on, or live no more.

I love him who desireth not too many virtues. One virtue is more of a virtue than two, because it is more of a knot for one's destiny to cling to.

I love him whose soul is lavish, who wanteth no thanks and doth not give back: for he always bestoweth, and desireth not to keep for himself.

I love him who is ashamed when the dice fall in his favour, and who then asketh: "Am I a dishonest player?"- for he is willing to succumb.

I love him who scattereth golden words in advance of his deeds, and always doeth more than he promiseth: for he seeketh his own down-going.

I love him who justifieth the future ones, and redeemeth the past ones: for he is willing to succumb through the present ones.

I love him who chasteneth his God, because he loveth his God: for he must succumb through the wrath of his God.

I love him whose soul is deep even in the wounding, and may succumb through a small matter: thus goeth he willingly over the bridge.

I love him whose soul is so overfull that he forgetteth himself, and all things are in him: thus all things become his down-going.

I love him who is of a free spirit and a free heart: thus is his head only the bowels of his heart; his heart, however, causeth his down-going.

I love all who are like heavy drops falling one by one out of the dark cloud that lowereth over man: they herald the coming of the lightning, and succumb as heralds.

Lo, I am a herald of the lightning, and a heavy drop out of the cloud: the lightning, however, is the Superman.-

5.

When Zarathustra had spoken these words, he again looked at the people, and was silent. "There they stand," said he to his heart; "there they laugh: they understand me not; I am not the mouth for these ears.

Must one first batter their ears, that they may learn to hear with their eyes? Must one clatter like kettledrums and penitential preachers? Or do they only believe the stammerer? hey have something whereof they are proud. What do they call it, that which maketh them proud? Culture, they call it; it distinguisheth them from the goatherds.

They dislike, therefore, to hear of 'contempt' of themselves. So I will appeal to their pride. I will speak unto them of the most contemptible thing: that, however, is the last man!"

And thus spake Zarathustra unto the people:

It is time for man to fix his goal. It is time for man to plant the germ of his highest hope. Still is his soil rich enough for it. But that soil will one day be poor and exhausted, and no lofty tree will any longer be able to grow thereon.

Alas! there cometh the time when man will no longer launch the arrow of his longing beyond man- and the string of his bow will have unlearned to whizz!

I tell you: one must still have chaos in one, to give birth to a dancing star. I tell you: ye have still chaos in you.

Alas! There cometh the time when man will no longer give birth to any star. Alas! There cometh the time of the most despicable man, who can no longer despise himself.

Lo! I show you the last man.

"What is love? What is creation? What is longing? What is a star?"- so asketh the last man and blinketh. The earth hath then become small, and on it there hoppeth the last man who maketh everything small. His species is ineradicable like that of the ground-flea; the last man liveth longest.

"We have discovered happiness"- say the last men, and blink thereby. They have left the regions where it is hard to live; for they need warmth. One still loveth one's neighbour and rubbeth against him; for one needeth warmth.

Turning ill and being distrustful, they consider sinful: they walk warily. He is a fool who still stumbleth over stones or men!

A little poison now and then: that maketh pleasant dreams. And much poison at last for a pleasant death.

One still worketh, for work is a pastime. But one is careful lest the pastime should hurt one. One no longer becometh poor or rich; both are too burdensome. Who still wanteth to rule? Who still wanteth to obey? Both are too burdensome.

No shepherd, and one herd! Everyone wanteth the same; everyone is equal: he who hath other sentiments goeth voluntarily into the madhouse.

"Formerly all the world was insane,"- say the subtlest of them, and blink thereby. They are clever and know all that hath happened: so there is no end to their raillery. People still fall out, but are soon reconciled-otherwise it spoileth their stomachs.

They have their little pleasures for the day, and their little pleasures for the night, but they have a regard for health. "We have discovered happiness,"- say the last men, and blink thereby.-

And here ended the first discourse of Zarathustra, which is also called "The Prologue", for at this point the shouting and mirth of the multitude interrupted him. "Give us this last man, O Zarathustra,"- they called out- "make us into these last men! Then will we make thee a present of the Superman!" And all the people exulted and smacked their lips. Zarathustra, however, turned sad, and said to his heart:

"They understand me not: I am not the mouth for these ears Too long, perhaps, have I lived in the mountains; too much have I hearkened unto the brooks and trees: now do I speak unto them as unto the goatherds.

Calm is my soul, and clear, like the mountains in the morning. But they think me cold, and a mocker with terrible jests.

And now do they look at me and laugh: and while they laugh they hate me too. There is ice in their laughter."

6.

Then, however, something happened which made every mouth mute and every eye fixed. In the meantime, of course, the rope-dancer had commenced his performance: he had come out at a little door, and was going along the rope which was stretched between two towers, so that it hung above the market-place and the people. When he was just midway across, the little door opened once more, and a gaudily-dressed fellow like a buffoon sprang out, and went rapidly after the first one. "Go on, halt-foot," cried his frightful voice, "go on, lazy-bones, interloper, sallow-face!- lest I tickle thee with my heel! What dost thou here between the towers? In the tower is the place for thee, thou shouldst be locked up; to one better than thyself thou blockest the way!"- And with every word he came nearer and nearer the first one. When, however, he was but a step behind, there happened the frightful thing which made every mouth mute and every eye fixed- he uttered a yell like a devil, and jumped over the other

who was in his way. The latter, however, when he thus saw his rival triumph, lost at the same time his head and his footing on the rope; he threw his pole away, and shot downward faster than it, like an eddy of arms and legs, into the depth. The market-place and the people were like the sea when the storm cometh on: they all flew apart and in disorder, especially where the body was about to fall.

Zarathustra, however, remained standing, and just beside him fell the body, badly injured and disfigured, but not yet dead. After a while consciousness returned to the shattered man, and he saw Zarathustra kneeling beside him. "What art thou doing there?" said he at last, "I knew long ago that the devil would trip me up. Now he draggeth me to hell: wilt thou prevent him?"

"On mine honour, my friend," answered Zarathustra, "there is nothing of all that whereof thou speakest: there is no devil and no hell. Thy soul will be dead even sooner than thy body; fear, therefore, N0othing any more!"

The man looked up distrustfully. "If thou speakest the truth," said he, "I lose nothing when I lose my life. I am not much more than an animal which hath been taught to dance by blows and scanty fare."

"Not at all," said Zarathustra, "thou hast made danger thy calling; therein there is nothing contemptible. Now thou perishes by thy calling: therefore will I bury thee with mine own hands."

When Zarathustra had said this the dying one did not reply further; but he moved his hand as if he sought the hand of Zarathustra in gratitude.

The will to power

Suppose nothing else were "given" as real except our world of desires and passions, and we could not get down, or up, to any other "reality" besides the reality of our drives--for thinking is merely a relation of these drives to each other: is it not permitted to make the experiment and to ask the question whether this "given" would not be sufficient for also understanding on the basis of this kind of thing the so-called mechanistic (or "material") world?...

In the end not only is it permitted to make this experiment; the conscience of method demands it. Not to assume several kinds of causality until the experiment of making do with a single one has been pushed to its utmost limit (to the point of nonsense, if I may say so)... The question is in the end whether we really recognize the will as efficient, whether we believe in the causality of the will: if we do--and at bottom our faith in this is nothing less than our faith in causality itself--then we have to make the experiment of positing causality of the will hypothetically as the only one. "Will," of course, can affect only "will"--and not "matter" (not "nerves," for example). In short, one has to risk the hypothesis whether will does not affect will wherever "effects" are recognized--and whether all mechanical occurrences are not, insofar as a force is active in them, will force, effects of will.

Suppose, finally, we succeeded in explaining our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of one basic form of the will--namely, of the will to power, as my proposition has it... then one would have gained the right to determine all efficient force univocally as--will to power. The world viewed from inside... it would be "will to power" and nothing else.

(from Beyond Good and Evil, s.36, Walter Kaufmann transl).

In order to sustain the theory of a mechanistic world, therefore, we always have to stipulate to what extent we are employing two fictions: the concept of motion (taken from our sense language) and the concept of the atom (=unity, deriving from our psychical "experience"): the mechanistic theory presupposes a sense prejudice and a psychological prejudice...

The mechanistic world is imagined only as sight and touch imagine a world (as "moved") --so as to be calculable-- thus causal unities are invented, "things" (atoms) whose effect remains constant (--transference of the false concept of subject to the concept of the atom)...

If we eliminate these additions, no things remain but only dynamic quanta, in a relation of tension to all other dynamic quanta: their essence lies in their relation to all other quanta, in their "effect" upon the same. The will to power is not a being, not a becoming, but a pathos --the most elemental fact from which a becoming and effecting first emerge--

(from The Will to Power, s.635, Walter Kaufmann transl.)

My idea is that every specific body strives to become master over all space and to extend its force (--its will to power:) and to thrust back all that resists its extension. But it continually encounters similar efforts on the part of other bodies and ends by coming to an arrangement ("union") with those of them that are sufficiently related to it: thus they then conspire together for power. And the process goes on--

(from The Will to Power, s.636, Walter Kaufmann transl).

[Anything which] is a living and not a dying body... will have to be an incarnate will to power, it will strive to grow, spread, seize, become predominant - not from any morality or immorality but because it is living and because life simply is will to power... 'Exploitation'... belongs to the essence of what lives, as a basic organic function; it is a consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will to life.

(from Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil, s.259, Walter Kaufmann transl.)

