HISTORY OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

COURSE READER

(Optional Reading)

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION
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History of Western Philosophy: Chronology of the Greek Philosophers

Birth-Death	Philosopher	

Pre-Socratics

~625-545 BC.	**Thales**	From Miletus. Known as the first philosopher by all accounts of history of philosophy: "Philosophy begins with Thales."(Bertrand Russell). The first Greek to search for the ultimate substance of things, which he identified with water.
~570-495.	**Pythagoras**	He taught the doctrine of reincarnation and held that the cosmos is explicable in terms of harmony or number.
~570-470.	**Xenophanes**	Known as the first philosopher of religion. He said men create gods in their own image. God is neither infinite nor finite, neither changeable nor changeless.
~535-475.	**Heraclitus**	He held that *Logos* governs all things and is represented as fire, symbolizing change. He is principally remembered for the doctrine of the "flux" of all things.
~515-440.	**Parmenides**	Probably the most important pre-Socratic, first radical rationalist. He held that what is real, Being, must be ungenerated, imperishable, indivisible, motionless.
~460-370.	**Democritus**	A founder of classical atomism. he held that ultimate reality consists of atoms: indivisible, homogeneous, solid, and unchanging units. These atoms are in eternal motion and combine in various ways to form all material things.

Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Post-Aristotelian Greek Philosophy

~490-420.	**Protagoras (Sophist)**	The most famous Sophist. He held that man is the measure of all things. Considered the first humanist, he taught a form of relativism.
~469-399.	**Socrates**	Athenian philosopher, Socrates fought as a soldier during the Peloponnesian War. Famous for saying, "I know that I know nothing," Socrates combined skepticism and logic in his resolute pursuit of wisdom. His technique of questioning others is often referred to as the "dialectical" or Socratic method. He did not write anything but Plato immortalized him in many of his dialogues. Socrates was tried, found guilty, and executed for corrupting the youth of Athens and not believing in the gods of the city. He is considered the patron saint of philosophy.
~428-347.	**Plato**	Plato may have served as a soldier in the Peloponnesian War. Plato's study with Socrates ended in the trauma of Socrates's execution by Athenian democrats. Wrote many dialogues, including *Euthyphro, Crito, Phaedo,* and *The Republic* . He wrote about the theory of Forms.
384-322.	**Aristotle**	Originally from Macedonia, Aristotle studied at Plato's Academy in Athens. He also tutored Alexander the Great. Aristotle later returned to Athens in 335 and opened his own school—the Lyceum. He wrote about a wide range of topics, including physics, metaphysics, logic, ethics, biology, politics, rhetoric, and the arts. In 323 Aristotle had to flee Athens, and died a year later in 322.
~365-275.	**Pyrrho (Skepticism)**	He was a soldier in Alexander's army; taught that nothing could be known for sure because all reasoning was ultimately circular. His ideas established into the school of skepticism.
341-271.	**Epicurus (Epicureanism)**	He taught that "pleasure" was the greatest good, and it was achieved through modest living. Father of Epicureanism.
334-262.	**Zeno of Citium (Stoicism)**	From Cyprus, he believed that the universe came from fire and will return to fire, and that history repeats itself in an endless cycle in accordnace with Fate. Father of Stoicism, he believed that everything was determined.

1. The Golden Cord of Reason

From *Laws* by Plato

[Project Gutenberg: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1750/1750-h/1750-h.htm]

ATHENIAN [Socrates?]: And we agreed before that they are good men who are able to rule themselves, and bad men who are not.

CLEINIAS: You are quite right.

ATHENIAN: Let me now proceed, if I can, to clear up the subject a little further by an illustration which I will offer you.

CLEINIAS: Proceed.

ATHENIAN: Do we not consider each of ourselves to be one?

CLEINIAS: We do.

ATHENIAN: And each one of us has in his bosom two counsellors, both foolish and also antagonistic; of which we call the one pleasure, and the other pain.

CLEINIAS: Exactly.

ATHENIAN: Also there are opinions about the future, which have the general name of expectations; and the specific name of fear, when the expectation is of pain; and of hope, when of pleasure; and further, there is reflection about the good or evil of them, and this, when embodied in a decree by the State, is called Law.

CLEINIAS: I am hardly able to follow you; proceed, however, as if I were.

MEGILLUS: I am in the like case.

ATHENIAN: Let us look at the matter thus: May we not conceive each of us living beings to be a puppet of the Gods, either their plaything only, or created with a purpose—which of the two we cannot certainly know? But we do know, that these affections in us are like cords and strings, which pull us different and opposite ways, and to opposite actions; and herein lies the difference between virtue and vice. According to the argument there is one among these cords which every man ought to grasp and never let go, but to pull with it against all the rest; and this is the sacred and **golden cord of reason**, called by us the common law of the State; there are others which are hard and of iron, but this one is soft because golden …

2. The Principle of Charity

From **Donald Davison's *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (2001) Ch. 13**

… If you see a ketch sailing by and your companion says, 'Look at that handsome yawl', you may be faced with a problem of interpretation. One natural possibility is that your friend has mistaken a ketch for a yawl, and has formed a false belief. But if his vision is good and his line of sight favourable it is even more plausible that he does not use the word 'yawl' quite as you do, and has made no mistake at all about the position of the jigger on the passing yacht. We do this sort of off the cuff interpretation all the time, deciding in favour of reinterpretation of words in order to preserve a reasonable theory of belief. As philosophers we are peculiarly tolerant of systematic malapropism, and practised at interpreting the result. The process is that of constructing a viable theory of belief and meaning from sentences held true.

Such examples emphasize the interpretation of anomalous details against a background of common beliefs and a going method of translation. But the principles involved must be the same in less trivial cases. What matters is this: if all we know is what sentences a speaker holds true, and we cannot assume that his language is our own, then we cannot take even a first step towards interpretation without knowing or assuming a great deal about the speaker's beliefs. Since knowledge of beliefs comes only with the ability to interpret words, the only possibility at the start is to assume general agreement on beliefs. We get a first approximation to a finished theory by assigning to sentences of a speaker conditions of truth that actually obtain (in our own opinion) just when the speaker holds those sentences true. The guiding policy is to do this as far as possible, subject to considerations of simplicity, hunches about the effects of social conditioning, and of course our common-sense, or scientific, knowledge of explicable error.

The method is not designed to eliminate disagreement, nor can it; its purpose is to make meaningful disagreement possible, and this depends entirely on a foundation—*some* foundation—in agreement. The agreement may take the form of widespread sharing of sentences held true by speakers of 'the same language', or agreement in the large mediated by a theory of truth contrived by an interpreter for speakers of another language.

Since **charity*** is not an option, but a condition of having a workable theory, it is meaningless to suggest that we might fall into massive error by endorsing it. Until we have successfully established a systematic correlation of sentences held true with sentences held true, there are no mistakes to make. Charity is forced on us; whether we like it or not, if we want to understand others, we must count them right in most matters. If we can produce a theory that reconciles charity and the formal conditions for a theory, we have done all that could be done to ensure communication. Nothing more is possible, and nothing more is needed.

We make maximum sense of the words and thoughts of others when we interpret in a way that optimizes agreement (this includes room, as we said, for explicable error, i.e. differences of opinion).

[* charity here refers to **the Principle of Charity**]

PHILOSOPHY IN ITS INFANCY

The Milesians

Pythagoras' life is lost in legend. Rather more is known about a group of philosophers, roughly contemporary with him, who lived in the city of Miletus in Ionia, or Greek Asia. The first of these was **Thales**, who was old enough to have foretold an eclipse in 585. Like Pythagoras, he was a geometer, though he is credited with rather simpler theorems, such as the one that a circle is bisected by its diameter. Like Pythagoras, he mingled geometry with religion: when he discovered how to inscribe a right-angled triangle inside a circle, he sacrificed an ox to the gods. But his geometry had a practical side: he was able to measure the height of the pyramids by measuring their shadows. He was also interested in astronomy: he identified the constellation of the little bear, and pointed out its use in navigation. He was, we are told, the first Greek to fix the length of the year as 365 days, and he made estimates of the sizes of the sun and moon.

Thales was perhaps the first philosopher to ask questions about the structure and nature of the cosmos as a whole. He maintained that the earth rests on water, like a log floating in a stream. (Aristotle asked, later: what does the water rest on?) But earth and its inhabitants did not just rest on water: in some sense, so Thales believed, they were all made out of water. Even in antiquity, people could only conjecture the grounds for this belief: was it because all animals and plants need water, or because the seeds of everything are moist?

Because of his theory about the cosmos Thales was called by later writers a physicist or philosopher of nature ('*physis*' is the Greek word for 'nature'). Though he was a physicist, Thales was not a materialist: he did not, that is to say, believe that nothing existed except physical matter. One of the two sayings which have

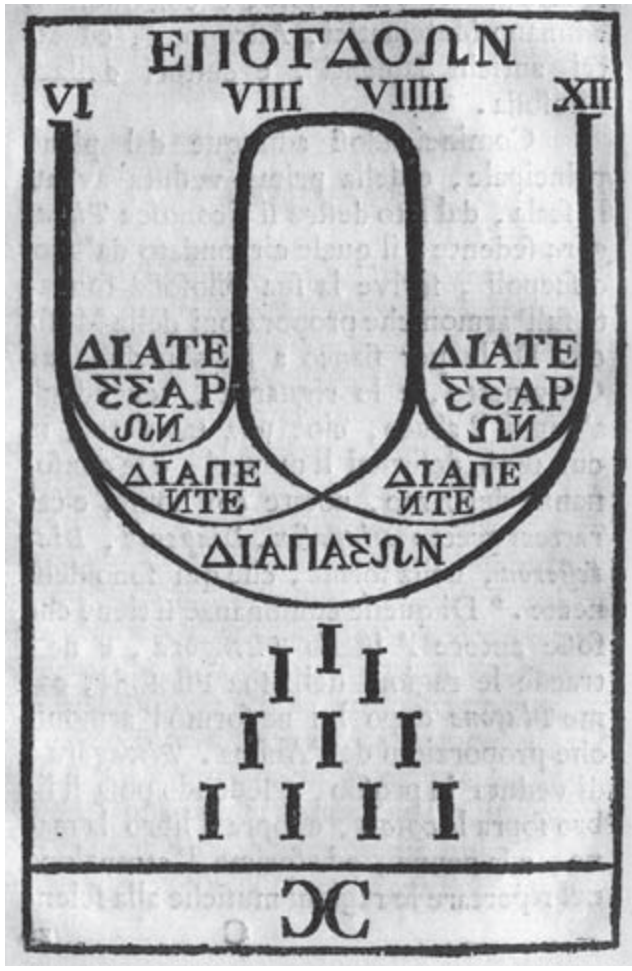

Figure 1 The Pythagoreans discovered the relationships between frequency and pitch in the notes of the octave scale, as shown in this diagram held up for Pythagoras in Raphael's *School of Athens*.
(© Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts)

come down from him verbatim is 'everything is full of gods'. What he meant is perhaps indicated by his claim that the magnet, because it moves iron, has a soul. He did not believe in Pythagoras' doctrine of transmigration, but he did maintain the immortality of the soul.

Thales was no mere theorist. He was a political and military adviser to King Croesus of Lydia, and helped him to ford a river by diverting a stream. Foreseeing an unusually good olive crop, he took a lease on all the oil-mills, and made a fortune. None the less, he acquired a reputation for unworldly absent-mindedness,

as appears in a letter which an ancient fiction-writer feigned to have been written to Pythagoras from Miletus:

> Thales has met an unkind fate in his old age. He went out from the court of his house at night, as was his custom, with his maidservant to view the stars, and forgetting where he was, as he gazed, he got to the edge of a steep slope and fell over. In such wise have the Milesians lost their astronomer. Let us who were his pupils cherish his memory, and let it be cherished by our children and pupils.

A more significant thinker was a younger contemporary and pupil of Thales called **Anaximander**, a savant who made the first map of the world and of the stars, and invented both a sundial and an all-weather clock. He taught that the earth was cylindrical in shape, like a section of a pillar. Around the world were gigantic tyres, full of fire; each tyre had a hole through which the fire could be seen, and the holes were the sun and moon and stars. The largest tyre was twenty-eight times as great as the earth, and the fire seen through its orifice was the sun. Blockages in the holes explained eclipses and the phases of the moon. The fire within these tyres was once a great ball of flame surrounding the infant earth, which had gradually burst into fragments which enrolled themselves in bark-like casings. Eventually the heavenly bodies would return to the original fire.

> The things from which existing things come into being are also the things into which they are destroyed, in accordance with what must be. For they give justice and reparation to one another for their injustice in accordance with the arrangement of time.

Here physical cosmogony is mingled not so much with theology as with a grand cosmic ethic: the several elements, no less than men and gods, must keep within bounds everlastingly fixed by nature.

Though fire played an important part in Anaximander's cosmogony, it would be wrong to think that he regarded it as the ultimate constituent of the world, like Thales' water. The basic element of everything, he maintained, could be neither water nor fire, nor anything similar, or else it would gradually take over the universe. It had to be something with no definite nature, which he called the 'infinite' or 'unlimited'. 'The infinite is the first principle of things that exist: it is eternal and ageless, and it contains all the worlds.'

