

PART 4

Classical & Contemporary Philosophies

“Homo homini lupus”

- *Thomas Hobbes*

Naturalism is the philosophical view that all objects and events are capable of being accounted for by “*scientific explanation*”, usually allied with the ontological claim that there is non-natural objects, processes and causes. Naturalism is considered the oldest philosophy in the western world.



Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan

Thomas Hobbes, a contemporary naturalist, give a picture of nature as he saw it in man. The native condition of man, as Hobbes sees him, is a “*war of everyone against*

everyone." Individual man is constantly is continually in competition with each other, grasping for honor and dignity. His chief joy is in comparing himself with other men, and therefore he relishes "*nothing but what is eminent*". Hobbes believes it is best for man to be kept busy or in an inferior position from which he will struggle for something better, because he is most troublesome when he is most at ease. His hunger for power is such a restless unquenchable desire it is only eases at death. One of the famous naturalist was Jean Jacque Rousseau, for him everything is good as it comes from the hands of nature but everything degenerates in the hands of man. For him, nature is good, dependable; it offers freedom and necessity; it has smooth flowing rhythms which choose the time. His glorification of nature promoted naturalism, particularly in education and politics. Rousseau established three (3) principles of teachings which formed the basis of the reform of Pestalozzi, Herbart and Froebel. (1.) The principle of Growth. That the order of nature is need, activity, experience and knowledge, the process of education should be the same order. The work of the teacher is not impel learning but merely to guide it in such a way that it follows the natural order. (2.) The principle of student Activity. Nothing must be done for the student that he can do for himself is the principle of student activity. (3.) The principle of Individualization. The needs and interests of

individual must be placed above those of society. The student is not to be adjusted to his education but his education is to be adjusted to his needs. Rousseau asserts that society is fickle, it is evil and crafty; it offers tyranny and authority' it is full of hurry and premature actions prompted by the whims and ambitions of people who do not know nature. The specific target of Rousseau was the highly artificial life of the upper classes. He wrote the "Social Contract" an influential work in politics. His writings were outburst of emotions, revolts against what is and proclamations of what ought to be.

The metaphysics of Naturalism attempts to explain what naturalism has said about nature of reality, what naturalism believes to be all and end all of the nature of existence itself. Naturalism maintains that nature is the only idea worthy of the serious consideration of man, and that man himself is the apex of reality. From the epistemological point of view, naturalism believes that the reality and nature are identical and that, beyond nature, there is no reality. Nationalism denies reason as a source of knowledge and claims that the only valid form of knowledge is what is derived from existence.

Realism

It is a philosophical doctrine that universals have a

real objective existence; that the objects of sense perception have an existence independent of the act of perception. Realism is based on what is real as they are; something that exists independently of all other things and from which all other things are derived. Plato define reality as the pure ideas of the mind. He believed that ideas and concepts are innate or inherited in a form. Aristotle, Plato's student, defined reality as the relationship found in the physical environment and learning occurs through contact with the environment. He claims that knowledge is initially acquired by forming images of sensory experience, and associations are then made among the images. These are various views about reality.

Epistemologically, realism is the refinement of our acceptance of the world as being just that it appears to be, and that things are the same as they are before entering our consciousness and remain unchanged through our experience. Realism holds that there is a real world whose existence is independent of man but it can be ascertained through man's intellect and sense perception. The realist believe that reality refers to physical objects and forces perceived as they are. These are certain principles about realism as a philosophy:

1. All beings, material or immaterial, can be understood clearly by the human mind as they appear to be what they are.
2. The familiarity gained by experience and by human nature is unchanging and dependable and serves as norm for the decision and action of the individual and society. The beginning of realism can be traced back to the middle ages and to Plato and rests on the being that “ideas” which according to Plato, are forms, patterns, types, or universal existing in the mind, as a result of mental understanding awareness and activity; a concept developed from the mind.

Educational aim

1. Gives direction and form to individual’s basic potentials.
2. Determine the direction of the individual’s inherited tendencies.
3. Provide an education that could produce a good individual and a good society by meeting 4 principal needs of an individual: (a) Aptitude needs, (b) Self-determination needs, (c) Self-realization needs, (d) Self-integration needs.