EXISTENTIALISM

"Existentialism" is a term that belongs to intellectual history. Its definition is thus to some extent one of historical convenience. The term was explicitly adopted as a self-description by **Jean-Paul Sartre**, and through the wide dissemination of the postwar literary and philosophical output of Sartre and his associates—notably **Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Merleau-Ponty,** and **Albert Camus**—existentialism became identified with a cultural movement that flourished in Europe in the 1940s and 1950s. Among the major philosophers identified as existentialists were **Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger**, and **Martin Buber** in Germany, **Jean Wahl** and **Gabriel Marcel** in France, the Spaniards **Jose Ortega y Gasset** and **Miguel de Unamuno**, and the Russians **Nikolai Berdyaev** and **Lev Shestov**. The nineteenth century philosophers, **Soren Kierkegaard** and **Friedrich Nietzsche**, came to be seen as precursors of the movement.

Existentialism was as much a literary phenomenon as a philosophical one. Sartre's own ideas were and are better known through his fictional works (such as Nausea and No Exit) than through his more purely philosophical ones (such as Being and Nothingness and Critique of Dialectical Reason), and the postwar years found a very diverse coterie of writers and artists linked under the term: retrospectively, Dostoevsky, Ibsen, and Kafka were conscripted; in Paris there were Jean Genet, Andre Gide, Andre Malraux, and the expatriate Samuel Beckett; the Norwegian Knut Hamsun and the Romanian Eugene Ionesco belong to the club; artists such as Alberto Giacometti and even Abstract Expressionists such as Jackson Pollock, Arshile Gorky, and Willem de Kooning, and filmmakers such as Jean-Luc Godard and Ingmar Bergman were understood in existential terms. By the mid 1970s the cultural image of existentialism had become a cliché, parodized in countless books and films by Woody Allen.

On the existential view, to understand what a human being is it is not enough to know all the truths that natural science—including the science of psychology—could tell us. The dualist who holds that human beings are composed of independent substances—"mind" and "body"—is no better off in this regard than is the physicalist, who holds that human existence can be adequately explained in terms of the fundamental physical constituents of the universe. Existentialism does not deny the validity of the basic categories of physics, biology, psychology, and the other sciences (categories such as matter, causality, force, function, organism, development, motivation, and so on). It claims only that human beings cannot be fully understood in terms of them. Nor can such an understanding be gained by supplementing our scientific picture with a moral one.

Categories of moral theory such as intention, blame, responsibility, character, duty, virtue, and the like do capture important aspects of the human condition, but neither moral thinking (governed by the norms of the good and the right) nor scientific thinking (governed by the norm of truth) suffices.

"Existentialism", therefore, may be defined as the philosophical theory which holds that a further set of categories, governed by the norm of authenticity, is necessary to grasp human existence. To approach existentialism in this categorial way may seem to conceal what is often taken to be its "heart", namely, its character as a gesture of protest against academic philosophy, its anti-system sensibility, its flight from the "iron cage" of reason. But while it is true that the major existential philosophers wrote with a passion and urgency rather uncommon in our own time, and while the idea that philosophy cannot be practiced in the disinterested manner of an objective science is indeed central to existentialism, it is equally true that all the themes popularly associated with existentialism—dread, boredom, alienation, the absurd, freedom, commitment, nothingness, and so on—find their philosophical significance in the context of the search for a new categorial framework, together with its governing norm.

Existentialism in the broader sense is a 20th century philosophy that is centered upon the analysis of *existence and of the way humans find themselves existing in the world*. The notion is that humans exist first and then each individual spends a lifetime changing their essence or nature.

In simpler terms, existentialism is a philosophy concerned with *finding self and the meaning of life through free will, choice, and personal responsibility*. The belief is that people are searching to find out who and what they are throughout life as they make choices based on their experiences, beliefs, and outlook. And personal choices become unique without the necessity of an objective form of truth. An existentialist believes that a person should be forced to choose and be responsible without the help of laws, ethnic rules, or traditions.

Existentialism takes into consideration the underlying concepts:

- Human free will
- Human nature is chosen through life choices
- A person is best when struggling against their individual nature, fighting for life
- Decisions are not without stress and consequences
- There are things that are not rational
- Personal responsibility and discipline is crucial

- Society is unnatural and its traditional religious and secular rules are arbitrary
- Worldly desire is futile

Existentialism is broadly defined in a variety of concepts and there can be no one answer as to what it is, yet it does not support any of the following: wealth, pleasure, or honor make the good life
social values and structure control the individual
accept what is and that is enough in life
science can and will make everything better
people are basically good but ruined by society or external forces
"I want my way, now!" or "It is not my fault!" mentality

There is a wide variety of philosophical, religious, and political ideologies that make up existentialism so there is no universal agreement in an arbitrary set of ideals and beliefs. Politics vary, but each seeks the most individual freedom for people within a society.

An existentialist could either be a religious moralist, agnostic relativist, or an amoral atheist. Kierkegaard, a religious philosopher, Nietzsche, an anti-Christian, Sartre, an atheist, and Camus an atheist, are credited for their works and writings about existentialism. Sartre is noted for bringing the most international attention to existentialism in the 20th century.

Each basically agrees that human life is in no way complete and fully satisfying because of suffering and losses that occur when considering the lack of perfection, power, and control one has over their life. Even though they do agree that life is not optimally satisfying, it nonetheless has meaning. Existentialism is the search and journey for true self and true personal meaning in life.

Most importantly, it is the arbitrary act that existentialism finds most objectionable-that is, when someone or society tries to impose or demand that their beliefs, values, or rules be faithfully accepted and obeyed. Existentialists believe this destroys individualism and makes a person become whatever the people in power desire thus they are dehumanized and reduced to being an object. Existentialism then stresses that a person's judgment is the determining factor for what is to be believed rather than by arbitrary religious or secular world values.

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

Søren Kierkegaard (1813- 1855) was a profound writer in the Danish "golden age" of intellectual and artistic activity. His work crosses the boundaries of philosophy, theology, psychology, literary criticism, devotional literature and fiction. Kierkegaard brought this potent mixture of

discourses to bear as social critique and for the purpose of renewing Christian faith within Christendom. At the same time he made many original conceptual contributions to each of the disciplines he employed. He is known as the “father of existentialism”.

Kierkegaard's life and work exemplify the paradox that he saw at the heart of modern life. Ever scornful of human pretensions, he deliberately chose the reverse deception of pretending to be less than he was. Since serious work should stand on its own, without deriving any arbitrary force from the presumed authority of its creator, Kierkegaard wrote privately and published under a variety of pseudonyms while frequently making flighty public appearances in his native Copenhagen. Perhaps this was a great project of personal ironic exhibitionism: how better to illustrate the uselessness of customary "social" life than by living it out to the fullest?

But why would anyone take such great pains in a deliberate effort to be out-of-step with his own world? For Kierkegaard, this was the only way to be sure of the truth, by eliminating every possible ulterior motive for what one says. The pseudonymous writer is notably freed from any temptation to tailor his message to popular opinion, since it is impossible for him to achieve any fame. This is what mattered to Kierkegaard.

With regard to everything that counts in human life, including especially matters of ethical and religious concern, Kierkegaard held that the crowd is always wrong. Any appeal to the opinions of others is inherently false, since it involves an effort to avoid responsibility for the content and justification of my own convictions. Genuine action must always arise from the Individual, without any prospect of support or agreement from others. Thus, on Kierkegaard's view, both self-denial and the self-realization to which it may lead require absolute and uncompromising independence from the group. Social institutions—embodying "the system" of Hegelian idealism—are invariably bad; only the solitary perception of self can be worthwhile.

What is at stake here is Kierkegaard's theoretical distinction between objective and subjective truth, worked out in the Afsluttende Uvidenskabelig Efterskrift (Concluding Unscientific Postscript) (1846) to the Philosophical Fragments. Considered objectively, truth merely seeks attachment to the right object, correspondence with an independent reality. Considered subjectively, however, truth seeks achievement of the right attitude, an appropriate relation between object and knower. Thus, for example, although Christianity is objectively merely one of many available religions in the world, it subjectively demands our complete devotion.

For Kierkegaard, it is clearly subjective truth that counts in life. How we believe matters much more than what we believe, since the "passionate inwardness" of subjective adherence is the only way to deal with our anxiety. Passionate attachment to a palpable falsehood, Kierkegaard supposed, is preferable to detached conviction of the obvious truth. Mild acceptance of traditional, institutional religion is useless, since god's existence can only be appreciated on wholly subjective grounds.

Appendix

Sören Kierkegaard

THE SICKNESS UNTO DEATH

(fragment)

Chapter 1: That Despair is the Sickness Unto Death

A. Despair is a Sickness in the Spirit, in the Self, and So It May Assume a Triple Form: in Despair at Not Being Conscious of Having a Self (Despair Improperly So Called); in Despair at Not Willing to Be Oneself; in Despair at Willing to Be Oneself.

Man is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation which relates itself to its own self, or it is that in the relation [which accounts for it] that the relation relates itself to its own self; the self is not the relation but [consists in the fact] that the relation relates itself to its own self. Man is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity, in short it is a synthesis. A synthesis is a relation between two factors. So regarded, man is not yet a self.

In the relation between two, the relation is the third term as a negative unity, and the two relate themselves to the relation, and in the relation to the relation; such a relation is that between soul and body, when man is regarded as soul. If on the contrary the relation relates itself to its own self, the relation is then the positive third term, and this is the self.