Anaximander was an early proponent of evolution. The human beings we know cannot always have existed, he argued. Other animals are able to look after themselves, soon after birth, while humans require a long period of nursing; if humans had originally been as they are now they could not have survived. He maintained that in an earlier age there were fish-like animals within which human embryos grew to puberty before bursting forth into the world. Because of this thesis, though he was not otherwise a vegetarian, he preached against the eating of fish.

The infinite of Anaximander was a concept too rarefied for some of his successors. His younger contemporary at Miletus, **Anaximenes**, while agreeing that the ultimate element could not be fire or water, claimed that it was air, from which everything else had come into being. In its stable state, air is invisible, but when it is moved and condensed it becomes first wind and then cloud and then water, and finally water condensed becomes mud and stone. Rarefied air, presumably, became fire, completing the gamut of the elements. In support of his theory, Anaximenes appealed to experience: 'Men release both hot and cold from their mouths; for the breath is cooled when it is compressed and condensed by the lips, but when the mouth is relaxed and it is exhaled it becomes hot by reason of its rareness'. Thus rarefaction and condensation can generate everything out of the underlying air. This is naive, but it is naive science: it is not mythology, like the classical and biblical stories of the flood and of the rainbow.

Anaximenes was the first flat-earther: he thought that the heavenly bodies did not travel under the earth, as his predecessors had claimed, but rotated round our heads like a felt cap. He was also a flat-mooner and a flat-sunner: 'the sun and the moon and the other heavenly bodies, which are all fiery, ride the air because of their flatness'.

Xenophanes

Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes were a trio of hardy and ingenious speculators. Their interests mark them out as the forebears of modern scientists rather more than of modern philosophers. The matter is different when we come to **Xenophanes** of Colophon (near present-day Izmir), who lived into the fifth century. His themes and methods are recognizably the same as those of philosophers through succeeding ages. In particular he was the first philosopher of religion, and some of the arguments he propounded are still taken seriously by his successors.

Xenophanes detested the religion found in the poems of Homer and Hesiod, whose stories blasphemously attributed to the gods theft, trickery, adultery, and all kinds of behaviour that, among humans, would be shameful and blameworthy. A poet himself, he savaged Homeric theology in satirical verses, now lost. It was not that he claimed himself to possess a clear insight into the nature of the divine; on the contrary, he wrote, 'the clear truth about the gods no man has ever seen nor any man will ever know'. But he did claim to know where these legends of the gods came from: human beings have a tendency to picture everybody and everything as like themselves. Ethiopians, he said, make their gods dark and snub-nosed, while Thracians make them red-haired and blue-eyed. The belief that gods have any kind of human form at all is childish anthropomorphism. 'If cows and horses or lions had hands and could draw, then horses would draw the forms of gods like horses, cows like cows, making their bodies similar in shape to their own.'

Though no one would ever have a clear vision of God, Xenophanes thought that as science progressed, mortals could learn more than had been originally revealed. 'There is one god,' he wrote, 'greatest among gods and men, similar to mortals neither in shape nor in thought.' God was neither limited nor infinite, but altogether non-spatial: that which is divine is a living thing which sees as a whole, thinks as a whole and hears as a whole.

In a society which worshipped many gods, he was a resolute monotheist. There was only one God, he argued, because God is the most powerful of all things, and if there were more than one, then they would all have to share equal power. God cannot have an origin; because what comes into existence does so either from what is like or what is unlike, and both alternatives lead to absurdity in the case of God. God is neither infinite nor finite, neither changeable nor changeless. But though God is in a manner unthinkable, he is not unthinking. On the contrary, 'Remote and effortless, with his mind alone he governs all there is'.

Xenophanes' monotheism is remarkable not so much because of its originality as because of its philosophical nature. The Hebrew prophet Jeremiah and the authors of the book of Isaiah had already proclaimed that there was only one true God. But while they took their stance on the basis of a divine oracle, Xenophanes offered to prove his point by rational argument. In terms of a distinction not drawn until centuries later, Isaiah proclaimed a revealed religion, while Xenophanes was a natural theologian.

Xenophanes' philosophy of nature is less exciting than his philosophy of religion. His views are variations on themes proposed by his Milesian predecessors. He took as his ultimate element not water, or air, but earth. The earth, he thought, reached down beneath us to infinity. The sun, he maintained, came into existence each day from a congregation of tiny sparks. But it was not the only sun; indeed there were infinitely many. Xenophanes' most original contribution to science was to draw attention to the existence of fossils: he pointed out that in Malta there were to be found impressed in rocks the shapes of all sea-creatures. From this he drew the conclusion that the world passed through a cycle of alternating terrestrial and marine phases.

Heraclitus

The last, and the most famous, of these early Ionian philosophers was **Heraclitus**, who lived early in the fifth century in the great metropolis of Ephesus, where later St Paul was to preach, dwell, and be persecuted. The city, in Heraclitus' day as in St Paul's, was dominated by the great temple of the fertility goddess Artemis. Heraclitus denounced the worship of the temple: praying to statues was like whispering gossip to an empty house, and offering sacrifices to purify oneself

from sin was like trying to wash off mud with mud. He visited the temple from time to time, but only to play dice with the children there – much better company than statesmen, he said, refusing to take any part in the city's politics. In Artemis' temple, too, he deposited his three-book treatise on philosophy and politics, a work, now lost, of notorious difficulty, so puzzling that some thought it a text of physics, others a political tract. ('What I understand of it is excellent,' Socrates said later, 'what I don't understand may well be excellent also; but only a deep-sea diver could get to the bottom of it.')

In this book Heraclitus spoke of a great Word or Logos which holds forever and in accordance with which all things come about. He wrote in paradoxes, claiming that the universe is both divisible and indivisible, generated and ungenerated, mortal and immortal, Word and Eternity, Father and Son, God and Justice. No wonder that everybody, as he complained, found his Logos quite incomprehensible.

If Xenophanes, in his style of argument, resembled modern professional philosophers, Heraclitus was much more like the popular modern idea of the philosopher as guru. He had nothing but contempt for his philosophical predecessors. Much learning, he said, does not teach a man sense; otherwise it would have taught Hesiod and Pythagoras and Xenophanes. Heraclitus did not argue, he pronounced: he was a master of pregnant dicta, profound in sound and obscure in sense. His delphic style was perhaps an imitation of the oracle of Apollo, which, in his own words, 'neither tells, nor conceals, but gestures'. Among Heraclitus' best-known sayings are these:

> The way up and the way down is one and the same.
> Hidden harmony is better than manifest harmony.
> War is the father of all and the king of all; it proves some people gods, and some people men; it makes some people slaves and some people free.
> A dry soul is wisest and best.
> For souls it is death to become water.
> A drunk is a man led by a boy.
> Gods are mortal, humans immortal, living their death, dying their life.
> The soul is a spider and the body is its web.

That last remark was explained by Heraclitus thus: just as a spider, in the middle of a web, notices as soon as a fly breaks one of its threads and rushes thither as if in grief, so a person's soul, if some part of the body is hurt, hurries quickly there as if unable to bear the hurt. But if the soul is a busy spider, it is also, according to Heraclitus, a spark of the substance of the fiery stars.

In Heraclitus' cosmology fire has the role which water had in Thales and air had in Anaximenes. The world is an ever-burning fire: all things come from fire and go into fire; 'all things are exchangeable for fire, as goods are for gold and gold for goods'. There is a downward path, whereby fire turns to water and water

to earth, and an upward path, whereby earth turns to water, water to air, and air to fire. The death of earth is to become water, and the death of water is to become air, and the death of air is to become fire. There is a single world, the same for all, made neither by god nor man; it has always existed and always will exist, passing, in accordance with cycles laid down by fate, through a phase of kindling, which is war, and a phase of burning, which is peace.

Heraclitus' vision of the transmutation of the elements in an ever-burning fire has caught the imagination of poets down to the present age. T. S. Eliot, in *Four Quartets*, puts this gloss on Heraclitus' statement that water was the death of earth.

> There are flood and drouth
> Over the eyes and in the mouth,
> Dead water and dead sand
> Contending for the upper hand.
> The parched eviscerate soil
> Gapes at the vanity of toil,
> Laughs without mirth
> This is the death of earth.

Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote a poem entitled 'That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire', full of imagery drawn from Heraclitus.

> Million fueled, nature's bonfire burns on.
> But quench her bonniest, dearest to her, her clearest-selved spark,
> Man, how fast his firedint, his mark on mind, is gone!
> Both are in an unfathomable, all is in an enormous dark
> Drowned. O pity and indignation! Manshape, that shone
> Sheer off, disseveral, a star, death blots black out . . .

Hopkins seeks comfort from this in the promise of the final resurrection – a Christian doctrine, of course, but one which itself finds its anticipation in a passage of Heraclitus which speaks of humans rising up and becoming wakeful guardians of the living and the dead. 'Fire', he said, 'will come and judge and convict all things.'

In the ancient world the aspect of Heraclitus' teaching which most impressed philosophers was not so much the vision of the world as a bonfire, as the corollary that everything in the world was in a state of constant change and flux. Everything moves on, he said, and nothing remains; the world is like a flowing stream. If we stand by the river bank, the water we see beneath us is not the same two moments together, and we cannot put our feet twice into the same water. So far, so good; but Heraclitus went on to say that we cannot even step twice into the same river. This seems false, whether taken literally or allegorically; but, as we shall see, the sentiment was highly influential in later Greek philosophy.

8

The School of Parmenides

The philosophical scene is very different when we turn to **Parmenides**, who was born in the closing years of the sixth century. Though probably a pupil of Xenophanes, Parmenides spent most of his life not in Ionia but in Italy, in a town called Elea, seventy miles or so south of Naples. He is said to have drawn up an excellent set of laws for his city; but we know nothing of his politics or political philosophy. He is the first philosopher whose writing has come down to us in any quantity: he wrote a philosophical poem in clumsy verse, of which we possess about a hundred and twenty lines. In his writing he devoted himself not to cosmology, like the early Milesians, nor to theology, like Xenophanes, but to a new and universal study which embraced and transcended both: the discipline which later philosophers called 'ontology'. Ontology gets its name from a Greek word which in the singular is '*on*' and in the plural '*onta*': it is this word – the present participle of the Greek verb 'to be' – which defines Parmenides' subject matter. His remarkable poem can claim to be the founding charter of ontology.

To explain what ontology is, and what Parmenides' poem is about, it is necessary to go into detail about points of grammar and translation. The reader's patience with this pedantry will be rewarded, for between Parmenides and the present-day, ontology was to have a vast and luxuriant growth, and only a sure grasp of what Parmenides meant, and what he failed to mean, enables one to see one's way clear over the centuries through the ontological jungle.

Parmenides' subject is '*to on*', which translated literally means 'the being'. Before explaining the verb, we need to say something about the article. In English we sometimes use an adjective, preceded by the definite article, to refer to a class of people or things; as when we say 'the rich' to mean people who are rich, and 'the poor' to mean those who are poor. The corresponding idiom was much more frequent in Greek than in English: Greeks could use the expression 'the hot' to mean things that are hot, and 'the cold' to mean things that are cold. Thus, for instance, Anaximenes said that air was made visible by the hot and the cold and the moist and the moving. Instead of an adjective after 'the' we may use a participle: as when we speak, for instance, of a hospice for the dying, or a playgroup for the rising fours. Once again, the corresponding construction was possible, and frequent, in Greek; and it is this idiom which occurs in 'the being'. 'The being' is that which is be-ing, in the same way as 'the dying' are those who are dying.

A verbal form like 'dying' has, in English, two uses: it may be a participle, as in 'the dying should not be neglected', or it may be a verbal noun, as in 'dying can be a long-drawn-out business'. 'Seeing is believing' is equivalent to 'To see is to believe'. When philosophers write treatises about being, they are commonly using the word as a verbal noun: they are offering to explain what it is for something *to be*. That is not, or not mainly, what Parmenides is about: he is concerned with *the being*, that is to say, with whatever is, as it were, doing the be-ing. To distinguish

this sense of 'being' from its use as a verbal noun, and to avoid the strangeness of the literal 'the being' in English, it has been traditional to dignify Parmenides' topic with a capital 'B'. We will follow this convention, whereby 'Being' means whatever is engaged in being, and 'being' is the verbal noun equivalent to the infinitive 'to be'.

Very well; but if that is what Being is, in order to make out what Parmenides is talking about we must also know what being is, that is to say, what it is for something to be. We can understand what it is for something to be blue, or to be a puppy: but what is it for something to just be, period? One possibility which suggests itself is this: being is existing, or, in other words, to be is to exist. If so, then Being is all that exists.

In English 'to be' can certainly mean 'to exist'. When Hamlet asks the question 'to be or not to be?' he is debating whether or not to put an end to his existence. In the Bible we read that Rachel wept for her children 'and would not be comforted because they are not'. This usage in English is poetic and archaic, and it is not natural to say such things as 'The Tower of London is, and the Crystal Palace is not', when we mean that the former building is still in existence while the latter is no longer there. But the corresponding statement would be quite natural in ancient Greek; and this sense of 'be' is certainly involved in Parmenides' talk of Being.

If this were all that was involved, then we could say simply that Being is all that exists, or if you like, all that there is, or again, everything that is in being. That is a broad enough topic, in all conscience. One could not reproach Parmenides, as Hamlet reproached Horatio, by saying:

> There are more things in heaven and earth
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

For whatever there is in heaven and earth will fall under the heading of Being.