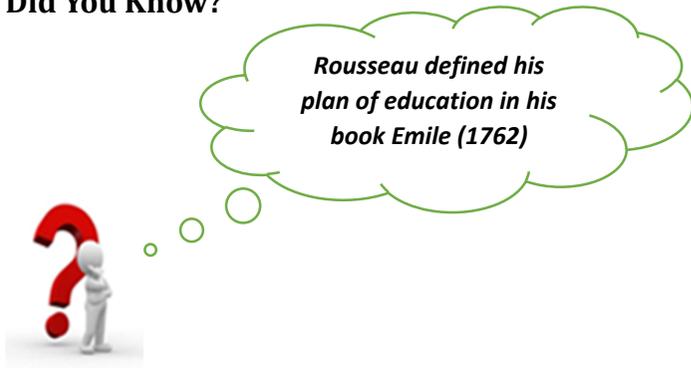
Role of teachers

1. Help the students realize irresistible necessity of earth's physical forces.
2. Help develop initiative and ability to control their experiences.
3. Help realize that they can enter into the meaning of their experiences.
4. The students would be taught factual information for mastery.

Role of school

1. Further develop discipline
2. Utilize pupil activity through instruction
3. Speak with authority
4. Regard the pupil as more superior than other objects
5. Change in the school would be perceived as a natural evolution toward perfection of order

Did You Know?



Idealism

It is a philosophical theory that maintains that the real is of the nature of thought or that the object of external perceptions consists of ideas. Idealism asserts that reality is composed of thought related to mind and idea, and that matter is mere by product of its workings. For the idealists, mind is real and matter is just an appearance. They believe that the universe can be understood by examining the laws of thought and consciousness. This negates the methods applied to the physical sciences. Idealism holds the view that the world exists independent of the mind and that this world can be ascertained through perception of the mind which determines its organization and form as well as the human knowledge. Plato regards the real and significant things in this world as ideas. For him “ideas” did not mean anything mental with existence dependent upon the mind of man. These ideals are eternal essences, forms or types which serve as patterns, ideas or standards for things which are perceived by the senses. It is in this premise that the world is divide into spheres – that of matter and that of idea. The world of matter is perceived clearly to man through his senses and faculties; e.g., sight, hearing, smell, taste or touch. It is always changing and it is a source of disorder and confusion, imperfections and evil. On the other hand, the type of the world of ideas is firm and established in one’s

mind and is known to man through his reason or intelligence. According to Plato, this is real world, although incorporeal or not material that provides man with genuine knowledge, free from pre-tense and affection, not mere appearances produced by our senses.

From metaphysics that treats the ultimate nature of existence, reality and experience, idealism holds that we ourselves are real, not mere illusions or dreams. It holds that the world of colors, shapes and sounds that each of us lives in, is reality and the world of his own mind. Since our mind are our island, "finite centers" in a larger world, the idealists believe this large world, to be rational through and through, and because of this, they are inclined to think, too, as spiritual. Metaphysically, the reality of the self, the idealists take as their starting point the fact of self-consciousness. The art of self-consciousness in reflexive is that the subject is also the object. In the act of being self-conscious, the individual is directly aware of himself. The reality of individual self seems as clear and certain to the idealists. The idealists believe that the self is spiritual or mental in character.

Epistemologically, idealism embraces modified skepticism, a principle which is relied upon by the idealists as attest of truth, the principle of coherence. These principles state that the truth is orderly and systematic. Hegel asserts that with just relationships as our perception,

the qualities of object, no entity at all. It is their relationships; there is no object, no entity at all. It is their relationship which constitutes the real thing itself.

Logically, the idealists believe that the mind is the prime reality. The methods of knowing are the interpretation of our perceptions and the unifying elements of our ideas. Formal logic, is stressed by the idealists as a tool by which our thinking can be rendered coherent. From the idealists point of view, the growth and development of knowledge, whether in the individual mind or the experience of the human race, is a matter of extending vision so that individual and classes are seen in their larger and more complete relationships. That is, the more knowledge is developed, the more analysis and synthesis take place and wholes are seen with deeper insight as being constituted of the interrelated parts. On axiology, the values human beings desire and enjoy are basically rooted in their very existence and these values of human life run supreme. For the idealists, values arise out of man's participation in the order of the universe of which he is part. Values are not his creation but his discovery. He is aware of it because he has the innate capacity to realize as intelligent life in the order of the universe.