Such a relation which relates itself to its own self (that is to say, a self) must either have constituted itself or have been constituted by another.

If this relation which relates itself to its own self is constituted by another, the relation doubtless is the third term, but this relation (the third term) is in turn a relation relating itself to that which constituted the whole relation.

Such a derived, constituted, relation is the human self, a relation which relates itself to its own self, and in relating itself to its own self relates itself to another. Hence it is that there can be two forms of despair properly so called. If the human self had constituted itself, there could be a question

only of one form, that of not willing to be one's own self, of willing to get rid of oneself, but there would be no question of despairingly willing to be oneself. This formula [i.e. that the self is constituted by another] is the expression for the total dependence of the relation (the self namely), the expression for the fact that the self cannot of itself attain and remain in equilibrium and rest by itself, but only by relating itself to that Power which constituted the whole relation. Indeed, so far is it from being true that this second form of despair (despair at willing to be one's own self) denotes only a particular kind of despair, that on the contrary all despair can in the last analysis be reduced to this. If a man in despair is as he thinks conscious of his despair, does not talk about it meaninglessly as of something which befell him (pretty much as when a man who suffers from vertigo talks with nervous self-deception about a weight upon his head or about its being like something falling upon him, etc., this weight and this pressure being in fact not something external but an inverse reflection from an inward experience), and if by himself and by himself only he would abolish the despair, then by all the labor he expends he is only laboring himself deeper into a deeper despair. The disrelationship of despair is not a simple disrelationship but a disrelationship in a relation which relates itself to its own self and is constituted by another, so that the disrelationship in that self-relation reflects itself infinitely in the relation to the Power which constituted it.

This then is the formula which describes the condition of the self when despair is completely eradicated: by relating itself to its own self and by willing to be itself the self is grounded transparently in the Power which posited it.

B. Possibility and Actuality of Despair

Is despair an advantage or a drawback? Regarded in a purely dialectical way it is both. If one were to stick to the abstract notion of despair, without thinking of any concrete despairer, one might say that it is an immense advantage. The possibility of this sickness is man's advantage over the beast, and this advantage distinguishes him far more essentially than the erect posture, for it implies the infinite erectness or loftiness of being spirit. The possibility of this sickness is man's advantage over the beast; to be sharply observant of this sickness constitutes the Christian's advantage over the natural man; to be healed of this sickness is the Christian's bliss.

So then it is an infinite advantage to be able to despair; and yet it is not only the greatest misfortune and misery to be in despair; no, it is perdition. Ordinarily there is no such relation between possibility and actuality; if it is an advantage to be able to be this or that, it is a still greater advantage to be

such a thing. That is to say, being is related to the ability to be as an ascent. In the case of despair, on the contrary, being is related to the ability to be as a fall. Infinite as is the advantage of the possibility, just so great is the measure of the fall. So in the case of despair the ascent consists in not being in despair. Yet this statement is open to misunderstanding. The thing of not being in despair is not like not being lame, blind, etc. In case the not being in despair means neither more nor less than not being this, then it is precisely to be it. The thing of not being in despair must mean the annihilation of the possibility of being this; if it is to be true that a man is not in despair, one must annihilate the possibility every instant. Such is not ordinarily the relation between possibility and actuality. Although thinkers say2 that actuality is the annihilated possibility, yet this is not entirely true; it is the fulfilled, the effective possibility. Here, on the contrary, the actuality (not being in despair), which in its very form is a negation, is the impotent, annihilated possibility; ordinarily, actuality in comparison with possibility is a confirmation, here it is a negation.

Despair is the disrelationship in a relation which relates itself to itself. But the synthesis is not the disrelationship, it is merely the possibility, or, in the synthesis is latent the possibility of the disrelationship. If the synthesis were the disrelationship, there would be no such thing as despair, for despair would then be something inherent in human nature as such, that is, it would not be despair, it would be something that befell a man, something he suffered passively, like an illness into which a man falls, or like death which is the lot of all. No, this thing of despairing is inherent in man himself; but if he were not a synthesis, he could not despair, neither could he despair if the synthesis were not originally from God’s hand in the right relationship.

Whence then comes despair? From the relation wherein the synthesis relates itself to itself, in that God who made man a relationship lets this go as it were out of His hand, that is, in the fact that the relation relates itself to itself. And herein, in the fact that the relation is spirit, is the self, consists the responsibility under which all despair lies, and so lies every instant it exists, however much and however ingeniously the despairer, deceiving himself and others, may talk of his despair as a misfortune which has befallen him, with a confusion of things different, as in the case of vertigo aforementioned, with which, though it is qualitatively different, despair has much in common, since vertigo is under the rubric soul what despair is under the rubric spirit, and is pregnant with analogies to despair.

So when the disrelationship -- that is, despair -- has set in, does it follow as a matter of course that it continues? No, it does not follow as a matter of

course; if the disrelationship continues, it does not follow as a consequence of the disrelation but as a consequence of the relation which relates itself to itself. That is to say, every time the disrelation expresses itself, and every instant it exists, it is to the relation one must revert. Observe that we speak of a man contracting a disease, maybe through carelessness. Then the illness sets in, and from that instant it affirms itself and is now an actuality, the origin of which recedes more and more into the past. It would be cruel and inhuman if one were to continue to say incessantly, "This instant thou, the sick man, art contracting this disease"; that is, if every instant one were to resolve the actuality of the disease into its possibility. It is true that he did contract the disease, but this he did only once; the continuance of the disease is a simple consequence of the fact that he once contracted it, its progress is not to be referred every instant to him as the cause; he contracted it, but one cannot say that he is contracting it. Not so with despair: every actual instant of despair is to be referred back to possibility, every instant the man in despair is contracting it, it is constantly in the present tense, nothing comes to pass here as a consequence of a bygone actuality superseded; at every actual instant of despair the despairer bears as his responsibility all the foregoing experience in possibility as a present. This comes from the fact that despair is a qualification of spirit, that it is related to the eternal in man. But the eternal he cannot get rid of, no, not to all eternity; he cannot cast it from him once for all, nothing is more impossible; every instant he does not possess it he must have cast it or be casting it from him -- but it comes back, every instant he is in despair he contracts despair. For despair is not a result of the disrelationship but of the relation which relates itself to itself. And the relation to himself a man cannot get rid of, any more than he can get rid of himself, which moreover is one and the same thing, since the self is the relationship to oneself.

C. Despair is "The Sickness unto Death."

The concept of the sickness unto death must be understood, however, in a peculiar sense. Literally it means a sickness the end and outcome of which is death. Thus one speaks of a mortal sickness as synonymous with a sickness unto death. In this sense despair cannot be called the sickness unto death. But in the Christian understanding of it death itself is a transition unto life In view of this, there is from the Christian standpoint no earthly, bodily sickness unto death. For death is doubtless the last phase of the sickness, but death is not the last thing. If in the strictest sense we are to speak of a sickness unto death, it must be one in which the last thing is death, and death the last thing. And this precisely is despair.

Yet in another and still more definite sense despair is the sickness unto death. It is indeed very far from being true that, literally understood, one dies of this sickness, or that this sickness ends with bodily death. On the contrary, the torment of despair is precisely this, not to be able to die So it has much in common with the situation of the moribund when he lies and struggles with death, and cannot die. So to be sick unto death is, not to be able to die -- yet not as though there were hope of life; no the hopelessness in this case is that even the last hope, death, is not available. When death is the greatest danger, one hopes for life; but when one becomes acquainted with an even more dreadful danger, one hopes for death. So when the danger is so great that death has become one's hope, despair is the disconsolateness of not being able to die.

It is in this last sense that despair is the sickness unto death, this agonizing contradiction, this sickness in the self, everlastingly to die, to die and yet not to die, to die the death. For dying means that it is all over, but dying the death means to live to experience death; and if for a single instant this experience is possible, it is tantamount to experiencing it forever. If one might die of despair as one dies of a sickness, then the eternal in him, the self, must be capable of dying in the same sense that the body dies of sickness. But this is an impossibility; the dying of despair transforms itself constantly into a living. The despairing man cannot die; no more than "the dagger can slay thoughts" can despair consume the eternal thing, the self, which is the ground of despair, whose worm dieth not, and whose fire is not quenched. Yet despair is precisely self-consuming, but it is an impotent self-consumption which is not able to do what it wills; and this impotence is a new form of self-consumption, in which again, however, the despairer is not able to do what he wills, namely, to consume himself. This is despair raised to a higher potency, or it is the law for the potentiation. This is the hot incitement, or the cold fire in despair, the gnawing canker whose movement is constantly inward, deeper and deeper, in impotent self-consumption. The fact that despair does not consume him is so far from being any comfort to the despairing man that it is precisely the opposite, this comfort is precisely the torment, it is precisely this that keeps the gnawing pain alive and keeps life in the pain. This precisely is the reason why he despairs -- not to say despaired -- because he cannot consume himself, cannot get rid of himself, cannot become nothing. This is the potentiated formula for despair, the rising of the fever in the sickness of the self.