Unfortunately for us, however, matters are more complicated than this. Existence is not all that Parmenides has in mind when he talks of Being. He is interested in the verb 'to be' not only as it occurs in sentences such as 'Troy is no more' but as it occurs in any kind of sentence whatever – whether 'Penelope is a woman' or 'Achilles is a hero' or 'Menelaus is gold-haired' or 'Telemachus is six-feet high'. So understood, Being is not just that which exists, but that of which any sentence containing 'is' is true. Equally, being is not just existing (being, period) but being anything whatever: being red or being blue, being hot or being cold, and so on *ad nauseam*. Taken in this sense, Being is a much more difficult realm to comprehend.

After this long preamble, we are in a position to look at some of the lines of Parmenides' mysterious poem.

> What you can call and think must Being be
> For Being can, and nothing cannot, be.

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The first line stresses the vast extension of Being: if you can call Argos a dog, or if you can think of the moon, then Argos and the moon must be, must count as part of Being. But why does the second line tell us that nothing cannot be? Well, anything that can be at all, must be something or other; it cannot be just nothing.

Parmenides introduces, to correspond with Being, the notion of Unbeing.

> Never shall this prevail, that Unbeing is;
> Rein in your mind from any thought like this.

If Being is that of which something or other, no matter what, is true, then Unbeing is that of which nothing at all is true. That, surely, is nonsense. Not only can it not exist, it cannot even be thought of.

> Unbeing you won't grasp – it can't be done –
> Nor utter; being thought and being are one.

Given his definition of 'being' and 'Unbeing' Parmenides is surely right here. If I tell you that I am thinking of something, and you ask me what kind of thing I'm thinking of, you will be puzzled if I say that it isn't any kind of thing. If you then ask me what it is like, and I say that it isn't like anything at all, you will be quite baffled. 'Can you then tell me anything at all about it?' you may ask. If I say no, then you may justly conclude that I am not really thinking of anything or indeed thinking at all. In that sense, it is true that to be thought of and to be are one and the same.

We can agree with Parmenides thus far; but we may note that there is an important difference between saying

> Unbeing cannot be thought of

and saying

> What does not exist cannot be thought of.

The first sentence is, in the sense explained, true; the second is false. If it were true, we could prove that things exist simply by thinking of them; but whereas lions and unicorns can both be thought of, lions exist and unicorns don't. Given the convolutions of his language, it is hard to be sure whether Parmenides thought that the two statements were equivalent. Some of his successors have accused him of that confusion; others have seemed to share it themselves.

We have agreed with Parmenides in rejecting Unbeing. But it is harder to follow Parmenides in some of the conclusions he draws from the inconceivability of Unbeing and the universality of Being. This is how he proceeds.

11

One road there is, signposted in this wise:
Being was never born and never dies;
Foursquare, unmoved, no end it will allow
It never was, nor will be; all is now,
One and continuous. How could it be born
Or whence could it be grown? Unbeing? No –
That mayn't be said or thought; we cannot go
So far ev'n to deny it is. What need,
Early or late, could Being from Unbeing seed?
Thus it must altogether be or not.
Nor to Unbeing will belief allot
An offspring other than itself . . .

'Nothing can come from nothing' is a principle which has been accepted by many thinkers far less intrepid than Parmenides. But not many have drawn the conclusion that Being has no beginning and no end, and is not subject to temporal change. To see why Parmenides drew this conclusion, we have to assume that he thought that 'being water' or 'being air' was related to 'being' in the same way as 'running fast' and 'running slowly' is related to 'running'. Someone who first runs fast and then runs slowly, all the time goes on running; similarly, for Parmenides, stuff which is first water and then is air goes on being. When a kettle of water boils away, this may be, in Heraclitus' words, the death of water and the birth of air; but, for Parmenides, it is not the death or birth of Being. Whatever changes may take place, they are not changes from being to non-being; they are all changes within Being, not changes of Being.

Being must be everlasting; because it could not have come from Unbeing, and it could never turn into Unbeing, because there is no such thing. If Being could – *per impossibile* – come from nothing, what could make it do so at one time rather than another? Indeed, what is it that differentiates past from present and future? If it is no kind of being, then time is unreal; if it is some kind of being, then it is all part of Being, and past, present and future are all one Being.

By similar arguments Parmenides seeks to show that Being is undivided and unlimited. What would divide Being from Being? Unbeing? In that case the division is unreal. Being? In that case there is no division, but continuous Being. What could set limits to Being? Unbeing cannot do anything to anything; and if we imagine that Being is limited by Being, then Being has not yet reached its limits.

To think a thing's to think it is, no less.
Apart from Being, whate'er we may express,
Thought does not reach. Naught is or will be
Beyond Being's bounds, since Destiny's decree
Fetters it whole and still. All things are names
Which the credulity of mortals frames –

Birth and destruction, being all or none,
Changes of place, and colours come and gone.

Parmenides' poem is in two parts: the Way of Truth and the Way of Seeming. The Way of Truth contains the doctrine of Being, which we have been examining; the Way of Seeming deals with the world of the senses, the world of change and colour, the world of empty names. We need not spend time on the Way of Seeming, since what Parmenides tells us about this is not very different from the cosmological speculations of the Ionian thinkers. It was his Way of Truth which set an agenda for many ages of subsequent philosophy.

The problem facing future philosophers was this. Common sense suggests that the world contains things which endure, such as rocky mountains, and things which constantly change, such as rushing streams. On the one hand, Heraclitus had pronounced that at a fundamental level, even the most solid things were in perpetual flux; on the other hand, Parmenides had argued that even what is most apparently fleeting is, at a fundamental level, static and unchanging. Can the doctrines of either Heraclitus or Parmenides be refuted? Is there any way in which they can be reconciled? For Plato, and his successors, this was a major task for philosophy to address.

Figure 2 Parmenides and Heraclitus as portrayed by Raphael in the *School of Athens* (*detail*).
(Vatican, Stanza della Segnatura; photo: Bridgeman Art Library)

The Sophists

Anaxagoras, during the rule of Pericles, was without rival as a resident philosopher in Athens. But during the same period the city received visits from a number of itinerant purveyors of learning who left behind reputations not inferior to his. These peripatetic teachers, or advisers, were called sophists: they were willing, for a fee, to impart many different skills and to act as consultants on a variety of topics.

As there was no public system of higher education in Athens, it fell to the sophists to instruct those young men who could afford their services in the arts and information which they would need in their adult life. Given the importance of public pleading in the assembly and before the courts, rhetorical skill was at a premium, and sophists were much in demand to teach, and assist with, the presentation of a case in the most favourable possible light. Critics alleged that because they were more concerned with persuasiveness than with the pursuit of truth, the sophists were no true philosophers. None the less, the best of them were quite capable of holding their own in philosophical argument.

The most famous of the sophists was **Protagoras** of Abdera, who visited Athens several times during the mid-fifth century, and was employed by Pericles to draw up a constitution for an Athenian colony. Most of what we know of Protagoras comes from the writings of Plato, who disapproved of sophists and regarded them as a bad influence on the young, encouragers of scepticism, relativism, and cynicism. None the less, Plato took Protagoras seriously and endeavoured to provide answers to his arguments.

Protagoras was agnostic in religion. 'About the gods,' he said, 'I cannot be sure whether they exist or not, or what they are like to see; for many things stand in the way of knowledge of them, both the opacity of the subject and the shortness of human life.' He was more a humanist than a theist: 'Man is the measure of all things,' ran his most famous saying, 'both of things that are that they are, and of things that are not that they are not.'

On the most likely interpretation, this means that whatever, whether through perception or through thought, appears to a particular person to be true, *is* true for that person. This does away with objective truth: nothing can be true absolutely, but only true relative to an individual. When people differ in belief, there is no way in which one of them is right and the other wrong. Democritus, and later Plato, objected that Protagoras' doctrine destroyed itself. For if all beliefs are true, then among true beliefs is the belief that not every belief is true.

Another sophist, **Gorgias** of Leontini, had been a pupil of Empedocles. He was first and foremost a teacher of rhetoric, whose essays on the polishing of style influenced the history of Greek oratory. But he was also a philosopher, of a tendency even more sceptical than that of Protagoras. He is said to have maintained that there is nothing, that if there is anything it cannot be known, and if anything can be known it cannot be communicated by one person to another.

By the time Gorgias visited Athens, in 427, a war had commenced between Athens and Sparta, known as the Peloponnesian war. Shortly after the outbreak of war, Pericles died, and campaign after campaign went badly for Athens. Defeat and plague brutalized the Athenians, and they became cruel and unscrupulous in warfare. They forfeited all claim to moral grandeur in 416 when they occupied the island of Melos, slaughtered all the adult males and enslaved the women and children. The later tragedies of Euripides, and some of the comedies of his contemporary Aristophanes, expressed an eloquent protest against the Athenian conduct of the war. It concluded with a crushing naval defeat at Aegospotami in 405 BC. The Athenian empire came to an end, and the leadership of Greece passed to Sparta. But the great days of Athenian philosophy were still to come.

Socrates

Among those who served in the Athenian heavy infantry was **Socrates** the son of Sophroniscus, who was thirty-eight when the war began. He was present at three of the important battles in the earlier years of the war and won a reputation for bravery. Back in Athens in 406, he held office in the Assembly at a time when a group of generals was put on trial for abandoning the bodies of the dead at the sea-battle of Arginusae. It was illegal to try the generals collectively rather than individually, but Socrates was the only person to vote against doing so, and they were executed.

When the war ended in 404, the Spartans replaced the Athenian democracy with an oligarchy known as the Thirty Tyrants, who instituted a reign of terror. Socrates was ordered to arrest an innocent man, but disregarded the order. He would soon pay the price of the uprightness which had made him unpopular now with both democrats and aristocrats.

Socrates' importance in the development of philosophy is such that all the philosophers we have considered hitherto are lumped together by historians under the title 'Pre-Socratics'. Yet he left no written work, and the details of his life, apart from its main dramatic events, remain obscure, a subject of controversy among scholars. He did not lack biographers, and indeed many of his contemporaries and successors wrote dialogues in which he took the leading part. The difficulty is to sort out sober fact from admiring fiction. His biographers all tell us that he was shabby and ugly, pot-bellied and snub-nosed; but agreement goes little further than that. The two authors whose works survive intact, the military historian Xenophon and the idealist philosopher Plato, paint pictures of Socrates which differ from each other as much as the picture of Jesus given by St Mark differs from that given by St John.

In his lifetime, Socrates was mocked by the comic dramatist Aristophanes, who portrayed him as a bumbling and corrupt eccentric, pursuing scientific curiosities with his head literally in the clouds. But rather than a natural philosopher, Socrates seems to have been a sophist of an unusual kind. Like the sophists, he spent much of his time in discussion and debate with rich young men (some of whom came to positions of power when oligarchy replaced democracy). But unlike others he charged no fees, and his method of education was not to instruct but to question; he said that he drew out, like a midwife, the thoughts with which his young pupils were pregnant. Unlike the sophists he made no claim to the possession of any special knowledge or expertise.

In classical Greece great attention was paid to the oracles uttered in the name of the god Apollo by the entranced priestesses in the shrine of Delphi. When asked if there was anyone wiser than Socrates, a priestess replied that there was no one. Socrates professed to be puzzled by this oracle, and questioned, one after another, politicians, poets, and experts claiming to possess wisdom of various kinds. None of them were able to defend their reputation against his cross-questioning, and Socrates concluded that the oracle was correct in that he alone realized that his own wisdom was worth nothing.

It was in matters of morality that it was most important to pursue genuine knowledge and to expose false pretensions. For according to Socrates moral knowledge and virtue were one and the same thing. Someone who really knew what it was right to do could not do wrong; if anyone did what was wrong, it must be because he did not know what was right. No one goes wrong on purpose, since everyone wants to lead a good life and thus be happy. Those who do wrong unintentionally are in need of instruction, not punishment. This

remarkable set of doctrines is sometimes called by historians 'The Socratic Paradox'.

Socrates did not claim to possess himself the degree of wisdom which would keep him from wrongdoing. Instead, he said that he relied on an inner divine voice, which would intervene if ever he was on the point of taking a wrong step.

Authorities who disagree about the content of Socrates' teaching agree about the manner of his death. The enemies whom he had made by his political probity, and his gadfly-like puncturing of reputations, ganged together to bring against him, at the age of seventy, a series of capital charges, accusing him of impiety, the introduction of strange gods, and the corruption of Athenian youth. Plato, who was present at his trial, wrote, after his death, a dramatized version of his speech in his defence, or *Apology*.

His accuser, Meletus, claims that he corrupts the young. Who then are the people who improve the young? In answer Meletus suggests, first, the judges, then the members of the legislative council, then the members of the assembly, and finally every single Athenian except Socrates. What a surprising piece of good fortune for the city's young people! Socrates goes on to ask whether it is better to live among good men than among bad men? Anyone would obviously prefer to live among good men, since bad men are likely to do him harm; if so he himself can have no motive for corrupting the young on purpose, and if he is doing so unwittingly, he should be educated rather than prosecuted.