Educational aim

To develop the individual spiritually, mentally and morally.

Role of teachers

1. Chief source of inspiration
2. Creator of educational environment

Role of School

1. An agency of the society
2. Thinking institution

Pragmatism

It is a philosophical movement or system of having various forms; but generally, stressing practical consequences as constituting the essential criterion in determining meaning of truth or values. Pragmatism is fundamentally an American philosophical movement, having been formulated first in American philosophical movement, having been formulated first in American soil by Charles Sanders Peirce, a philosopher and mathematician and considered to be the father of pragmatism are quite substantial and well established. The essence of pragmatism as a philosophy in on the meaning, value and truth of an idea, concept, belief, or theory that are determined by the practical results, and the function of thought is to produce the conceived action. For some philosophers and thinkers, pragmatism is more inclined to attitude and method, rather than to a philosophical doctrine.

Pragmatism proposes that the pragmatic method is conscious formulation of what goes on all the time in our experience. Knowledge, for the pragmatists, is descriptive and experimental, because what is known is always known in achieving a satisfactory given unit of experience. Pragmatism though it rejects accumulation of facts, does not consider the content of scientific observation unimportant. It is a necessity and its value become distinctly evident when this content provides hypothesis for experimental action.

Dewey's concept of experience and thinking

According to John Dewey, what constitutes our brute or animalistic experience is the interaction between a biological organism and its environment. Experience is not an object known, but rather an action performed. In the course of activities, it encounters situations in which it can no longer act, and therefore, thinking arises as a means of dealing with these disturbing situations by working out hypotheses or guides to future actions. The merits of these intellectual acts are determined by practical criterion, by which organism functions satisfactorily.

Dewey and progressive education

He regarded his type of pragmatism as having far reaching application in our society. An important utilization

of this theory is in the realm of education. He proposed that the educational system should try to develop methods for problem solving. He believes that he would be better fit for living in our ever-changing world with its manifold perplexities. Out of this application of Dewey's theory, grew and developed methods of overcoming the difficulties that beset him. He would learn to choose satisfactorily 'adjustment to his environment" and consequently develop different means which would help him in solving bigger problems of the physical and social world in which he would have to live. This type of education would train the citizens for living in an organized and democratic society. It would likewise strengthen the development of our type of social, economic. And political institutions. It has been observed that a democratic society is one that is able to confront new situations and try new solutions, since its system of social organization that is open to exploration of new means of meeting difficulties. The students trained in problem solving will be an active citizen of such a society, in utilizing his capabilities and techniques in dealing with unresolved problems in cooperation with the larger social group in their common search for satisfactory ways of dealing with the difficulties and other problems which virtually hinder the smooth functioning of society. Dewey's philosophy is commonly referred to as "instrumentalism", it

is a doctrine that ideas are instruments of action and that their application and usefulness will determine the truth. Dewey's assert that if ideas, meanings and conceptions, theories and systems are instruments to an active reorganization of the given environment, to a removal of a specific trouble and perplexity, then the of their validity and value lies in accomplishing the work. If people succeed in their office, they are reliable, sound, valid good and true. If they fail to clear up confusion, uncertainty and evil when they are acted upon, they are false. In confirmation, corroboration, verification lies work and consequences. For Dewey, truth, is satisfaction of the needs and conditions of the problem out of which the ideas, the purpose and appropriate methods of action arises. It is in this context that 'truth utility means service in making just contribution to reorganization in experience that the idea or theory claims to be able to wake. For Dewey, knowledge is not an end but an instrument which an individual can utilize to attain his desired goal. Knowing is an intellectual instrument, the utensil of civilization, a highly generalized tool, which the mind uses and is prepared in advance to all sorts of intellectual emergencies. Dewey's theory of instrumentalism is applicable to various facets of life; e.g. education, religion, politics and morality. It may be of interest to note that it is education which emphasizes the importance of experience,

experimentation, and learning by doing that which brought tremendous influence to the learners.