A despairing man is in despair over something. So it seems for an instant, but only for an instant; that same instant the true despair manifests

itself, or despair manifests itself in its true character. For in the fact that he despaired of something, he really despaired of himself, and now would be rid of himself. Thus when the ambitious man whose watchword was "Either Caesar or nothing"3 does not become Caesar, he is in despair thereat. But this signifies something else, namely, that precisely because he did not become Caesar he now cannot endure to be himself. So properly he is not in despair over the fact that he did not become Caesar, but he is in despair over himself for the fact that he did not become Caesar. This self which, had he become Caesar, would have been to him a sheer delight (though in another sense equally in despair), this self is now absolutely intolerable to him. In a profounder sense it is not the fact that he did not become Caesar which is intolerable to him, but the self which did not become Caesar is the thing that is intolerable; or, more correctly, what is intolerable to him is that he cannot get rid of himself. If he had become Caesar he would have been rid of himself in desperation, but now that he did not become Caesar he cannot in desperation get rid of himself. Essentially he is equally in despair in either case, for he does not possess himself, he is not himself. By becoming Caesar he would not after all have become himself but have got rid of himself, and by not becoming Caesar he falls into despair over the fact that he cannot get rid of himself. Hence it is a superficial view (which presumably has never seen a person in despair, not even one's own self) when it is said of a man in despair, "He is consuming himself." For precisely this it is he despairs of, and to his torment it is precisely this he cannot do, since by despair fire has entered into something that cannot burn, or cannot burn up, that is, into the self.

So to despair over something is not yet properly despair. It is the beginning, or it is as when the physician says of a sickness that it has not yet declared itself. The next step is the declared despair, despair over oneself. A young girl is in despair over love, and so she despairs over her lover, because he died, or because he was unfaithful to her. This is not a declared despair; no, she is in despair over herself. This self of hers, which, if it had become "his" beloved, she would have been rid of in the most blissful way, or would have lost, this self is now a torment to her when it has to be a self without "him"; this self which would have been to her riches (though in another sense equally in despair) has now become to her a loathsome void, since "he" is dead, or it has become to her an abhorrence, since it reminds her of the fact that she was betrayed. Try it now, say to such a girl, "Thou art consuming thyself," and thou shalt hear her reply, "Oh, no, the torment is precisely this, that I cannot do it."

To despair over oneself, in despair to will to be rid of oneself, is the formula for all despair, and hence the second form of despair (in despair at willing to be oneself) can be followed back to the first (in despair at not willing to be oneself), just as in the foregoing we resolved the first into the second (cf. I). A despairing man wants despairingly to be himself. But if he despairingly wants to be himself, he will not want to get rid of himself. Yes, so it seems; but if one inspects more closely, one perceives that after all the contradiction is the same. That self which he despairingly wills to be is a self which he is not (for to will to be that self which one truly is, is indeed the opposite of despair); what he really wills is to tear his self away from the Power which constituted it. But notwithstanding all his despair, this he is unable to do, notwithstanding all the efforts of despair, that Power is the stronger, and it compels him to be the self he does not will to be. But for all that he wills to be rid of himself, to be rid of the self which he is, in order to be the self he himself has chanced to chose. To be self as he wills to be would be his delight (though in another sense it would be equally in despair), but to be compelled to be self as he does not will to be is his torment, namely, that he cannot get rid of himself.

Socrates proved the immortality of the soul from the fact that the sickness of the soul (sin) does not consume it as sickness of the body consumes the body. So also we can demonstrate the eternal in man from the fact that despair cannot consume his self, that this precisely is the torment of contradiction in despair. If there were nothing eternal in a man, he could not despair; but if despair could consume his self, there would still be no despair.

Thus it is that despair, this sickness in the self, is the sickness unto death. The despairing man is mortally ill. In an entirely different sense than can appropriately be said of any disease, we may say that the sickness has attacked the noblest part; and yet the man cannot die. Death is not the last phase of the sickness, but death is continually the last. To be delivered from this sickness by death is an impossibility, for the sickness and its torment . . . and death consist in not being able to die.

This is the situation in despair. And however thoroughly it eludes the attention of the despairer, and however thoroughly the despairer may succeed (as in the case of that kind of despair which is characterized by unawareness of being in despair) in losing himself entirely, and losing himself in such a way that it is not noticed in the least -- eternity nevertheless will make it manifest that his situation was despair, and it will so nail him to himself that the torment nevertheless remains that he cannot get rid of himself, and it becomes manifest that he was deluded in thinking

that he succeeded. And thus it is eternity must act, because to have a self, to be a self, is the greatest concession made to man, but at the same time it is eternity's demand upon him.

ALBERT CAMUS

Albert Camus (1913-1960) was a French-Algerian existentialist. He was a journalist, playwright, novelist, writer of philosophical essays, and Nobel laureate. Though neither by advanced training nor profession a philosopher, Camus nevertheless through his literary works and in numerous reviews, articles, essays, and speeches made important, forceful contributions to a wide range of issues in moral philosophy – from terrorism and political violence to suicide and the death penalty. In awarding him its prize for literature in 1957, the Nobel committee cited the author's persistent efforts to "illuminate the problem of the human conscience in our time," and it is pre-eminently as a writer of conscience and as a champion of imaginative literature as a vehicle of philosophical insight and moral truth that Camus was honored by his own generation and is still admired today. He was at the height of his career, at work on an autobiographical novel, planning new projects for theatre, film, and television, and still seeking a solution to the lacerating political turmoil in his native Algeria, when he died tragically in an automobile accident in January, 1960.

There is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy. All the rest – whether or not the world has three dimensions, whether the mind has nine or twelve categories – comes afterwards. These are games; one must first answer. [Albert Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus; translated from the French by Justin O'Brien (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975), p. 11.]

This is how Camus' essay collection **The Myth of Sisyphus** starts, when it was first published in 1942. The central essay is the eponymous portrait of the mythological figure of Sisyphus. Sisyphus was one of the wisest men on earth, extremely skilled in trickery and the founder of Corinth. After deceiving the gods, Zeus banished him into Tartarus, a prison-like waste land beneath the underworld. Here, Sisyphus endlessly rolls a rock up a hill, just to have it roll back to start anew. A Sisyphean task became synonymous with senseless work that man has to do nowadays. From the

beginning on it is the very clear tone of the book, that the value of life is most important issue.

All other themes resolve about the question of suicide, mortality and faith. The term ‘faith' is burdened with a heavy religious meaning, but for the Camus it is not a matter of one believes in God or not, but rather to believe in oneself. Camus examines how an honest affirmation of life can come into existence without pinning it down to external influences. It is life that matters, the pure ability to be part of this world. The discussion of the ‘The Myth of Sisyphus' essay in the collection starts from a fairly existential viewpoint (even though Camus later distanced himself from existentialism as a whole philosophy): existence matters, all questions of essence come afterwards.

Suicide, the decision to end one's own life, is an act of despair and an inability to cope with life. Camus is aware of that, but digs immediately deeper: he looks at mortality. The pairing between mortality and the endless task of Sisyphus, that makes him immortal in his punishment, is not a stark contrast. On the contrary, with this combination, Camus presents that we are all immortal until the moment of death occurs. How is this possible? It is because death has never been experienced. This reveals to the reader why Camus fascination with suicide marks the start of ‘Absurdity and Suicide': since there is no personal experience of death (where the self has died), the fascination and curiosity prevails. It is this drive that is later needed for overcoming the absurd.

The words ‘eternal', ‘endless', ‘immortal' are made up by the human mind to fix something that is ungraspable. By naming ‘eternity' as such, the status loses a threatening quality of never-ending quality. In Camus' works, these unlimited visions like eternity are summed up in the notion of the absurd. It is also a far better word to describe how our mind processes a word but can never fully grasp the meaning behind since we always act within limits of information. Sisyphus is in the same situation and his story illustrates how man copes with the graspable world around him. His situation also shows how one can overcome the despair of the absurd through Camus revolt.

The basic idea of revolt is largely political: to overthrow an existing and often oppressive authority. Despite the political importance of this essay for the time published, the idea of overcoming a tyrannical force is crucial. Camusian revolt consists of three steps: acknowledgement, acceptance, accomplishment. Acknowledgement of the absurd makes it first of all a part of one's own; it is not foreign and unpleasant anymore. After this step, “[y]ou have already grasped that Sisyphus is the absurd hero.” Acceptance

is therefore much more difficult for many people. Sisyphus cannot break his fate from the outside, but only from the inside. This inside is the attitude shown towards an issue, although it could alternatively regarded as the underworld itself or a representation of the Freudian unconsciousness.

Sisyphus has to accept the absurd around him in order to overcome it. Camus uses the lack of information about Sisyphus to create his own story about the man alone with a rock. Nothing seems to be scarier than working for no results and always starting all over again, apparently with no aim. This is the point where Camus, like a lawyer, takes position for Sisyphus and works in his theory of the absurd.

At each of those moments when he leaves the heights and gradually sinks towards the lairs of gods, he is superior to his fate. He is stronger than his rock. ... Sisyphus, the proletarian of the gods, powerless and rebellious, knows the whole extent of his wretched condition; it is what he thinks of during his descent. The lucidity that was to constitute his torture at the same time crowns his victory. There is not fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn. 3

The Myth of Sisyphus is a deeply humanistic book. Even though the word ‘fate' appears several times, it is meant in terms of fear: fear of a (wrong) decision, a situation or a life – in short, representations of the absurd. Since this is no solid soil for an individual to grow on, this state of fear is only overcome by faith in the self. Camus' essay is a celebration of the individual without falling into self-indulgence or egotism.

Albert Camus

Quotes

“In order to understand the world, one has to turn away from it on occasion."