Socrates turns to the charge of impiety. Is he being accused of atheism, or of introducing strange gods? The two charges are not consistent with each other; and in fact, Meletus seems to be confusing him with Anaxagoras who said the sun was made of stone and the moon of earth. As for the charge of atheism, Socrates can reply that his mission as a philosopher was given him by God himself, and his campaign to expose false wisdom was waged in obedience to the Delphic oracle. What would really be a betrayal of God would be to desert his post through fear of death. If he were told that he could go free on condition of abandoning philosophical inquiry, he would reply, 'Men of Athens, I honour 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'.

Socrates concludes his defence by pointing to the presence in court of many of his pupils and their families, none of whom has been called on to testify for the prosecution. He refuses to do as others and produce in court his weeping children as objects of compassion: at the hands of the judges he seeks justice and not mercy.

When the verdict was delivered, he was condemned by a slender majority of the 501 judges. The prosecution called for the death penalty; it was for the accused to propose an alternative sentence. Socrates considered asking for an honourable pension, but was willing to settle for a moderate fine – one too large for him to

pay himself, but which Plato and his friends were willing to pay on his behalf. The judges regarded the fine as unrealistically small, and passed sentence of death.

In his speech after sentence, Socrates told the judges that it would not have been difficult for him to frame a defence which would have secured acquittal; but the kind of tactics required would have been beneath him. 'The difficulty, my friends, is not to avoid death, but to avoid unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death'. Socrates, old and slow, has been overtaken by the slower runner; his sprightly accusers have been overtaken by the faster. During the trial his divine voice has never once spoken to him to hold him back, and so he is content to go to his death.

Is death a dreamless sleep? Such a sleep is more blessed than most nights and days in the life of even the most fortunate mortal. Is death a journey to another world? How splendid, to be able to meet the glorious dead and to converse with Hesiod and Homer! 'Nay. if this be true, let me die again and again.' He has so many questions to put to the great men and women of the past: and in the next world no one will be put to death for asking questions. 'The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways – I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows.'

From *Apology*: Obeying God and the Closing Argument

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… If you should address me thus, "Socrates, we shall not now yield to Anytus, but dismiss you, on this condition, however, that you no longer persevere in your researches nor study philosophy; and if hereafter you are detected in so doing, you shall die"—if, as I said, you should dismiss, me on these terms, I should say to you, "O Athenians! I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you; and so long as I breathe and am able, I shall not cease studying philosophy, and exhorting you and warning any one of you I may happen to meet, saying, as I have been accustomed to do: 'O best of men! seeing you are an Athenian, of a city the most powerful and most renowned for wisdom and strength, are you not ashamed of being careful for riches, how you may acquire them in greatest abundance, and for glory, and honor, but care not nor take any thought for wisdom and truth, and for your soul, how it may be made most perfect?'" And if any one of you should question my assertion, and affirm that he does care for these things, I shall not at once let him go, nor depart, but I shall question him, sift and prove him. And if he should appear to me not to possess virtue, but to pretend that he does, I shall reproach him for that he sets the least value on things of the greatest worth, but the highest on things that are worthless. Thus I shall act to all whom I meet, both young and old, stranger and citizen, but rather to you, my fellow-citizens, because ye are more nearly allied to me. For be well assured, this the deity commands. And I think that no greater good has ever befallen you in the city than my zeal for the service of the god. For I go about doing nothing else than persuading you, both young and old, to take no care either for the body, or for riches, prior to or so much as for the soul, how it may be made most perfect, telling you that virtue does not spring from riches, but riches and all other human blessings, both private and public, from virtue.

[The judges … condemned Socrates to death; whereupon he continued:]

… Moreover, we may hence conclude that there is great hope that death is a blessing. For to die is one of two things: for either the dead may be annihilated, and have no sensation of anything whatever; or, as it is said, there are a certain change and passage of the soul from one place to another. And if it is a privation of all sensation, as it were a sleep in which the sleeper has no dream, death would be a wonderful gain. For I think that if any one, having selected a night in which he slept so soundly as not to have had a dream, and having compared this night with all the other nights and days of his life, should be required, on consideration, to say how many days and nights he had passed better and more pleasantly than this night throughout his life, I think that not only a private person, but even the great king himself, would find them easy to number, in comparison with other days and nights. If, therefore, death is a thing of this kind, I say it is a gain; for thus all futurity appears to be nothing more than one night. But if, on the other hand, death is a removal from hence to another place, and what is said be true, that all the dead are there, what greater blessing can there be than this, my judges? For if, on arriving at Hades, released from these who pretend to be judges, one shall find those who are true judges, and who are said to judge there, Minos and Rhadamanthus, Æacus and Triptolemus, and such others of the demi-gods as were just

during their own life, would this be a sad removal? At what price would you not estimate a conference with Orpheus and Musæus, Hesiod and Homer? I indeed should be willing to die often, if this be true. For to me the sojourn there would be admirable, when I should meet with Palamedes, and Ajax, son of Telamon, and any other of the ancients who has died by an unjust sentence. The comparing my sufferings with theirs would, I think, be no unpleasing occupation. But the greatest pleasure would be to spend my time in questioning and examining the people there as I have done those here, and discovering who among them is wise, and who fancies himself to be so, but is not. At what price, my judges, would not any one estimate the opportunity of questioning him who led that mighty army against Troy, or Ulysses, or Sisyphus, or ten thousand others whom one might mention both men and women—with whom to converse and associate, and to question them, would be an inconceivable happiness? Surely for that the judges there do not condemn to death; for in other respects those who live there are more happy than those who are here, and are henceforth immortal, if, at least, what is said be true.

You, therefore, O my judges! ought to entertain good hopes with respect to death, and to meditate on this one truth, that to a good man nothing is evil, neither while living nor when dead, nor are his concerns neglected by the gods. And what has befallen me is not the effect of chance; but this is clear to me, that now to die, and be freed from my cares is better for me On this account the warning in no way turned me aside; and I bear no resentment toward those who condemned me, or against my accusers, although they did not condemn and accuse me with this intention, but thinking to injure me: in this they deserve to be blamed.

Thus much, however, I beg of them. Punish my sons when they grow up, O judges! paining them as I have pained you, if they appear to you to care for riches or anything else before virtue; and if they think themselves to be something when they are nothing, reproach them as I have done you, for not attending to what they ought, and for conceiving themselves to be something when they are worth nothing. If ye do this, both I and my sons shall have met with just treatment at your hands.

But it is now time to depart—for me to die, for you to live. But which of us is going to a better state is unknown to everyone but God.

From *Phaedo*: Argument on the Immortality of the Soul

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79. … [Simmias said] "because any one might use the same argument with respect to harmony, and a lyre, and its chords, that harmony is something invisible and incorporeal, very beautiful and divine, in a well-modulated lyre; but the lyre and its chords are bodies, and of corporeal form, compounded and earthly, and akin to that which is mortal. When any one, then, has either broken the lyre, or cut or burst the chords, he might maintain from the same reasoning as yours that it is necessary the harmony should still exist and not be destroyed; for there could be no possibility that the lyre should subsist any longer when the chords are burst; and that the chords, which are of a mortal nature, should subsist, but that the harmony, which is of the same nature and akin to that which is divine and immortal, should become extinct, and perish before that which is mortal; but he might say that the harmony must needs subsist somewhere, and that the wood and chords must decay before it can undergo any change.

80. For I think, Socrates, that you yourself have arrived at this conclusion, that we consider the soul to be pretty much of this kind—namely, that our body being compacted and held together by heat and cold, dryness and moisture, and other such qualities, our soul is the fusion and harmony of these, when they are well and duly combined with each other. If, then, the soul is a kind of harmony, it is evident that when our bodies are unduly relaxed or strained, through diseases and other maladies, the soul must, of necessity, immediately perish, although it is most divine, just as other harmonies which subsist in sounds or in the various works of artisans; but that the remains of the body of each person last for a long time, till they are either burned or decayed. Consider, then, what we shall say to this reasoning, if any one should maintain that the soul, being a fusion of the several qualities in the body, perishes first in that which is called death."

…

120. … [Socrates] said, "consider whether you will agree with me in this also. Do you call heat and cold anything?"

"I do."

"The same as snow and fire?"

"By Jupiter! I do not."

"But heat is something different from fire, and cold something different from snow?"

"Yes."

"But this, I think, is apparent to you—that snow, while it is snow, can never, when it has admitted heat, as we said before, continue to be what it was, snow and hot; but, on the approach of heat, it must either withdraw or perish?"

"Certainly."

"And, again, that fire, when cold approaches it, must either depart or perish; but that it will never endure, when it has admitted coldness, to continue what it was, fire and cold?"

121. "You speak truly," he said.

"It happens, then," he continued, "with respect to some of such things, that not only is the idea itself always thought worthy of the same appellation, but likewise something else which is not, indeed, that idea itself, but constantly retains its form so long as it exists. What I mean will perhaps be clearer in the following examples: the odd in number must always possess the name by which we now call it, must it not?"

"Certainly."

"Must it alone, of all things—for this I ask—or is there anything else which is not the same as the odd, but yet which we must always call odd, together with its own name, because it is so constituted by nature that it can never be without the odd? But this, I say, is the case with the number three, and many others. For consider with respect to the number three: does it not appear to you that it must always be called by its own name, as well as by that of the odd, which is not the same as the number three? Yet such is the nature of the number three, five, and the entire half of number, that though they are not the same as the odd, yet each of them is always odd. And, again, two and four, and the whole other series of number, though not the same as the even, are nevertheless each of them always even: do you admit this, or not?"

122. "How should I not?" he replied.

"Observe then," said he, "what I wish to prove. It is this—that it appears not only that these contraries do not admit each other, but that even such things as are not contrary to each other, and yet always possess contraries, do not appear to admit that idea which is contrary to the idea that exists in themselves, but, when it approaches, perish or depart. Shall we not allow that the number three would first perish, and suffer any thing whatever, rather than endure, while it is still three, to become even?"

"Most certainly," said Cebes.

"And yet," said he, "the number two is not contrary to three."

"Surely not."

"Not only, then, do ideas that are contrary never allow the approach of each other, but some other things also do not allow the approach of contraries."

"You say very truly," he replied.

"Do you wish, then," he said, "that, if we are able, we should define what these things are?"

"Certainly."

"Would they not then, Cebes," he said, "be such things as, whatever they occupy, compel that thing not only to retain its own idea, but also that of something which is always a contrary?"

"How do you mean?"

123. "As we just now said. For you know, surely, that whatever things the idea of three occupies must of necessity not only be three, but also odd?"

"Certainly."

"To such a thing, then, we assert, that the idea contrary to that form which constitutes this can never come."

"It cannot."

"But did the odd make it so?"

"Yes."

"And is the contrary to this the idea of the even?"

"Yes."

"The idea of the even, then, will never come to the three?"

"No, surely."

"Three, then, has no part in the even?"

"None whatever."

"The number three is uneven?"

"Yes."

"What, therefore, I said should be defined—namely, what things they are which, though not contrary to some particular thing, yet do not admit of the contrary itself; as, in the present instance, the number three, though not contrary to the even, does not any the more admit it, for it always brings the contrary with it, just as the number two does to the odd, fire to cold, and many other particulars. Consider, then, whether you would thus define, not only that a contrary does not admit a

contrary, but also that that which brings with it a contrary to that to which it approaches will never admit the contrary of that which it brings with it.

124. But call it to mind again, for it will not be useless to hear it often repeated. Five will not admit the idea of the even, nor ten, its double, that of the odd. This double, then, though it is itself contrary to something else, yet will not admit the idea of the odd, nor will half as much again, nor other things of the kind, such as the half and the third part, admit the idea of the whole, if you follow me, and agree with me that it is so."

"I entirely agree with you," he said, "and follow you."

"Tell me again, then," he said, "from the beginning; and do not answer me in the terms in which I put the question, but in different ones, imitating my example. For I say this because, besides that safe mode of answering which I mentioned at first, from what has now been said, I see another no less safe one. For if you should ask me what that is which, if it be in the body, will cause it to be hot, I should not give you that safe but unlearned answer, that it is heat, but one more elegant, from what we have just now said, that it is fire; nor, if you should ask me what that is which, if it be in the body, will cause it to be diseased, should I say that it is disease, but fever; nor if you should ask what that is which, if it be in number, will cause it to be odd, should I say that it is unevenness, but unity; and so with other things. But consider whether you sufficiently understand what I mean."

125. "Perfectly so," he replied.

"Answer me, then," he said, "what that is which, when it is in the body, the body will be alive?"

"Soul," he replied.

"Is not this, then, always the case?"

"How should it not be?" said he.

"Does the soul, then, always bring life to whatever it occupies?"

"It does indeed," he replied.

"Whether, then, is there anything contrary to life or not?"

"There is," he replied.

"What?"

"Death."

"The soul, then, will never admit the contrary of that which it brings with it, as has been already allowed?"

"Most assuredly," replied Cebes.

"What, then? How do we denominate that which does not admit the idea of the even?"

"Uneven," he replied.

"And that which does not admit the just, nor the musical?"

"Unmusical," he said, "and unjust."

"Be it so. But what do we call that which does not admit death?"

"Immortal," he replied.

"Therefore, does not the soul admit death?"

"No."

"Is the soul, then, immortal?"

"Immortal."

126. "Be it so," he said. "Shall we say, then, that this has been now demonstrated? or how think you?"

"Most completely, Socrates."

"What, then," said he, "Cebes, if it were necessary for the uneven to be imperishable, would the number three be otherwise than imperishable?"

"How should it not?"