Educational aim

1. For social efficacy
2. Train the students to continuously and actively quest for information and production of new ideas needed to adjust to an ever-changing society

Role of teachers

1. Keep order in the class
2. Facilitates group work
3. Encourages and offer suggestions, questions and help in planning
4. Curricular planner



Image of a young Fredrich Nietzsche

Existentialism

It is a modern movement encompassing a variety of themes, among them the doctrine that individual existence determines essence, that man has absolute freedom of choice but there are no rational criteria serving a basis for choice, and the general claim is that the universe is absurd, with an emphasis on phenomena on anxiety alienation. From the contemporary point of view, existentialism is a philosophical movement which means the type of thinking that emphasizes the human existence and the distinctive qualities of individual life. Existentialism is a philosophy of man as a living individual, the individual that breathes and thinks, that has freedom or moral choice.

There are two prominent exponents of existentialism and these are Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish religious thinker and Friedrich Nietzsche, a German Philosopher. Other advocate of existentialism were Jean Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel and Karl Jasper. For Kierkegaard, man is a subjective thinker and comprehends himself not as an abstraction but as an ethically engaged existing subject. Existence is in character, and since man himself alone can comprehend the meaning of his existence, this, in effect, brings to the fore man's mode of becoming which is choice. An authentic choice is fundamentally a product of passion and zealous intention.

Fredrich Nietzsche, was against the rationalistic

philosophy which spread out in 19th century. His works and other writings were focused on attacking rationalism and on studying the prevailing conditions which he believes were really demeaning to man. He sees in a man the nature of his character which seems vulnerable to deficiencies which have to be corrected to produce superior race. He disliked the traditional morality which to him, is the reason for an inferior race of men. He claimed that nature is beyond good and evil, that all men are equal; that morality is an intervention of the weak to limit and deter the strong; that power is the supreme virtue and the supreme desire of man; and that of all forms of government, the wisest and most natural is aristocracy. He argued that the real progress will come not by raising the weak and liberating the masses but through the development of superior race. The thought of Nietzsche about existentialism is perceived and deemed virtually radical by modern standard and calls some attention to the implications of living in a world where values, philosophical orientations, norms and personal human goals keep changing. He is revolutionary and futuristic philosophical critic of keen foresight who warned men about the impending changes of living in a highly technical and industrial age that changes and still have to come where human values are taken for granted. Meanwhile for Sartre, in anxiety, man becomes aware of his freedom, knows himself

and is responsible for his own actions and commitment. Existence precedes essence., man is encompassed by his existence. For Jasper, existence is always in a situation. While Marcel, existential thinking, the thinking of an involved self us threatened by the interest in abstraction and by bureaucratic societies which reduce individuals to average. Thus, existentialism is a theory of individual meaning, it asks each man to ponder the reason for his existence. As the name itself, indicates existentialism is characterized, first, by a tendency to place the emphasis on existence. The philosophy has a sole unifying principle “existence precedes essence”.

Educational aim

To train individual for significant and meaningful existence.

Role of teachers

1. Good provider of experience.
2. Effective questionnaire.
3. Mental disciplinarian.

Role of School

1. Create an atmosphere for an active interaction.
2. Plan better solution to their everyday problems.
3. Discuss the different situations based by an individual

Did You Know?

A broken engagement with Regine Olsen affected Kierkegaard writings, some surmised that he did not want to share his despair and melancholic personality with anyone, thus he called of his enaaement.



STUDY GUIDE

A. Concepts to comprehend

Ontology	Doctrine
Classical	Experience
Skeptics	Reality
Perception	Knowledge
Change	Praxis
Nature	Humanism

B. Check your facts

1. In what respect does realism disagree with idealism?
2. What are the aims of education in naturalism?
3. Discuss the basic principle of each classical and contemporary philosophy.
4. What is the concept of John Dewey about experience and thinking? Defend your claim.
5. Compare & contrast the classical & contemporary philosophy.
6. How does Plato regard idealism as a philosophical doctrine? Defend your answer.
7. What is the philosophical view of Jean Jacques Rousseau about nature and education?

8. Do you agree that pragmatism is more inclined to attitude & method rather than to a philosophical doctrine? Why? Defend your answer.
9. Among the philosophies discussed, which do you think should promote the well-being of the child? Defend your claim and cite some instances.
10. Differentiate the existentialism of Sartre, Marcel and Kierkegaard.

C. Phenomenological Reflection

“An individual has no essential nature, no self-identity, he creates himself by his own free choice.”