“Man is always preying to his truths. Once he has admitted them, he cannot free himself from them.”

“Seeking what is true is not seeking what is desirable.”

“What is called a reason for living is also an excellent reason for dying.”

“I know simply that the sky will last longer than I.”

“Man stands face to face with the irrational. He feels within him his longing for happiness and for reason. The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world.”

“A man devoid of hope and conscious of being so has ceased to belong to the future.”

“A man wants to earn money in order to be happy, and his whole effort and the best of a life are devoted to the earning of that money. Happiness is forgotten; the means are taken for the end.”

“The struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.”

“Likewise and during every day of an unillustrious life, time carries us. But a moment always comes when we have to carry it. We live on the future: “tomorrow,” “later on,” “when you have made your way,” “you will understand when you are old enough.” Such irrelevancies are wonderful, for, after all, it’s a matter of dying. Yet a day comes when a man notices or says that he is thirty. Thus he asserts his youth. But simultaneously he situates himself in relation to time. He takes his place in it. He admits that he stands at a certain point on a curve that he acknowledges having to travel to its end. He belongs to time, and by the horror that seizes him, he recognizes his worst enemy. Tomorrow, he was longing for tomorrow, whereas everything in him ought to reject it. That revolt of the flesh is the absurd.”

“There can be no question of holding forth on ethics. I have seen people behave badly with great morality and I note every day that integrity has no need of rules”

“Beginning to think is beginning to be undermined. Society has but little connection with such beginnings. The worm is in man's heart. That is where it must be sought. One must follow and understand this fatal game that leads from lucidity in the face of existence to flight from light.”

“From the moment absurdity is recognized, it becomes a passion, the most harrowing of all. But whether or not one can live with one's passions, whether or not one can accept their law, which is to burn the heart they simultaneously exalt - that is the whole question.”

“Of whom and of what can I say: "I know that"! This heart within me I can feel, and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch, and I likewise judge that it exists. There ends all my knowledge, and the rest is construction. For if I try to seize this self of which I feel sure, if I try to define and to summarize it, it is nothing but water slipping through my fingers. I can sketch one by one all the aspects it is able to assume, all those likewise that have been attributed to it, this upbringing, this origin, this ardor or these silences, this nobility or this vileness. But aspects cannot be added up. This very heart which is mine will forever remain indefinable to me. Between the certainty I have of my existence and the content I try to give to that assurance the gap will never be filled.”

"What can a meaning outside my condition mean to me? I can understand only in human terms. What I touch, what resists me--that is what I understand. And these two certainties--my appetite for the absolute and for unity and the impossibility of reducing this world to a rational and reasonable principle--I also know that I cannot reconcile them. What other truth can I admit without lying, without bringing in a hope which I lack and which means nothing within the limits of my condition?"

Appendix

Albert Camus

ABSURDITY AND SUICIDE

THERE IS BUT ONE TRULY SERIOUS philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy. All the rest—whether or not the world has three dimensions, whether the mind has nine or twelve categories—comes afterwards. These are games; one must first answer. And if it is true, as Nietzsche claims, that a philosopher, to deserve our respect, must preach by example, you can appreciate the importance of that reply, for it will precede the definitive act. These are facts the heart can feel; yet they call for careful study before they become clear to the intellect.

If I ask myself how to judge that this question is more urgent than that, I reply that one judges by the actions it entails. I have never seen anyone die for the ontological argument. Galileo, who held a scientific truth of great importance, abjured it with the greatest of ease as soon as it endangered his life. In a certain sense, he did right. That truth was not worth the stake. Whether the earth or the sun revolves around the other is a matter of profound indifference. To tell the truth, it is a futile question. On the other hand, I see many people die because they judge that life is not worth living. I see others paradoxically getting killed for the ideas or illusions that give them a reason for living (what is called a reason for living is also an excellent reason for dying). I therefore conclude that the meaning of life is the most urgent of questions. How to answer it? On all essential problems (I mean thereby those that run the risk of leading to death or those that intensify the passion of living) there are probably but two methods of thought: the method of La Palisse and the method of Don Quixote. Solely the balance between evidence and lyricism can allow us to achieve simultaneously emotion and lucidity. In a subject at once so humble and so heavy with emotion, the learned and classical dialectic must yield, one can see, to a more modest attitude of mind deriving at one and the same time from common sense and understanding.

Suicide has never been dealt with except as a social phenomenon. On the contrary, we are concerned here, at the outset, with the relationship between individual thought and suicide. An act like this is prepared within the silence of the heart, as is a great work of art. The man himself is ignorant of it. One evening he pulls the trigger or jumps. Of an apartment-building manager who had killed himself I was told that he had lost his daughter five years before, that he had changed greatly since, and that that experience had "undermined" him. A more exact word cannot be imagined. Beginning to think is beginning to be under mined. Society has but little connection with such beginnings. The worm is in man's heart. That is where it must be sought. One must follow and understand this fatal game that leads from lucidity in the face of existence to flight from light. . . .

But it is hard to fix the precise instant, the subtle step when the mind opted for death; it is easier to deduce from the act itself the consequences it implies. In a sense, and as in melodrama, killing yourself amounts to confessing. It is confessing that life is too much for you or that you do not understand it. Let's not go too far in such analogies, however, but rather return to everyday words. It is merely confessing that that "is not worth the trouble." Living, naturally, is never easy. You continue making the gestures commanded by existence for many reasons, the first of which is habit. Dying voluntarily implies that you have recognized, even instinctively, the ridiculous character of that habit, the absence of any profound reason for living, the insane character of that daily agitation, and the uselessness of suffering.

What, then, is that incalculable feeling that deprives the mind of the sleep necessary to life? A world that can be explained even with bad reasons is a familiar world. But, on the other hand, in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, is-properly the feeling of absurdity. All healthy men having thought of their own suicide, it can be seen, without further explanation, that there is a direct connection between this feeling and the longing for death.

The subject of this essay is precisely this relationship between the absurd and suicide, the exact degree to which suicide is a solution to the absurd. The principle can be established that for a man who does not cheat, what he believes to be true must determine his action. Belief in the absurdity of existence must then dictate his conduct. It is legitimate to wonder, clearly and without false pathos, whether a conclusion of this

importance requires forsaking as rapidly as possible an incomprehensible condition. I am speaking, of course, of men inclined to be in harmony with themselves.

All great deeds and all great thoughts have 2 ridiculous beginning. Great works are often born on a street-corner or in a restaurant's revolving door. So it is with absurdity. The absurd world more than others derives its nobility from that abject birth. In certain situations, replying "nothing" when asked what one is thinking about may be pretense in a man. Those who are loved are w el aware of this. But if that reply is sincere, if it symbolizes that odd state of soul in which die void becomes eloquent, in which the chain of daily gestures is broken, in which the heart vainly seeks the link that will connect it again, then it is as it were the first sign of absurdity.

It happens that the stage sets collapse. Rising, streetcar, four hours in the office or the factory, meal, streetcar, four hours of work, meal, sleep, and Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday and Saturday according to the same rhythm—this path is easily followed most of the time. But one day the "why" arises and everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement. "Begins"—this 15 important. Weariness comes at the end of the acts of a mechanical life, but at the same time it inaugurates the impulse of consciousness. It awakens consciousness and provokes what follows. What follows is the gradual return into the chain or it is the definitive awakening. At the end of the awakening comes, in time, the consequence: suicide or recovery. In itself weariness has something sickening about it. Here, I must conclude that it is good. For everything begins with consciousness and nothing is worth anything except through it. . . .

But what does life mean in such a universe? Nothing else for the moment but indifference to the future and a desire to use up everything that is-given. Belief in the meaning of life always implies a scale of values, a choice, our preferences. Belief in the absurd, according to our definitions, teaches the contrary. But this is worth examining.

Knowing whether or not one can live without appeal is all that interests me. I do not want get out of my depth. This aspect of life being given me, can I adapt myself to it? Now, faced with this particular concern, belief in the absurd is tantamount to substituting the quantity of experiences for the quality. If I convince myself that this life has no other aspect than that of the absurd, if I feel that its whole equilibrium depends on that perpetual opposition between my conscious revolt and the darkness in which it struggles, if I admit that my freedom has no meaning except in relation to

its limited fate, then I must say that what counts is not the best of living but the most living. . . .

On the one hand the absurd teaches that all experiences are unimportant, and on the other it urges toward the greatest quantity of experiences. How, then, can one fail to do as so many of those men I was speaking of earlier—choose the form of life that brings us the most possible of that human matter, thereby introducing a scale of values that on the other hand one claims to reject?

But again it is the absurd and its contradictory life that teaches us. For the mistake is thinking that that quantity of experiences depends on the circumstances of our life when it depends solely on us. Here we have to be over-simple. To two men living the same number of years, the world always provides the same sum of experiences. It is up to us to be conscious of them. Being aware of one's life, one's revolt, one's freedom, and to the maximum, is living, and to the maximum. Where lucidity dominates, the scale of values becomes useless. . . .

Albert Camus

THE MYTH OF SISYPHUS

The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They had thought with some reason that there is no more dreadful punishment than futile and hopeless labor.