"If, therefore, it were also necessary that what is without heat should be imperishable, when any one should introduce heat to snow, would not the snow withdraw itself, safe and unmelted? For it would not perish; nor yet would it stay and admit the heat."

"You say truly," he replied.

"In like manner, I think, if that which is insusceptible of cold were imperishable, that when anything cold approached the fire, it would neither be extinguished nor perish, but would depart quite safe."

"Of necessity," he said.

"Must we not, then, of necessity," he continued, "speak thus of that which is immortal? if that which is immortal is imperishable, it is impossible for the soul to perish, when death approaches it. For, from what has been said already, it will not admit death, nor will ever be dead; just as we said that three will never be even, nor, again, will the odd; nor will fire be cold, nor yet the heat that is in fire.

127. But someone may say, what hinders, though the odd can never become even by the approach of the even, as we have allowed, yet, when the odd is destroyed, that the even should succeed in its place? We could not contend with him who should make this objection that it is not destroyed, for the uneven is not imperishable; since, if this were granted us, we might easily have contended that, on the approach of the even, the odd and the three depart; and we might have contended in the same way with respect to fire, heat, and the rest, might we not?"

"Certainly."

"Wherefore, with respect to the immortal, if we have allowed that it is imperishable, the soul, in addition to its being immortal, must also be imperishable; if not, there will be need of other arguments."

"But there is no need," he said, "so far as that is concerned; for scarcely could anything not admit of corruption, if that which is immortal and eternal is liable to it."

128. "The deity, indeed, I think," said Socrates, "and the idea itself of life, and if anything else is immortal, must be allowed by all beings to be incapable of dissolution."

"By Jupiter!" he replied, "by all men, indeed, and still more, as I think, by the gods."

"Since, then, that which is immortal is also incorruptible, can the soul, since it is immortal, be anything else than imperishable?"

"It must, of necessity, be so."

"When, therefore, death approaches a man, the mortal part of him, as it appears, dies, but the immortal part departs safe and uncorrupted, having withdrawn itself from death?"

"It appears so."

"The soul, therefore," he said, "Cebes, is most certainly immortal and imperishable, and our souls will really exist in Hades."

"Therefore, Socrates," he said, "I have nothing further to say against this, nor any reason for doubting your arguments. But if Simmias here, or anyone else, has anything to say, it were well for him not to be silent; for I know not to what other opportunity beyond the present any one can defer it, who wishes either to speak or hear about these things."

129. "But, indeed," said Simmias, "neither have I any reason to doubt what has been urged; yet, from the magnitude of the subject discussed, and from my low opinion of human weakness, I am compelled still to retain a doubt within myself with respect to what has been said."

"Not only so, Simmias," said Socrates, "but you say this well; and, moreover, the first hypotheses, even though they are credible to you, should nevertheless be examined more carefully; and if you should investigate them sufficiently, I think you will follow my reasoning as far as it is possible for man to do so; and if this very point becomes clear, you will inquire no further."

"You speak truly," he said.

From *The Republic*: Justice | Gyges' Ring | the Cave

[Project Gutenberg: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1497/1497-h/1497-h.htm]

BOOK I

What is Justice? Cephalus and Polemarchus

… Well said, Cephalus, I [Socrates] replied; but as concerning **justice, what is it?—to speak the truth and to pay your debts—no more than this?** And even to this are there not exceptions? Suppose that a friend when in his right mind has deposited arms with me and he asks for them when he is not in his right mind, ought I to give them back to him? No one would say that I ought or that I should be right in doing so, any more than they would say that I ought always to speak the truth to one who is in his condition.

You are quite right, he replied.

But then, I said, speaking the truth and paying your debts is not a correct definition of justice.

Quite correct, Socrates, if Simonides is to be believed, said Polemarchus interposing.

I fear, said Cephalus, that I must go now, for I have to look after the sacrifices, and I hand over the argument to Polemarchus and the company.

Is not Polemarchus your heir? I said.

To be sure, he answered, and went away laughing to the sacrifices.

Tell me then, O thou heir of the argument, what did Simonides say, and according to you truly say, about justice?

He said that the repayment of a debt is just, and in saying so he appears to me to be right.

I should be sorry to doubt the word of such a wise and inspired man, but his meaning, though probably clear to you, is the reverse of clear to me. For he certainly does not mean, as we were just now saying, that I ought to return a deposit of arms or of anything else to one who asks for it when he is not in his right senses; and yet a deposit cannot be denied to be a debt.

True.

Then when the person who asks me is not in his right mind I am by no means to make the return?

Certainly not.

When Simonides said that the repayment of a debt was justice, he did not mean to include that case?

Certainly not; for he thinks that a friend ought always to do good to a friend and never evil.

You mean that the return of a deposit of gold which is to the injury of the receiver, if the two parties are friends, is not the repayment of a debt,—that is what you would imagine him to say?

Yes.

And are enemies also to receive what we owe to them?

To be sure, he said, they are to receive what we owe them, and an enemy, as I take it, owes to an enemy that which is due or proper to him—that is to say, evil.

Simonides, then, after the manner of poets, would seem to have spoken darkly of the nature of justice; for he really meant to say **that justice is the giving to each man what is proper to him, and this he termed a debt.**

That must have been his meaning, he said. …

What is Justice? Thrasymachur the Sophist

… Several times in the course of the discussion Thrasymachus had made an attempt to get the argument into his own hands, and had been put down by the rest of the company, who wanted to hear the end. But when Polemarchus and I had done speaking and there was a pause, he could no longer hold his peace; and, gathering himself up, he came at us like a wild beast, seeking to devour us. We were quite panic-stricken at the sight of him.

He roared out to the whole company: What folly, Socrates, has taken possession of you all? And why, sillybillies, do you knock under to one another? I say that if you want really to know what justice is, you should not only ask but answer, and you should not seek honour to yourself from the refutation of an opponent, but have your own answer; for there is many a one who can ask and cannot answer. And now I will not have you say that justice is duty or advantage or profit or gain or interest, for this sort of nonsense will not do for me; I must have clearness and accuracy.

I was panic-stricken at his words, and could not look at him without trembling. Indeed I believe that if I had not fixed my eye upon him, I should have been struck dumb: but when I saw his fury rising, I looked at him first, and was therefore able to reply to him.

Thrasymachus, I said, with a quiver, don't be hard upon us. Polemarchus and I may have been guilty of a little mistake in the argument, but I can assure you that the error was not intentional. If we were seeking for a piece of gold, you would not imagine that we were 'knocking under to one another,' and so losing our chance of finding it. And why, when we are seeking for justice, a thing more precious than many pieces of gold, do you say that we are weakly yielding to one another and not doing our utmost to get at the truth? Nay, my good friend, we are most willing and anxious to do so, but the fact is that we cannot. And if so, you people who know all things should pity us and not be angry with us.

How characteristic of Socrates! he replied, with a bitter laugh;—that's your ironical style! Did I not foresee—have I not already told you, that whatever he was asked he would refuse to answer, and try irony or any other shuffle, in order that he might avoid answering?

You are a philosopher, Thrasymachus, I replied ….

… [Socrates still speaking] The natural thing is, that the speaker should be someone like yourself who professes to know and can tell what he knows. Will you then kindly answer, for the edification of the company and of myself?

Glaucon and the rest of the company joined in my request, and Thrasymachus, as any one might see, was in reality eager to speak; for he thought that he had an excellent answer, and would distinguish himself. But at first he affected to insist on my answering; at length he consented to begin. Behold, he said, the wisdom of Socrates; he refuses to teach himself, and goes about learning of others, to whom he never even says Thank you.

That I learn of others, I replied, is quite true; but that I am ungrateful I wholly deny. Money I have none, and therefore I pay in praise, which is all I have; and how ready I am to praise anyone who appears to me to speak well you will very soon find out when you answer; for I expect that you will answer well.

Listen, then, he said; I proclaim that **justice is nothing else than the interest of the stronger**. And now why do you not praise me? But of course you won't.

Let me first understand you, I replied. Justice, as you say, is the interest of the stronger. What, Thrasymachus, is the meaning of this? You cannot mean to say that because Polydamas, the pancratiast, is stronger than we are, and finds the eating of beef conducive to his bodily strength, that to eat beef is therefore equally for our good who are weaker than he is, and right and just for us?

That's abominable of you, Socrates; you take the words in the sense which is most damaging to the argument.

Not at all, my good sir, I said; I am trying to understand them; and I wish that you would be a little clearer.

Well, he said, have you never heard that forms of government differ; there are tyrannies, and there are democracies, and there are aristocracies?

Yes, I know.

And the government is the ruling power in each state?

Certainly.

And the different forms of government make laws democratical, aristocratical, tyrannical, with a view to their several interests; and these laws, which are made by them for their own interests, are the justice which they deliver to their subjects, and him who transgresses them they punish as a breaker of the law, and unjust. And that is what I mean when I say that in all states there is the same principle of justice, which is the interest of the government; and as the government must be supposed to have power, the only reasonable conclusion is, that everywhere there is one principle of justice, which is the interest of the stronger.

Now I understand you, I said; and whether you are right or not I will try to discover.

…

BOOK II

What is Justice? Glaucon and Gyges' Ring

… [Glaucon] [I] shall begin by speaking, as I proposed, of the nature and origin of justice.

They say that to do injustice is, by nature, good; to suffer injustice, evil; but that the evil is greater than the good. And so when men have both done and suffered injustice and have had experience of both, not being able to avoid the one and obtain the other, they think that they had better agree among themselves to have neither; hence there arise laws and mutual covenants; and that which is ordained by law is termed by them lawful and just. This they affirm to be the origin and nature of justice;—it is a mean or compromise, between the best of all, which is to do injustice and not be punished, and the worst of all, which is to suffer injustice without the power of retaliation; and justice, being at a middle point between the two, is tolerated not as a good, but as the lesser evil, and honoured by reason of the inability of men to do injustice. For no man who is worthy to be called a man would ever submit to such an agreement if he were able to resist; he would be mad if he did. Such is the received account, Socrates, of the nature and origin of justice.

Now that those who practise justice do so involuntarily and because they have not the power to be unjust will best appear if we imagine something of this kind: having given both to the just and the unjust power to do what they will, let us watch and see whither desire will lead them; then we shall discover in the very act the just and unjust man to be proceeding along the same road, following their interest, which all natures deem to be their good, and are only diverted into the path of justice by the force of law. The liberty which we are supposing may be most completely given to them in the form of such a power as is said to have been possessed by Gyges, the ancestor of Croesus the Lydian. According to the tradition, Gyges was a shepherd in the service of the king of Lydia; there was a great storm, and an earthquake made an opening in the earth at the place where he was feeding his flock. Amazed at the sight, he descended into the opening, where, among other marvels, he beheld a hollow brazen horse, having doors, at which he stooping and looking in saw a dead body of stature, as appeared to him, more than human, and having nothing on but a gold ring; this he took from the finger of the dead and reascended. Now the shepherds met together, according to custom, that they might send their monthly report about the flocks to the king; into their assembly he came having the ring on his finger, and as he was sitting among them he chanced to

turn the collet of the ring inside his hand, when instantly he became invisible to the rest of the company and they began to speak of him as if he were no longer present. He was astonished at this, and again touching the ring he turned the collet outwards and reappeared; he made several trials of the ring, and always with the same result—when he turned the collet inwards he became invisible, when outwards he reappeared. Whereupon he contrived to be chosen one of the messengers who were sent to the court; whereas soon as he arrived he seduced the queen, and with her help conspired against the king and slew him, and took the kingdom. Suppose now that there were two such magic rings, and the just put on one of them and the unjust the other; no man can be imagined to be of such an iron nature that he would stand fast in justice. No man would keep his hands off what was not his own when he could safely take what he liked out of the market, or go into houses and lie with any one at his pleasure, or kill or release from prison whom he would, and in all respects be like a God among men. Then the actions of the just would be as the actions of the unjust; they would both come at last to the same point. And this we may truly affirm to be a great proof that **a man is just, not willingly or because he thinks that justice is any good to him individually, but of necessity**, for wherever anyone thinks that he can safely be unjust, there he is unjust. For all men believe in their hearts that injustice is far more profitable to the individual than justice, and he who argues as I have been supposing, will say that they are right. If you could imagine any one obtaining this power of becoming invisible, and never doing any wrong or touching what was another's, he would be thought by the lookers-on to be a most wretched idiot, although they would praise him to one another's faces, and keep up appearances with one another from a fear that they too might suffer injustice. Enough of this.

Now, if we are to form a real judgment of the life of the just and unjust, we must isolate them; there is no other way; and how is the isolation to be effected? I answer: Let the unjust man be entirely unjust, and the just man entirely just; nothing is to be taken away from either of them, and both are to be perfectly furnished for the work of their respective lives. First, let the unjust be like other distinguished masters of craft; like the skilful pilot or physician, who knows intuitively his own powers and keeps within their limits, and who, if he fails at any point, is able to recover himself. So let the unjust make his unjust attempts in the right way, and lie hidden if he means to be great in his injustice: (he who is found out is nobody:) for the highest reach of injustice is, to be deemed just when you are not. Therefore I say that in the perfectly unjust man we must assume the most perfect injustice; there is to be no deduction, but we must allow him, while doing the most unjust acts, to have acquired the greatest reputation for justice. If he have taken a false step he must be able to recover himself; he must be one who can speak with effect, if any of his deeds come to light, and who can force his way where force is required by his courage and strength, and command of money and friends. And at his side let us place the just man in his nobleness and simplicity, wishing, as Aeschylus says, to be and not to seem good. There must be no seeming, for if he seem to be just he will be honoured and rewarded, and then we shall not know whether he is just for the sake of justice or for the sake of honours and rewards; therefore, let him be clothed in justice only, and have no other covering; and he must be imagined in a state of life the opposite of the former. Let him be the best of men, and let him be thought the worst; then he will have been put to the proof; and we shall see whether he will be affected by the fear of infamy and its consequences. And let him continue thus to the hour of death; being just and seeming to be unjust. When both have reached the uttermost extreme, the one of justice and the other of injustice, let judgment be given which of them is the happier of the two.

Heavens! my dear Glaucon, I said, how energetically you polish them up for the decision, first one and then the other, as if they were two statues.

Virtue in an Individual like Virtue in a State

… I will tell you, I replied; justice, which is the subject of our enquiry, is, as you know, sometimes spoken of as the virtue of an individual, and sometimes as the virtue of a State.

True, he replied.

And is not a State larger than an individual?

It is.

Then in the larger the quantity of justice is likely to be larger and more easily discernible. I propose therefore that we enquire into the nature of justice and injustice, first as they appear in the State, and secondly in the individual, proceeding from the greater to the lesser and comparing them.

That, he said, is an excellent proposal.

And if we imagine the State in process of creation, we shall see the justice and injustice of the State in process of creation also.

I dare say.

When the State is completed there may be a hope that the object of our search will be more easily discovered.

Yes, far more easily.

But ought we to attempt to construct one? I said; for to do so, as I am inclined to think, will be a very serious task. Reflect therefore.

I have reflected, said Adeimantus, and am anxious that you should proceed.

A State, I said, arises, as I conceive, out of the needs of mankind; no one is self-sufficing, but all of us have many wants. Can any other origin of a State be imagined?

There can be no other.

Then, as we have many wants, and many persons are needed to supply them, one takes a helper for one purpose and another for another; and when these partners and helpers are gathered together in one habitation the body of inhabitants is termed a State.

True, he said.

And they exchange with one another, and one gives, and another receives, under the idea that the exchange will be for their good.

Very true.

Then, I said, let us begin and create in idea a State; and yet the true creator is necessity, who is the mother of our invention.

Of course, he replied.

Now the first and greatest of necessities is food, which is the condition of life and existence.

Certainly.

The second is a dwelling, and the third clothing and the like.

True.

And now let us see how our city will be able to supply this great demand: We may suppose that one man is a husbandman, another a builder, someone else a weaver—shall we add to them a shoemaker, or perhaps some other purveyor to our bodily wants?

Quite right.

The barest notion of a State must include four or five men.

Clearly.

And how will they proceed? Will each bring the result of his labours into a common stock?—the individual husbandman, for example, producing for four, and labouring four times as long and as much as he need in the provision of food with which he supplies others as well as himself; or will he have nothing to do with others and not be at the trouble of producing for them, but provide for himself alone a fourth of the food in a fourth of the time, and in the remaining three fourths of his

time be employed in making a house or a coat or a pair of shoes, having no partnership with others, but supplying himself all his own wants?

Adeimantus thought that he should aim at producing food only and not at producing everything.

Probably, I replied, that would be the better way; and when I hear you say this, I am myself reminded that we are not all alike; there are diversities of natures among us which are adapted to different occupations.

Very true.

And will you have a work better done when the workman has many occupations, or when he has only one?

When he has only one.

Further, there can be no doubt that a work is spoilt when not done at the right time?

No doubt.

For business is not disposed to wait until the doer of the business is at leisure; but the doer must follow up what he is doing, and make the business his first object.

He must.

And if so, we must infer that all things are produced more plentifully and easily and of a better quality when one man does one thing which is natural to him and does it at the right time, and leaves other things.

Undoubtedly.

Then more than four citizens will be required; for the husbandman will not make his own plough or mattock, or other implements of agriculture, if they are to be good for anything. Neither will the builder make his tools—and he too needs many; and in like manner the weaver and shoemaker.

True.

Then carpenters, and smiths, and many other artisans, will be sharers in our little State, which is already beginning to grow?

True.

Yet even if we add neatherds, shepherds, and other herdsmen, in order that our husbandmen may have oxen to plough with, and builders as well as husbandmen may have draught cattle, and curriers and weavers fleeces and hides,—still our State will not be very large.

That is true; yet neither will it be a very small State which contains all these.

Then, again, there is the situation of the city—to find a place where nothing need be imported is wellnigh impossible.

Impossible.

Then there must be another class of citizens who will bring the required supply from another city?

There must.

But if the trader goes empty-handed, having nothing which they require who would supply his need, he will come back empty-handed.

That is certain.

And therefore what they produce at home must be not only enough for themselves, but such both in quantity and quality as to accommodate those from whom their wants are supplied.

Very true.

Then more husbandmen and more artisans will be required?

They will.

Not to mention the importers and exporters, who are called merchants?

Yes.

Then we shall want merchants?

We shall.

And if merchandise is to be carried over the sea, skilful sailors will also be needed, and in considerable numbers?

Yes, in considerable numbers.

Then, again, within the city, how will they exchange their productions? To secure such an exchange was, as you will remember, one of our principal objects when we formed them into a society and constituted a State.

Clearly they will buy and sell.

Then they will need a market-place, and a money-token for purposes of exchange.

Certainly.

Suppose now that a husbandman, or an artisan, brings some production to market, and he comes at a time when there is no one to exchange with him,—is he to leave his calling and sit idle in the market-place?

Not at all; he will find people there who, seeing the want, undertake the office of salesmen. In well-ordered states they are commonly those who are the weakest in bodily strength, and therefore of little use for any other purpose; their duty is to be in the market, and to give money in exchange for goods to those who desire to sell and to take money from those who desire to buy.

This want, then, creates a class of retail-traders in our State. Is not 'retailer' the term which is applied to those who sit in the market-place engaged in buying and selling, while those who wander from one city to another are called merchants?

Yes, he said.

And there is another class of servants, who are intellectually hardly on the level of companionship; still they have plenty of bodily strength for labour, which accordingly they sell, and are called, if I do not mistake, hirelings, hire being the name which is given to the price of their labour.

True.

Then hirelings will help to make up our population?

Yes.

And now, Adeimantus, is our State matured and perfected?

I think so.

Where, then, is justice, and where is injustice, and in what part of the State did they spring up?

Probably in the dealings of these citizens with one another. I cannot imagine that they are more likely to be found anywhere else.

I dare say that you are right in your suggestion, I said; we had better think the matter out, and not shrink from the enquiry.

…

BOOK VII

The Cave

And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened:—Behold! human beings living in a underground den, which has a mouth open towards 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 marionette players 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 passers-by 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 towards 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 some one 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 towards 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 fellow-prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

Certainly, he would.

And if they were in the habit of conferring honours 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 honours 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 an 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 any one 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 prison-house is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upwards 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.

From **Aristotle's *Physics***

[translated by R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye]

Book II Part 3: on the four causes

Now that we have established these distinctions, we must proceed to consider causes, their character and number. Knowledge is the object of our inquiry, and men do not think they know a thing till they have grasped the 'why' of (which is to grasp its primary cause). So clearly we too must do this as regards both coming to be and passing away and every kind of physical change, in order that, knowing their principles, we may try to refer to these principles each of our problems.

In one sense, then, (1) that out of which a thing comes to be and which persists, is called 'cause', e.g. the bronze of the statue, the silver of the bowl, and the genera of which the bronze and the silver are species.

In another sense (2) the form or the archetype, i.e. the statement of the essence, and its genera, are called 'causes' (e.g. of the octave the relation of 2:1, and generally number), and the parts in the definition.

Again (3) the primary source of the change or coming to rest; e.g. the man who gave advice is a cause, the father is cause of the child, and generally what makes of what is made and what causes change of what is changed.

Again (4) in the sense of end or 'that for the sake of which' a thing is done, e.g. health is the cause of walking about. ('Why is he walking about?' we say. 'To be healthy', and, having said that, we think we have assigned the cause.) The same is true also of all the intermediate steps which are brought about through the action of something else as means towards the end, e.g. reduction of flesh, purging, drugs, or surgical instruments are means towards health. All these things are 'for the sake of' the end, though they differ from one another in that some are activities, others instruments.

This then perhaps exhausts the number of ways in which the term 'cause' is used.

Epicureanism

Epicurus, born into a family of Athenian expatriates in Samos, set up house in Athens about 306 BC, and lived there until his death in 271. His followers in the Garden, who included women and slaves, lived on simple fare and kept away from public life. Epicurus wrote three hundred books, but except for a few letters almost all that he wrote has been lost. Fragments from his treatise *On Nature* were buried in volcanic ash at Herculaneum when Vesuvius erupted in AD 79; in modern times they have been painstakingly unrolled and deciphered. To this day, however, we depend for our knowledge of Epicurus' teachings principally on a long Latin poem written in the first century BC by his follower Lucretius, entitled *On the Nature of Things* (De Rerum Natura) – see Plate 6.

The aim of Epicurus' philosophy is to make happiness possible by removing the fear of death which is its greatest obstacle. Because men are afraid of death, they struggle for wealth and power in the hope of postponing it, and throw themselves into frenzied activity so that they can forget its inevitability. The fear of death is instilled in us by religion, which holds out the prospect of suffering and punishment after death. But this prospect is illusory. The point is eloquently made by Lucretius (in Dryden's translation): there is no need to fear either death, or survival, or reincarnation.

> What has this bugbear, death, to frighten man,
> If souls can die, as well as bodies can?
> For, as before our birth we felt no pain
> When Punic arms infested land and main,
> So, when our mortal frame shall be disjoined,
> The lifeless lump uncoupled from the mind,
> From sense of grief and pain we shall be free
> We shall not feel, because we shall not be.
> Though earth in seas, and seas in heaven were lost
> We should not move, we only should be tossed.
> Nay, e'en suppose when we have suffered fate,
> The soul could feel in her divided state,
> What's that to us? for we are only we
> While souls and bodies in one frame agree.
> Nay, though our atoms should revolve by chance,
> And matter leap into the former dance;
> Though time our life and motion could restore,
> And make our bodies what they were before;
> What gain to us would all this bustle bring?
> The new-made man would be another thing.

It was to cure the fear of death, and in order to show that the terrors held out by religion were only fairy-tales, that Epicurus set out his account of the nature and structure of the world.

He took over, with some modifications, the atomism of Democritus. Indivisible unchanging units move in void and infinite space; initially they all move downwards at constant and equal speed, but from time to time they swerve and collide with each other. From their collisions everything in heaven and earth has come into being. The soul, too, like everything else, consists of atoms, which differ from other atoms only in being smaller and subtler. At death the atoms of the soul are dispersed, and cease to be capable of sensation because they no longer occupy their appropriate place in a body. The gods themselves are compounded of atoms, just like humans and animals; but because they live in less turbulent regions they are free from the danger of dissolution. Epicurus was no atheist, but he believed that the gods took no interest in the affairs of this world, and lived a life of their own in uninterrupted tranquillity. For this reason, belief in divine providence was superstition, and religious rituals were worthless at best.

Unlike Democritus, Epicurus believed that the senses were reliable sources of information, and he gave an atomistic account of their operation. Bodies in the world throw off thin films of the atoms of which they are made, which retain their original shape and thus serve as images (*eidola*) of their parent bodies. Sensation occurs when these images make contact with the atoms in the soul. The appearances which reach the soul are never false; they always correspond exactly to their source. If we are misled about reality it is because we have used these genuine appearances as a basis for false judgements. If appearances conflict, as when an oar looks bent when in the water and straight when outside it, the two appearances are to be regarded as honest witnesses between which the mind must give judgement. If appearances are insufficient to settle the issue between competing theories (e.g. about the real size of the sun) then the mind should suspend judgement and exercise an equal tolerance to all.

The keystone of Epicurus' moral philosophy is the doctrine that pleasure is the beginning and end of the happy life. He makes a distinction, however, between pleasures which are the satisfaction of desires, and pleasures which come when all desires have been satisfied. The pleasures of satisfying our desires for food and drink and sex are inferior pleasures, because they are bound up with pain: the desire which they satisfy is itself painful, and its satisfaction leads to a renewal of desire. We should aim, therefore, at quiet pleasures such as those of private friendship.

Though he was an atomist, Epicurus was not a determinist; he believed humans enjoyed freedom of the will, and he sought to explain it by appealing to the random swerve of the atoms. Since we are free we are masters of our own fate: the gods neither impose necessity nor interfere with our choices. We cannot escape death, but if we take a truly philosophical view of it, death is no evil.

Stoicism

Epicureanism survived for six hundred years after Epicurus' death; but despite finding incomparable expression in Lucretius' great poem, it was never as popular as the Stoicism founded by his contemporary **Zeno** of Citium. Zeno came from Cyprus, where, having read a book about Socrates, he acquired a passion for philosophy which led him to emigrate to Athens, at about the same time as Epicurus. There he was to study under a number of teachers, but on his first arrival he became a pupil of the Cynic Crates, who, he was told, was the nearest contemporary equivalent of Socrates. Cynicism was not a school of philosophy, but a bohemian way of life, based on contempt for material wealth and conventional propriety. Its founder had been Diogenes of Sinope, who lived like a dog ('cynic' means 'dog-like') in a tub for a kennel. When visited by the great Alexander, who asked what favour he could do him, Diogenes replied 'you could move out of my light'. Zeno's encounter with Cynicism taught him to give a prominent place in his philosophy to the ideal of self-sufficiency.