If one believes Homer, Sisyphus was the wisest and most prudent of mortals. According to another tradition, however, he was disposed to practice the profession of highwayman. I see no contradiction in this. Opinions differ as to the reasons why he became the futile laborer of the underworld. To begin with, he is accused of a certain levity in regard to the gods. He stole their secrets. Egina, the daughter of Esopus, was carried off by Jupiter. The father was shocked by that disappearance and complained to Sisyphus. He, who knew of the abduction, offered to tell about it on condition that Esopus would give water to the citadel of Corinth. To the celestial thunder-bolts he preferred the benediction of water. He was punished for this in the underworld. Homer tells us also that Sisyphus had put Death in chains. Pluto could not endure the sight of his deserted, silent empire. He dispatched the god of war, who liberated Death from the hands of her conqueror.

It is said also that Sisyphus, being near to death, rashly wanted to test his wife's love. He ordered her to cast his unburied body into the middle of the public square. Sisyphus woke up in the underworld. And there, annoyed by

an obedience so contrary to human love, he obtained from Pluto permission to return to earth in order to chastise his wife. But when he had seen again the face of this world, enjoyed water and sun, warm stones and the sea, he no longer wanted to go back to the infernal darkness. Recalls, signs of anger, warnings were of no avail. Many years more he lived facing the curve of the gulf, the sparkling sea, and the smiles of earth. A decree of the gods was necessary. Mercury came and seized the impudent man by the collar and, snatching him from his joys, led him forcibly back to the underworld, where his rock was ready for him.

You have already grasped that Sisyphus is the absurd hero. He is, as much through his passions as through his torture. His scorn of the gods, his hatred of death, and his passion for life won him that unspeakable penalty in which the whole being is exerted toward accomplishing nothing. This is the price that must be paid for the passions of this earth. Nothing is told us about Sisyphus in the underworld. Myths are made for the imagination to breathe life into them. As for this myth, one sees merely the whole effort of a body straining to raise the huge stone, to roll it and push it up a slope a hundred times over; one sees the face screwed up, the cheek tight against the stone, the shoulder bracing the clay-covered mass, the foot wedging it, the fresh start with arms outstretched, the wholly human security of two earth-clotted hands. At the very end of his long effort measured by skyless space and time without depth, the purpose is achieved. Then Sisyphus watches the stone rush down in a few moments toward that lower world whence he will have to push it up again toward the summit. He goes back down to the plain.

It is during that return, that pause, that Sisyphus interests me. A face that toils so close to stones is already stone itself! I see that man going back down with a heavy yet measured step toward the torment of which he will never know the end. That hour like a breathing-space which returns as surely as his suffering, that is the hour of consciousness. At each of those moments when he leaves the heights and gradually sinks toward the lairs of the gods, he is superior to his fate. He is stronger than his rock.

If this myth is tragic, that is because its hero is conscious. Where would his torture be, indeed, if at every step the hope of succeeding upheld him? The workman of today works every day in his life at the same tasks, and this fate is no less absurd. But it is tragic only at the rare moments when it becomes conscious. Sisyphus, proletarian of the gods, powerless and rebellious, knows the whole extent of his wretched condition: it is what he thinks of during his descent. The lucidity that was to constitute his torture at

the same time crowns his victory. There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn.

If the descent is thus sometimes performed in sorrow, it can also take place in joy. This word is not too much. Again I fancy Sisyphus returning toward his rock, and the sorrow was in the beginning. When the images of earth cling too tightly to memory, when the call of happiness becomes too insistent, it happens that melancholy rises in man's heart: this is the rock's victory, this is the rock itself.

The boundless grief is too heavy to bear. These are our nights of Gethsemane. But crushing truths perish from being acknowledged. Thus, Edipus at the outset obeys fate without knowing it. But from the moment he knows, his tragedy begins. Yet at the same moment, blind and desperate, he realizes that the only bond linking him to the world is the cool hand of a girl. Then a tremendous remark rings out: "Despite so many ordeals, my advanced age and the nobility of my soul make me conclude that all is well." Sophocles' Edipus, like Dostoevsky's Kirilov, thus gives the recipe for the absurd victory. Ancient wisdom confirms modern heroism.

One does not discover the absurd without being tempted to write a manual of happiness. "What! by such narrow ways—?" There is but one world, however. Happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth. They are inseparable. It would be a mistake to say that happiness necessarily springs from the absurd discovery. It happens as well that the feeling of the absurd springs from happiness. "I conclude that all is well," says CEdipus, and that remark is sacred. It echoes in the wild and limited universe of man. It teaches that all is not, has not been, exhausted. It drives out of this world a god who had come into it with dissatisfaction and a preference for futile sufferings. It makes of fate a human matter, which must be settled among men.

All Sisyphus' silent joy is contained therein. His fate belongs to him. His rock is his thing. Likewise, the absurd man, when he contemplates his torment, silences all the idols. In the universe suddenly restored to its silence, the myriad wondering little voices of the earth rise up. Unconscious, secret calls, invitations from all the faces, they are the necessary reverse and price of victory. There is no sun without shadow, and it is essential to know the night. The absurd man says yes and his effort will henceforth be unceasing. If there is a personal fate, there is no higher destiny, or at least there is but one which he concludes is inevitable and despicable. For the rest, he knows himself to be the master of his days. At that subtle moment when man glances backward over his life, Sisyphus returning toward his rock, in that slight pivoting contemplates that series of

unrelated actions which becomes his fate, created by him, combined under his memory's eye and soon sealed by death. Thus, convinced of the wholly human in of all that is human, a blind man eager to who knows that the night has no end, he is still the go. The rock is still rolling. I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain!

One always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and -raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre focussed more sharply on the moral consequences of existentialist thought. In literary texts as well as in philosophical treatises, Sartre emphasized the vital implications of human subjectivity.

Sartre's 1946 lecture *L'Existentialisme est un humanisme* offers a convenient summary of his basic views. The most fundamental doctrine of existentialism is the claim that—for human beings at least—*existence precedes essence.* As an atheist, Sartre demands that we completely abandon the traditional notion of human beings as the carefully designed artifacts of a divine creator. There is no abstract nature that one is destined to fill. Instead, each of us simply **is** in the world; **what** we will be is then entirely up to us. Being human just means having the capacity to create one's own essence in time.

But my exercise of this capacity inevitably makes me totally responsible for the life I choose. Since I could always have chosen some other path in life, the one I follow is my own. Since nothing has been imposed on me from outside, there are no excuses for what I am. Since the choices I make are ones I deem best, they constitute my proposal for what any human being ought to be. On Sartre's view, the inescapable condition of human life is the requirement of choosing **something** and accepting the responsibility for the consequences.

But accepting such total responsibility entails a profound alteration of my attitude towards life. Sharing in the awesome business of determining the future development of humanity generally through the particular decisions I make for myself produces an overwhelming sense of **anguish**.

Moreover, since there is no external authority to which I can turn in an effort to escape my duty in this regard, I am bound to feel **abandonment** as well. Finally, since I repeatedly experience evidence that my own powers are inadequate to the task, I am driven to **despair**. There can be no relief, no help, no hope. Human life demands total commitment to a path whose significance will always remain open to doubt.

Although this account of human life is thoroughly subjective, that does not reduce the importance of moral judgment. Indeed, only this account does justice to the fundamental dignity and value of human life. Since all of us share in the same situation, we must embrace our awesome freedom, deliberately rejecting any (false) promise of authoritative moral determination. Even when we choose to seek or accept advice about what to do, we remain ourselves responsible for choosing which advice to accept.

This doesn't mean that I can do whatever I want, since free choice is never exercised capriciously. Making a moral decision is an act of creation, like the creation of a work of art; nothing about it is predetermined, so its value lies wholly within itself. Nor does this mean that it is impossible to make mistakes. Although there can be no objective failure to meet external standards, an individual human being can choose badly. When that happens, it is not that I have betrayed my abstract essence, but rather that I have failed to keep faith with myself.

Since the central feature of human existence is the capacity to choose in full awareness of one's own non-being, it follows that the basic question is always whether or not I will be true to myself. Self-Deception invariably involves an attempt to evade responsibility for myself. If, for example, I attribute undesirable thoughts and actions to the influence upon me of the subconscious or unconscious, I have made part of myself into an "other" that I then suppose to control the real me. Thus, using psychological theory to distinguish between a "good I" and a "bad me" only serves to perpetuate my evasion of responsibility and its concomitants.

The ability to accept ourselves for what we are—without exaggeration—is the key, since the chief value of human life is fidelity to our selves, sincerity in the most profound sense. In our relationships with other human beings, what we truly are is all that counts, yet it is precisely here that we most often betray ourselves by trying to be whatever the other person expects us to be. This is invidious, on Sartre's view, since it exhibits a total lack of faith in ourselves: to the extent that I have faith in anyone else, I reveal my lack of the courage to be myself. There are, in the end, only two choices—sincerity or self-deception, to be or not to be.

Sartre's short story "The Wall" captures his central philosophical themes in a fictional setting. Only in the true-to-life moment of someone facing up to the immanence of his own death will the nature of human life be revealed.

Pablo fully experiences his own weakness in the face of death. But then his captors offer him the choice of saving himself by betraying his comrade. Now he must decide whether to defend the great cause or to live. After sweating it out, he chooses to give the authorities a phony story, knowing that it will guarantee his death. But the tables are turned when the lie turns out to be true.

Here are all of the consequences of human responsibility: anguish over the decision, abandonment in making it alone, and despair when it backfires. This, Sartre believed, is the character of human life.

Appendix

Jean-Paul Sartre

Existentialism Is a Humanism

(Lecture given in 1946)

Fragments

If one considers an article of manufacture as, for example, a book or a paper-knife – one sees that it has been made by an artisan who had a conception of it; and he has paid attention, equally, to the conception of a paper-knife and to the pre-existent technique of production which is a part of that conception and is, at bottom, a formula. Thus the paper-knife is at the same time an article producible in a certain manner and one which, on the other hand, serves a definite purpose, for one cannot suppose that a man would produce a paper-knife without knowing what it was for. Let us say, then, of the paperknife that its essence – that is to say the sum of the formulae and the qualities which made its production and its definition possible – precedes its existence. The presence of such-and-such a paper-knife or book is thus determined before my eyes. Here, then, we are viewing the world from a technical standpoint, and we can say that production precedes existence.

When we think of God as the creator, we are thinking of him, most of the time, as a supernal artisan. Whatever doctrine we may be considering, whether it be a doctrine like that of Descartes, or of Leibnitz himself, we always imply that the will follows, more or less, from the understanding or at least accompanies it, so that when God creates he knows precisely what he is creating. Thus, the conception of man in the mind of God is comparable to that of the paper-knife in the mind of the artisan: God makes man according to a procedure and a conception, exactly as the artisan manufactures a paper-knife,

following a definition and a formula. Thus each individual man is the realisation of a certain conception which dwells in the divine understanding. In the philosophic atheism of the eighteenth century, the notion of God is suppressed, but not, for all that, the idea that essence is prior to existence; something of that idea we still find everywhere, in Diderot, in Voltaire and even in Kant. Man possesses a human nature; that "human nature," which is the conception of human being, is found in every man; which means that each man is a particular example of a universal conception, the conception of Man. In Kant, this universality goes so far that the wild man of the woods, man in the state of nature and the bourgeois are all contained in the same definition and have the same fundamental qualities. Here again, the essence of man precedes that historic existence which we confront in experience.

Atheistic existentialism, of which I am a representative, declares with greater consistency that if God does not exist there is at least one being whose existence comes before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man or, as Heidegger has it, the human reality. What do we mean by saying that existence precedes essence? We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world – and defines himself afterwards. If man as the existentialist sees him is not definable, it is because to begin with he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself. Thus, there is no human nature, because there is no God to have a conception of it. Man simply is. Not that he is simply what he conceives himself to be, but he is what he wills, and as he conceives himself after already existing – as he wills to be after that leap towards existence. Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism. And this is what people call its "subjectivity," using the word as a reproach against us. But what do we mean to say by this, but that man is of a greater dignity than a stone or a table? For we mean to say that man primarily exists – that man is, before all else, something which propels itself towards a future and is aware that it is doing so. Man is, indeed, a project which possesses a subjective life, instead of being a kind of moss, or a fungus or a cauliflower. Before that projection of the self nothing exists; not even in the heaven of intelligence: man will only attain existence when he is what he purposes to be. Not, however, what he may wish to be. For what we usually understand by wishing or willing is a conscious decision taken – much more often than not – after we have made ourselves what we are. I may wish to join a party, to write a book or to marry – but in such a case what is usually called my will is probably a manifestation of a prior and more spontaneous decision. If, however, it is true that existence is prior to essence, man is responsible for what he is. Thus, the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own

shoulders. And, when we say that man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his own individuality, but that he is responsible for all men. The word "subjectivism" is to be understood in two senses, and our adversaries play upon only one of them. Subjectivism means, on the one hand, the freedom of the individual subject and, on the other, that man cannot pass beyond human subjectivity. It is the latter which is the deeper meaning of existentialism. When we say that man chooses himself, we do mean that every one of us must choose himself; but by that we also mean that in choosing for himself he chooses for all men. For in effect, of all the actions a man may take in order to create himself as he wills to be, there is not one which is not creative, at the same time, of an image of man such as he believes he ought to be. To choose between this or that is at the same time to affirm the value of that which is chosen; for we are unable ever to choose the worse. What we choose is always the better; and nothing can be better for us unless it is better for all. If, moreover, existence precedes essence and we will to exist at the same time as we fashion our image, that image is valid for all and for the entire epoch in which we find ourselves. Our responsibility is thus much greater than we had supposed, for it concerns mankind as a whole. If I am a worker, for instance, I may choose to join a Christian rather than a Communist trade union. And if, by that membership, I choose to signify that resignation is, after all, the attitude that best becomes a man, that man's kingdom is not upon this earth, I do not commit myself alone to that view. Resignation is my will for everyone, and my action is, in consequence, a commitment on behalf of all mankind. Or if, to take a more personal case, I decide to marry and to have children, even though this decision proceeds simply from my situation, from my passion or my desire, I am thereby committing not only myself, but humanity as a whole, to the practice of monogamy. I am thus responsible for myself and for all men, and I am creating a certain image of man as I would have him to be. In fashioning myself I fashion man.

This may enable us to understand what is meant by such terms – perhaps a little grandiloquent – as anguish, abandonment and despair. As you will soon see, it is very simple. First, what do we mean by anguish? – The existentialist frankly states that man is in anguish. His meaning is as follows: When a man commits himself to anything, fully realising that he is not only choosing what he will be, but is thereby at the same time a legislator deciding for the whole of mankind – in such a moment a man cannot escape from the sense of complete and profound responsibility. There are many, indeed, who show no such anxiety. But we affirm that they are merely disguising their anguish or are in flight from it. Certainly, many people think that in what they are doing they commit no one but themselves to anything: and if you ask them, "What would happen if everyone did so?" they shrug their shoulders and reply, "Everyone does not do so." But in truth, one ought always to ask oneself what would

happen if everyone did as one is doing; nor can one escape from that disturbing thought except by a kind of self-deception. The man who lies in self-excuse, by saying "Everyone will not do it" must be ill at ease in his conscience, for the act of lying implies the universal value which it denies. By its very disguise his anguish reveals itself. This is the anguish that Kierkegaard called "the anguish of Abraham." You know the story: An angel commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son; and obedience was obligatory, if it really was an angel who had appeared and said, "Thou, Abraham, shalt sacrifice thy son." But anyone in such a case would wonder, first, whether it was indeed an angel and secondly, whether I am really Abraham. Where are the proofs? A certain mad woman who suffered from hallucinations said that people were telephoning to her, and giving her orders. The doctor asked, "But who is it that speaks to you?" She replied: "He says it is God." And what, indeed, could prove to her that it was God? If an angel appears to me, what is the proof that it is an angel; or, if I hear voices, who can prove that they proceed from heaven and not from hell, or from my own subconsciousness or some pathological condition? Who can prove that they are really addressed to me?

Who, then, can prove that I am the proper person to impose, by my own choice, my conception of man upon mankind? I shall never find any proof whatever; there will be no sign to convince me of it. If a voice speaks to me, it is still I myself who must decide whether the voice is or is not that of an angel. If I regard a certain course of action as good, it is only I who choose to say that it is good and not bad. There is nothing to show that I am Abraham: nevertheless I also am obliged at every instant to perform actions which are examples. Everything happens to every man as though the whole human race had its eyes fixed upon what he is doing and regulated its conduct accordingly. So every man ought to say, "Am I really a man who has the right to act in such a manner that humanity regulates itself by what I do." If a man does not say that, he is dissembling his anguish. Clearly, the anguish with which we are concerned here is not one that could lead to quietism or inaction. It is anguish pure and simple, of the kind well known to all those who have borne responsibilities. When, for instance, a military leader takes upon himself the responsibility for an attack and sends a number of men to their death, he chooses to do it and at bottom he alone chooses. No doubt under a higher command, but its orders, which are more general, require interpretation by him and upon that interpretation depends the life of ten, fourteen or twenty men. In making the decision, he cannot but feel a certain anguish. All leaders know that anguish. It does not prevent their acting, on the contrary it is the very condition of their action, for the action presupposes that there is a plurality of possibilities, and in choosing one of these, they realize that it has value only because it is chosen. Now it is anguish of that kind which existentialism describes, and moreover, as we shall see, makes explicit through direct

responsibility towards other men who are concerned. Far from being a screen which could separate us from action, it is a condition of action itself.

And when we speak of "abandonment" – a favorite word of Heidegger – we only mean to say that God does not exist, and that it is necessary to draw the consequences of his absence right to the end. The existentialist is strongly opposed to a certain type of secular moralism which seeks to suppress God at the least possible expense. Towards 1880, when the French professors endeavoured to formulate a secular morality, they said something like this: God is a useless and costly hypothesis, so we will do without it. However, if we are to have morality, a society and a law-abiding world, it is essential that certain values should be taken seriously; they must have an a priori existence ascribed to them. It must be considered obligatory a priori to be honest, not to lie, not to beat one's wife, to bring up children and so forth; so we are going to do a little work on this subject, which will enable us to show that these values exist all the same, inscribed in an intelligible heaven although, of course, there is no God. In other words – and this is, I believe, the purport of all that we in France call radicalism – nothing will be changed if God does not exist; we shall rediscover the same norms of honesty, progress and humanity, and we shall have disposed of God as an out-of-date hypothesis which will die away quietly of itself. The existentialist, on the contrary, finds it extremely embarrassing that God does not exist, for there disappears with Him all possibility of finding values in an intelligible heaven. There can no longer be any good a priori, since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think it. It is nowhere written that "the good" exists, that one must be honest or must not lie, since we are now upon the plane where there are only men. Dostoevsky once wrote: "If God did not exist, everything would be permitted"; and that, for existentialism, is the starting point. Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist, and man is in consequence forlorn, for he cannot find anything to depend upon either within or outside himself. He discovers forthwith, that he is without excuse. For if indeed existence precedes essence, one will never be able to explain one's action by reference to a given and specific human nature; in other words, there is no determinism – man is free, man is freedom. Nor, on the other hand, if God does not exist, are we provided with any values or commands that could legitimise our behaviour. Thus we have neither behind us, nor before us in a luminous realm of values, any means of justification or excuse. – We are left alone, without excuse. That is what I mean when I say that man is condemned to be free.