Unlike Diogenes, who loved teasing Plato, and Crates, who liked writing poetic satire, Zeno took systematic philosophy seriously. His writings have not survived, and for our knowledge of his teaching we rely on writers from the Roman period, such as Nero's court philosopher Seneca and the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. We do know that he founded the Stoic tradition of dividing philosophy into three main disciplines, logic, ethics and physics. His followers said that logic was the bones, ethics the flesh, and physics the soul of philosophy. Zeno himself was concerned principally with ethics, but he was a close associate of two dialecticians from Megara, Diodorus Cronus and Philo, who had taken over from the Lyceum the task of filling the gaps which Aristotle had left in logic.

When Zeno died the leadership of the Stoa passed to **Cleanthes**, a converted boxer who specialized in physics and metaphysics. Cleanthes was a devout man who wrote a remarkable hymn to Zeus, whom he addresses in terms which would be appropriate enough for a Jewish or Christian monotheist addressing the Lord God.

> Zeus all powerful,
> Author of Nature, named by many names, all hail.
> Thy law rules all; and the world's voice may cry to thee.
> For from thee we are born, and alone of living things
> That move on earth are we created in God's image.

The hymn was known to St Paul, and quoted by him when preaching in Athens.

Cleanthes was succeeded by **Chrysippus**, who was head of the school from 232 to 206. He took ethics as his own speciality, but he also built up and extended the work of his predecessors, and was the first to present Stoicism as a

fully integrated system. Since the works of these three early Stoics have all been lost, it is difficult to determine precisely the contribution each of them made, and their doctrines are best considered together.

The logic of the Stoics differed from that of Aristotle in various ways. Aristotle used letters as variables, while they used numbers; a typical sentence-frame in an Aristotelian inference would run 'every A is B'; a typical sentence-frame in a Stoic inference would be 'If the first, then the second'. The difference between letters and numbers is trivial: what is important is that Aristotle's variables stand in for terms (subjects and predicates), while the Stoic variables stand in for whole sentences. Aristotle's syllogistic formalizes what nowadays would be called predicate logic; Stoic logic formalizes what is nowadays called propositional logic. A typical inference considered by the Stoics is

If Plato is living, then Plato is breathing
Plato is living
Therefore, Plato is breathing.

It is an important feature of Stoic logic that the validity of the argument does not depend on the content of the individual sentences. According to the Stoic view, the following argument is no less sound than the one above.

If Plato is dead, then Athens is in Greece
Plato is dead
Therefore Athens is in Greece.

The first premiss of this argument comes out true if, like the Stoics, we accept a particular definition of 'if . . . then' first suggested by Philo. According to this a sentence of the form 'if the first then the second' is to be taken as true in every case except when the first is true and the second is false. In everyday life, we usually make use of 'if . . . then' when there is some connection between the content of the sentences thus linked together. But we do sometimes make use of Philo's definition – e.g. when we say 'If Athens is in Turkey, then I am a Dutchman' as a way of denying that Athens is in Turkey. It turns out that the Stoics' minimal definition of 'if' is the one most useful for the technical development of propositional logic, and it is the one which logicians use today. The Stoic propositional logic is nowadays taken as the basic element in logic, upon which the predicate logic of Aristotle is built as a superstructure.

Under the heading 'logic' the Stoics investigated also the philosophy of language. They had an elaborate theory of signs, which studied both things signifying and things signified. Things signifying were classified as voice, speech, and discourse. Voice might be inarticulate sound, speech was sound which was articulate but might lack meaning, and discourse was both articulate and meaningful. Things signified might be bodies or statements (*lekta*). By 'statement' is meant,

not a sentence, but what is said by a sentence. If I say 'Dion is walking', the word 'Dion' signifies the body which I see; but what I mean by the sentence is not a body, but a statement about a body.

In this respect, there is a clash between Stoic logic and Stoic physics: the statements of Stoic logic are non-bodily entities, while Stoic physics recognizes no existents other than bodies. Once upon a time, Stoics believed, there was nothing but fire; gradually there emerged the other elements and the familiar furniture of the universe. Later, the world will return to fire in a universal conflagration, and then the whole cycle of its history will be repeated over and over again. All this happens in accordance with a system of laws which may be called 'fate', because the laws admit of no exception, or 'providence', because the laws were laid down by God for beneficent purposes.

The Stoics accepted the Aristotelian distinction between matter and form; but as conscientious materialists they insisted that form too was bodily – a fine and subtle body which they called breath (*pneuma*). The human soul and mind are made out of this *pneuma*; so too is God, who is the soul of the cosmos, which, in its entirety, constitutes a rational animal. If God and the soul were not themselves bodily, Stoics argued, they would not be able to act upon the material world.

The divinely designed system is called Nature, and our aim in life should be to live in accordance with Nature. Since all things are determined, nothing can escape Nature's laws. But human beings are free and responsible, despite the determinism of fate. The will must be directed to live in accordance with human nature by obeying reason. It is this voluntary acceptance of Nature's laws which constitutes virtue, and virtue is both necessary and sufficient for happiness. Poverty, imprisonment, and suffering, since they cannot take away virtue, cannot take away happiness; a good person cannot suffer any real harm. Does this mean that we should be indifferent to the misfortunes of others? Well, health and wealth are in truth matters of indifference, but the Stoics, in order to be able to co-operate at all with non-Stoics, were forced to concede that some matters were more indifferent than others.

Because society is natural to human beings, the Stoic, in his aim to be in harmony with Nature, will play his part in society and cultivate the social virtues. Though slavery and freedom are alike indifferent, it is legitimate to prefer one to the other, even though virtue may be practised in either state. What of life itself? Is that a matter of indifference? The virtuous Stoic will not lose his virtue whether he lives or dies; but it is legitimate for him, when faced with what the non-Stoic would regard as intolerable evils, to make a rational choice to depart from life.

Scepticism

The English language preserves traces of both Epicureanism and Stoicism, but with different degrees of accuracy. An epicure would find little satisfaction in the

bread and cheese diet of Epicurus; but a stoic attitude to suffering and death fairly reflects one aspect of Stoic philosophy. A third contemporary school, however, made its mark on the language unambiguously: the basic meaning of Scepticism has not changed since the Sceptics of the third century BC.

The founder of Scepticism was **Pyrrho** of Elis, a soldier in Alexander's army, who was an older contemporary of Epicurus. Pyrrho taught that nothing could be known and, consistently with that view, wrote no books; but his teaching was brought to Athens in the early years of the third century by his pupils Timon and Arcesilaus. Timon denied the possibility of finding any self-evident principles to serve as the foundation of sciences: and in the absence of such axioms, all lines of reasoning must be either circular or endless. Arcesilaus became head of the Platonic Academy about 273 and turned its attention from the later dogmatic works of Plato to the earlier Socratic dialogues. He himself, like Socrates, used to demolish theses put forward by his pupils; the proper attitude for the philosopher was to suspend judgement on all important topics. Arcesilaus' impact on the Academy was great, and it remained the home of Scepticism for two hundred years.

The Sceptics of the Academy took the Stoic system as their major target for attack. The Stoics were empiricists; that is to say, they claimed that all knowledge derived from sensory experience of concrete individuals. The appearances which things present to our senses are the foundation of all science; but appearances may mislead, and we need a test, or 'criterion', to decide which appearances are reliable and justify us in assenting to them. The Sceptics insisted that things appear differently to different species (woodlice taste good to bears but not to people), and differently to different members of the same species (honey seems bitter to some and sweet to others), and differently to the same person at different times (wine tastes sour after figs and sweet after nuts). How can conflicts between them be resolved?

The Stoics say that knowledge must be based not just on any old appearance, but upon appearance of a particular kind, a 'cognitive appearance' (*phantasia kataleptike*) – an appearance of the kind which comes from a real object and compels our assent. The Sceptic counters by asking how we can tell which appearances are cognitive appearances. It is no good defining them as ones which compel assent, since people often feel compelled to assent to appearances which turn out to have been misleading. The Stoics respond that a truly wise person can just tell which appearances are cognitive and which are not. But how can you tell whether you are a truly wise person? The Stoic search for a criterion seems doomed to failure: even if we found a criterion which worked, how would we know we had found it?

History of Western Philosophy:
Chronology of the Medieval and Enlightenment Philosophers

Christian Philosophy

~204-270	**Plotinus**	His ideas came to be known as neo-Platonism. He was the last of the Greek pagan philosophers. He believed that everything emanated from the One to the Nous (Logos), which in turn created the World Soul, the human soul, and matter. His ideas had a profound impact on early Christianity.
354-430	**Augustine**	Born in Algeria, he became bishop of Hippo in Africa. He is one of the most influential of all Christian philosophers. He believed that Ideas exist only in the mind of God, communicated by divine illumination. He wrote over 200 letters, 500 sermons, 100 books, most famous being *Confessions* and *The City of God* .
1225-1274	**Thomas Aquinas**	A Christian Aristotelian philosopher, he was Professor at University of Paris. He is best-known for writing *Summa contra Gentiles, Summa Theologiae* . He made Aristotle known and acceptable to Christianity. He argued for the proofs of God's existence, and believed in the Aristotelian concept of the soul and Christian concept of resurrection.

Rationalism | Empiricism

1596-1650	**René Descartes**	The most influential Continental philosopher of the 17th century, he wrote foundational works of mathematics and philosophy, including *Discourse on Method* and *Meditations on First Philosophy* . He is most famous for saying "cogito, ergo sum." His system of philosophy challenged Aristotle's for dominance among European thinkers. He laid the foundation for 17th century rationalism, but also began the debate on mind-body dualism.
1632-1677	**Baruch Spinoza**	Born in a Jewish family, Spinoza was one of the rationalist philosophers of the 17th century. He was excommunicated from the Jewish community in Amsterdam for expressing doubts about Judaism. He lived grinding lenses and developing his philosophy. He was offered but declined a chair in philosophy at the University of Heidelberg, preferring his quiet life in Holland. Spinoza died of tuberculosis, his illness likely worsened by the dust from grinding lenses. He was criticized as an atheist, but he was actually a pantheist. A radical rationalist, he believed in monistic determinism. He wrote *Ethics* .

1646-1716	**Leibniz**	A German mathematician and philosopher, most noted for his optimism in his theory of the “best of all possible worlds.” He is also known for his Principle of sufficient reason and his belief in “Monads” and “pre-established harmony.”
1642-1727	**Isaac Newton**	Prodigious mathematician and physicist, he made his revolutionary discoveries in gravitation, calculus, and the composition of light in 18 months just after graduating from university. He published his theories regarding gravity and other subjects in his famous *Principia* in 1687. He was also one of the youngest math professors at Cambridge.
1632–1704	**John Locke**	He was the first of the British empiricists and physician, most famous for saying human mind was a Tabula Rasa (blank slate), and that truths are only probable. He wrote *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and *Two Treatises of Government.*
1685–1753	**George Berkeley**	Irish philosopher, Bishop of Cloyne, he advocated “Immaterialism” (subjective idealism), that only ideas exist. He was a critic of the mechanistic materialism of enlightenment, arguing that it leads to skepticism / atheism. His most famous works are *Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous.*
1711–1776	**David Hume**	Scottish philosopher, historian, economist, writer, he was the Great Skeptic of Empiricism. His ideas include Causation / Induction, Personal Identity, Free will / determinism, and Miracles of religion. His most famous works are *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* , and *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.* He is most famous for saying cause-effect is only "constant conjuntions."

From *The Confessions of Saint Augustine* XI: Time

[Project Gutenberg: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3296/3296-h/3296-h.htm#link2H_4_0010]

… See, I answer him that asketh, "What did God before He made heaven and earth?" I answer not as one is said to have done merrily (eluding the pressure of the question), "He was preparing hell (saith he) for pryers into mysteries." It is one thing to answer enquiries, another to make sport of enquirers. So I answer not; for rather had I answer, "I know not," what I know not, than so as to raise a laugh at him who asketh deep things and gain praise for one who answereth false things. But I say that Thou, our God, art the Creator of every creature: and if by the name "heaven and earth," every creature be understood; I boldly say, "that before God made heaven and earth, He did not make any thing." For if He made, what did He make but a creature? And would I knew whatsoever I desire to know to my profit, as I know, that no creature was made, before there was made any creature.

But if any excursive brain rove over the images of forepassed times, and wonder that Thou the God Almighty and All-creating and All-supporting, Maker of heaven and earth, didst for innumerable ages forbear from so great a work, before Thou wouldest make it; let him awake and consider, that he wonders at false conceits. For whence could innumerable ages pass by, which Thou madest not, Thou the Author and Creator of all ages? or what times should there be, which were not made by Thee? or how should they pass by, if they never were? Seeing then Thou art the Creator of all times, if any time was before Thou madest heaven and earth, why say they that Thou didst forego working? For that very time didst Thou make, nor could times pass by, before Thou madest those times. But if before heaven and earth there was no time, why is it demanded, what Thou then didst? For there was no "then," when there was no time.