Condemned, because he did not create himself, yet is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does. The existentialist does not believe in the power of passion. He will never regard a grand passion as a destructive torrent upon which a man

is swept into certain actions as by fate, and which, therefore, is an excuse for them. He thinks that man is responsible for his passion. Neither will an existentialist think that a man can find help through some sign being vouchsafed upon earth for his orientation: for he thinks that the man himself interprets the sign as he chooses. He thinks that every man, without any support or help whatever, is condemned at every instant to invent man. As Ponge has written in a very fine article, "Man is the future of man." That is exactly true. Only, if one took this to mean that the future is laid up in Heaven, that God knows what it is, it would be false, for then it would no longer even be a future. If, however, it means that, whatever man may now appear to be, there is a future to be fashioned, a virgin future that awaits him – then it is a true saying. But in the present one is forsaken.

As an example by which you may the better understand this state of abandonment, I will refer to the case of a pupil of mine, who sought me out in the following circumstances. His father was quarrelling with his mother and was also inclined to be a "collaborator"; his elder brother had been killed in the German offensive of 1940 and this young man, with a sentiment somewhat primitive but generous, burned to avenge him. His mother was living alone with him, deeply afflicted by the semi-treason of his father and by the death of her eldest son, and her one consolation was in this young man. But he, at this moment, had the choice between going to England to join the Free French Forces or of staying near his mother and helping her to live. He fully realised that this woman lived only for him and that his disappearance – or perhaps his death – would plunge her into despair. He also realised that, concretely and in fact, every action he performed on his mother's behalf would be sure of effect in the sense of aiding her to live, whereas anything he did in order to go and fight would be an ambiguous action which might vanish like water into sand and serve no purpose. For instance, to set out for England he would have to wait indefinitely in a Spanish camp on the way through Spain; or, on arriving in England or in Algiers he might be put into an office to fill up forms. Consequently, he found himself confronted by two very different modes of action; the one concrete, immediate, but directed towards only one individual; and the other an action addressed to an end infinitely greater, a national collectivity, but for that very reason ambiguous – and it might be frustrated on the way. At the same time, he was hesitating between two kinds of morality; on the one side the morality of sympathy, of personal devotion and, on the other side, a morality of wider scope but of more debatable validity. He had to choose between those two. What could help him to choose? Could the Christian doctrine? No. Christian doctrine says: Act with charity, love your neighbour, deny yourself for others, choose the way which is hardest, and so forth. But which is the harder road? To whom does one owe the more brotherly love, the patriot or the mother? Which is the more useful aim, the general one of fighting

in and for the whole community, or the precise aim of helping one particular person to live? Who can give an answer to that a priori? No one. Nor is it given in any ethical scripture. The Kantian ethic says, Never regard another as a means, but always as an end. Very well; if I remain with my mother, I shall be regarding her as the end and not as a means: but by the same token I am in danger of treating as means those who are fighting on my behalf; and the converse is also true, that if I go to the aid of the combatants I shall be treating them as the end at the risk of treating my mother as a means. If values are uncertain, if they are still too abstract to determine the particular, concrete case under consideration, nothing remains but to trust in our instincts. That is what this young man tried to do; and when I saw him he said, "In the end, it is feeling that counts; the direction in which it is really pushing me is the one I ought to choose. If I feel that I love my mother enough to sacrifice everything else for her – my will to be avenged, all my longings for action and adventure then I stay with her. If, on the contrary, I feel that my love for her is not enough, I go." But how does one estimate the strength of a feeling? The value of his feeling for his mother was determined precisely by the fact that he was standing by her. I may say that I love a certain friend enough to sacrifice such or such a sum of money for him, but I cannot prove that unless I have done it. I may say, "I love my mother enough to remain with her," if actually I have remained with her. I can only estimate the strength of this affection if I have performed an action by which it is defined and ratified. But if I then appeal to this affection to justify my action, I find myself drawn into a vicious circle.

Moreover, as Gide has very well said, a sentiment which is play-acting and one which is vital are two things that are hardly distinguishable one from another. To decide that I love my mother by staying beside her, and to play a comedy the upshot of which is that I do so – these are nearly the same thing. In other words, feeling is formed by the deeds that one does; therefore I cannot consult it as a guide to action. And that is to say that I can neither seek within myself for an authentic impulse to action, nor can I expect, from some ethic, formulae that will enable me to act. You may say that the youth did, at least, go to a professor to ask for advice. But if you seek counsel – from a priest, for example you have selected that priest; and at bottom you already knew, more or less, what he would advise. In other words, to choose an adviser is nevertheless to commit oneself by that choice. If you are a Christian, you will say, consult a priest; but there are collaborationists, priests who are resisters and priests who wait for the tide to turn: which will you choose? Had this young man chosen a priest of the resistance, or one of the collaboration, he would have decided beforehand the kind of advice he was to receive. Similarly, in coming to me, he knew what advice I should give him, and I had but one reply to make. You are free, therefore choose, that is to say, invent. No rule of general morality can show you what you ought to do: no signs are vouchsafed

in this world. The Catholics will reply, “Oh, but they are!” Very well; still, it is I myself, in every case, who have to interpret the signs. While I was imprisoned, I made the acquaintance of a somewhat remarkable man, a Jesuit, who had become a member of that order in the following manner. In his life he had suffered a succession of rather severe setbacks. His father had died when he was a child, leaving him in poverty, and he had been awarded a free scholarship in a religious institution, where he had been made continually to feel that he was accepted for charity’s sake, and, in consequence, he had been denied several of those distinctions and honours which gratify children. Later, about the age of eighteen, he came to grief in a sentimental affair; and finally, at twenty-two – this was a trifle in itself, but it was the last drop that overflowed his cup – he failed in his military examination. This young man, then, could regard himself as a total failure: it was a sign – but a sign of what? He might have taken refuge in bitterness or despair. But he took it – very cleverly for him – as a sign that he was not intended for secular success, and that only the attainments of religion, those of sanctity and of faith, were accessible to him. He interpreted his record as a message from God, and became a member of the Order. Who can doubt but that this decision as to the meaning of the sign was his, and his alone? One could have drawn quite different conclusions from such a series of reverses – as, for example, that he had better become a carpenter or a revolutionary. For the decipherment of the sign, however, he bears the entire responsibility. That is what “abandonment” implies, that we ourselves decide our being. And with this abandonment goes anguish.

As for “despair,” the meaning of this expression is extremely simple. It merely means that we limit ourselves to a reliance upon that which is within our wills, or within the sum of the probabilities which render our action feasible. Whenever one wills anything, there are always these elements of probability. If I am counting upon a visit from a friend, who may be coming by train or by tram, I presuppose that the train will arrive at the appointed time, or that the tram will not be derailed. I remain in the realm of possibilities; but one does not rely upon any possibilities beyond those that are strictly concerned in one’s action. Beyond the point at which the possibilities under consideration cease to affect my action, I ought to disinterest myself. For there is no God and no prevenient design, which can adapt the world and all its possibilities to my will. When Descartes said, “Conquer yourself rather than the world,” what he meant was, at bottom, the same – that we should act without hope.

SIGMUND FREUD

(1856-1939)

Sigmund Freud, the father of **psychoanalysis**, was a medical doctor, psychologist and influential thinker of the early twentieth century. Freud elaborated the theory that the mind is a complex energy-system, the structural investigation of which is the proper province of psychology. He articulated and refined the concepts of the **unconscious**, he proposed a **tripartite account of the mind's structure**—all as part of a radically new conceptual and therapeutic frame of reference for the understanding of human psychological development and the treatment of abnormal mental conditions. Freud distinguished three structural elements within the mind, which he called ***id, ego***, and ***super-ego***. The ***id*** is that part of the mind in which are situated the *instinctual sexual drives which require satisfaction*; the ***super-ego*** is that part which contains the "*conscience*" namely, *socially-acquired control mechanisms* which have been internalized, and which are usually imparted in the first instance by the parents; while the ***ego*** is the *conscious self* that is created by the dynamic tensions and *interactions* between the ***id*** and the ***super-ego*** and has the task of reconciling their conflicting demands with the requirements of external reality. It is in this sense that the mind is to be understood as a dynamic energy-system. All objects of consciousness reside in the ***ego***; the contents of the ***id*** belong permanently to the unconscious mind; while the ***super-ego*** is an unconscious screening-mechanism which seeks to limit the blind pleasure-seeking drives of the id by the imposition of restrictive rules.

Freud was the first thinker to apply deterministic principles systematically to the sphere of the mental, and to hold that the broad spectrum of human behavior is explicable only in terms of the mental processes or states which determine it. Thus, instead of treating the behavior of the neurotic as being causally inexplicable—which had been the prevailing approach for centuries—Freud insisted, on the contrary, on treating it as behavior for which it is meaningful to seek an explanation by searching for causes in terms of the mental states of the individual concerned.