Nor dost Thou by time, precede time: else shouldest Thou not precede all times. But Thou precedest all things past, by the sublimity of an ever-present eternity; and surpassest all future because they are future, and when they come, they shall be past; but Thou art the Same, and Thy years fail not. Thy years neither come nor go; whereas ours both come and go, that they all may come. Thy years stand together, because they do stand; nor are departing thrust out by coming years, for they pass not away; but ours shall all be, when they shall no more be. Thy years are one day; and Thy day is not daily, but To-day, seeing Thy To-day gives not place unto to-morrow, for neither doth it replace yesterday. Thy To-day, is Eternity; therefore didst Thou beget The Coeternal, to whom Thou saidst, This day have I begotten Thee. Thou hast made all things; and before all times Thou art: neither in any time was time not.

At no time then hadst Thou not made any thing, because time itself Thou madest. And no times are coeternal with Thee, because Thou abidest; but if they abode, they should not be times. For what is time? Who can readily and briefly explain this? Who can even in thought comprehend it, so as to utter a word about it? But what in discourse do we mention more familiarly and knowingly, than time? And, we understand, when we speak of it; we understand also, when we hear it spoken of by another. What then is time? If no one asks me, I know: if I wish to explain it to one that asketh, I know not: yet I say boldly that I know, that if nothing passed away, time past were not; and if nothing were coming, a time to come were not; and if nothing were, time present were not. Those two times then, past and to come, how are they, seeing the past now is not, and that to come is not

yet? But the present, should it always be present, and never pass into time past, verily it should not be time, but eternity. If time present (if it is to be time) only cometh into existence, because it passeth into time past, how can we say that either this is, whose cause of being is, that it shall not be; so, namely, that we cannot truly say that time is, but because it is tending not to be?

And yet we say, "a long time" and "a short time"; still, only of time past or to come. A long time past (for example) we call an hundred years since; and a long time to come, an hundred years hence. But a short time past, we call (suppose) often days since; and a short time to come, often days hence. But in what sense is that long or short, which is not? For the past, is not now; and the future, is not yet. Let us not then say, "it is long"; but of the past, "it hath been long"; and of the future, "it will be long." O my Lord, my Light, shall not here also Thy Truth mock at man? For that past time which was long, was it long when it was now past, or when it was yet present? For then might it be long, when there was, what could be long; but when past, it was no longer; wherefore neither could that be long, which was not at all. Let us not then say, "time past hath been long": for we shall not find, what hath been long, seeing that since it was past, it is no more, but let us say, "that present time was long"; because, when it was present, it was long. For it had not yet passed away, so as not to be; and therefore there was, what could be long; but after it was past, that ceased also to be long, which ceased to be.

Let us see then, thou soul of man, whether present time can be long: for to thee it is given to feel and to measure length of time. What wilt thou answer me? Are an hundred years, when present, a long time? See first, whether an hundred years can be present. For if the first of these years be now current, it is present, but the other ninety and nine are to come, and therefore are not yet, but if the second year be current, one is now past, another present, the rest to come. And so if we assume any middle year of this hundred to be present, all before it, are past; all after it, to come; wherefore an hundred years cannot be present. But see at least whether that one which is now current, itself is present; for if the current month be its first, the rest are to come; if the second, the first is already past, and the rest are not yet. Therefore, neither is the year now current present; and if not present as a whole, then is not the year present. For twelve months are a year; of which whatever by the current month is present; the rest past, or to come. Although neither is that current month present; but one day only; the rest being to come, if it be the first; past, if the last; if any of the middle, then amid past and to come.

See how the present time, which alone we found could be called long, is abridged to the length scarce of one day. But let us examine that also; because neither is one day present as a whole. For it is made up of four and twenty hours of night and day: of which, the first hath the rest to come; the last hath them past; and any of the middle hath those before it past, those behind it to come. Yea, that one hour passeth away in flying particles. Whatsoever of it hath flown away, is past; whatsoever remaineth, is to come. If an instant of time be conceived, which cannot be divided into the smallest particles of moments, that alone is it, which may be called present. Which yet flies with such speed from future to past, as not to be lengthened out with the least stay. For if it be, it is divided into past and future. The present hath no space. Where then is the time, which we may call long? Is it to come? Of it we do not say, "it is long"; because it is not yet, so as to be long; but we say, "it will be long." When therefore will it be? For if even then, when it is yet to come, it shall not be long (because what can be long, as yet is not), and so it shall then be long, when from future which as yet is not, it shall begin now to be, and have become present, that so there should exist what may be long; then does time present cry out in the words above, that it cannot be long.

And yet, Lord, we perceive intervals of times, and compare them, and say, some are shorter, and others longer. We measure also, how much longer or shorter this time is than that; and we answer, "This is double, or treble; and that, but once, or only just so much as that." But we measure times as they are passing, by perceiving them; but past, which now are not, or the future, which are not yet, who can measure? unless a man shall presume to say, that can be measured, which is not. When then time is passing, it may be perceived and measured; but when it is past, it cannot, because it is not.

I ask, Father, I affirm not: O my God, rule and guide me. "Who will tell me that there are not three times (as we learned when boys, and taught boys), past, present, and future; but present only, because those two are not? Or are they also; and when from future it becometh present, doth it come out of some secret place; and so, when retiring, from present it becometh past? For where did they, who foretold things to come, see them, if as yet they be not? For that which is not, cannot be seen. And they who relate things past, could not relate them, if in mind they did not discern them, and if they were not, they could no way be discerned. Things then past and to come, are."

From *Summa Theologica*: Five Ways of Proving God's Existence

[Project Gutenberg: http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/17611/pg17611.html]

… THIRD ARTICLE [I, Q. 2, Art. 3]

Whether God Exists?

Objection 1: It seems that God does not exist; because if one of two contraries be infinite, the other would be altogether destroyed. But the word "God" means that He is infinite goodness. If, therefore, God existed, there would be no evil discoverable; but there is evil in the world. Therefore God does not exist.

Obj. 2: Further, it is superfluous to suppose that what can be accounted for by a few principles has been produced by many. But it seems that everything we see in the world can be accounted for by other principles, supposing God did not exist. For all natural things can be reduced to one principle which is nature; and all voluntary things can be reduced to one principle which is human reason, or will. Therefore there is no need to suppose God's existence.

On the contrary, It is said in the person of God: "I am Who am." (Ex. 3:14)

I answer that, The existence of God can be proved in five ways.

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is in motion is put in motion by another, for nothing can be in motion except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is in motion; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality. Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby moves and changes it. Now it is not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. For what is actually hot cannot simultaneously be potentially hot; but it is simultaneously potentially cold. It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e. that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another. If that by which it is put in motion be itself put in motion, then this also must needs be put in motion by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover, and, consequently, no other mover; seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are put in motion by the first mover; as the staff moves only because it is put in motion by the hand. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, put in motion by no other; and this everyone understands to be God.

The second way is from the nature of the efficient cause. In the world of sense we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known (neither is it, indeed, possible) in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself; for so it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause, whether the intermediate cause be several, or only one. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore, if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate cause. But if in efficient causes it is possible to go on to infinity,

there will be no first efficient cause, neither will there be an ultimate effect, nor any intermediate efficient causes; all of which is plainly false. Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.

The third way is taken from possibility and necessity, and runs thus. We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to corrupt, and consequently, they are possible to be and not to be. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which is possible not to be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything is possible not to be, then at one time there could have been nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence—which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, or not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their necessity caused by another, as has been already proved in regard to efficient causes. Therefore we cannot but postulate the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

The fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble and the like. But *more* and *less* are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest and, consequently, something which is uttermost being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being, as it is written in *Metaph*. ii. Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus; as fire, which is the maximum heat, is the cause of all hot things. Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God.

The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that not fortuitously, but designedly, do they achieve their end. Now whatever lacks intelligence cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is shot to its mark by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.

Reply Obj. 1: As Augustine says (Enchiridion xi): "Since God is the highest good, He would not allow any evil to exist in His works, unless His omnipotence and goodness were such as to bring good even out of evil." This is part of the infinite goodness of God, that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good.

Reply Obj. 2: Since nature works for a determinate end under the direction of a higher agent, whatever is done by nature must needs be traced back to God, as to its first cause. So also whatever is done voluntarily must also be traced back to some higher cause other than human reason or will, since these can change or fail; for all things that are changeable and capable of defect must be traced back to an immovable and self-necessary first principle, as was shown in the body of the Article.

From *Discourse on the Method* by Descartes: Cogito Ergo Sum

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PART IV

… I am in doubt as to the propriety of making my first meditations in the place above mentioned matter of discourse; for these are so metaphysical, and so uncommon, as not, perhaps, to be acceptable to everyone. And yet, that it may be determined whether the foundations that I have laid are sufficiently secure, I find myself in a measure constrained to advert to them. I had long before remarked that, in relation to practice, it is sometimes necessary to adopt, as if above doubt, opinions which we discern to be highly uncertain, as has been already said; but as I then desired to give my attention solely to the search after truth, I thought that a procedure exactly the opposite was called for, and that I ought to reject as absolutely false all opinions in regard to which I could suppose the least ground for doubt, in order to ascertain whether after that there remained aught in my belief that was wholly indubitable. Accordingly, seeing that our senses sometimes deceive us, I was willing to suppose that there existed nothing really such as they presented to us; and because some men err in reasoning, and fall into paralogisms, even on the simplest matters of geometry, I, convinced that I was as open to error as any other, rejected as false all the reasonings I had hitherto taken for demonstrations; and finally, when I considered that the very same thoughts (presentations) which we experience when awake may also be experienced when we are asleep, while there is at that time not one of them true, I supposed that all the objects (presentations) that had ever entered into my mind when awake, had in them no more truth than the illusions of my dreams. But immediately upon this I observed that, whilst I thus wished to think that all was false, it was absolutely necessary that I, who thus thought, should be somewhat; and as I observed that this truth, I think, therefore I am (COGITO ERGO SUM), was so certain and of such evidence that no ground of doubt, however extravagant, could be alleged by the sceptics capable of shaking it, I concluded that I might, without scruple, accept it as the first principle of the philosophy of which I was in search.

In the next place, I attentively examined what I was and as I observed that I could suppose that I had no body, and that there was no world nor any place in which I might be; but that I could not therefore suppose that I was not; and that, on the contrary, from the very circumstance that I thought to doubt of the truth of other things, it most clearly and certainly followed that I was; while, on the other hand, if I had only ceased to think, although all the other objects which I had ever imagined had been in reality existent, I would have had no reason to believe that I existed; I thence concluded that I was a substance whose whole essence or nature consists only in thinking, and which, that it may exist, has need of no place, nor is dependent on any material thing; so that "I," that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body, and is even more easily known than the latter, and is such, that although the latter were not, it would still continue to be all that it is.

PART I

CONCERNING GOD

Definitions

1. By that which is self-caused I mean that whose essence involves existence; or that whose nature can be conceived only as existing.

2. A thing is said to be finite in its own kind [*in suo genere finita*] when it can be limited by another thing of the same nature. For example, a body is said to be finite because we can always conceive of another body greater than it. So, too, a thought is limited by another thought. But body is not limited by thought, nor thought by body.

3. By substance I mean that which is in itself and is conceived through itself; that is, that the conception of which does not require the conception of another thing from which it has to be formed.

4. By attribute I mean that which the intellect perceives of substance as constituting its essence.

5. By mode I mean the affections of substance, that is, that which is in something else and is conceived through something else.

6. By God I mean an absolutely infinite being, that is, substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence.

Explication I say "absolutely infinite," not "infinite in its kind." For if a thing is only infinite in its kind, one may deny that it has infinite attributes. But if a thing is absolutely infinite, whatever expresses essence and does not involve any negation belongs to its essence.

7. That thing is said to be free [*liber*] which exists solely from the necessity of its own nature, and is determined to action by itself alone. A thing is said to be necessary [*necessarius*] or rather, constrained [*coactus*], if it is determined by another thing to exist and to act in a definite and determinate way.

8. By eternity I mean existence itself insofar as it is conceived as necessarily following solely from the definition of an eternal thing.

Explication For such existence is conceived as an eternal truth, just as is the essence of the thing, and therefore cannot be explicated through duration or time, even if duration be conceived as without beginning and end.

Axioms

1. All things that are, are either in themselves or in something else.

2. That which cannot be conceived through another thing must be conceived through itself.

3. From a given determinate cause there necessarily follows an effect; on the other hand, if there be no determinate cause, it is impossible that an effect should follow.

4. The knowledge of an effect depends on, and involves, the knowledge of the cause.

5. Things which have nothing in common with each other cannot be understood through each other; that is, the conception of the one does not involve the conception of the other.

6. A true idea must agree with that of which it is the idea [*ideatum*].

7. If a thing can be conceived as not existing, its essence does not involve existence.

Proposition 1

Substance is by nature prior to its affections.

Proof This is evident from Defs. 3 and 5.

Proposition 2

Two substances having different attributes have nothing in common.

Proof This too is evident from Def. 3; for each substance must be in itself and be conceived through itself; that is, the conception of the one does not involve the conception of the other.

Proposition 3

When things have nothing in common, one cannot be the cause of the other.

Proof If things have nothing in common, then (Ax. 5) they cannot be understood through one another, and so (Ax. 4) one cannot be the cause of the other.

Proposition 4

Two or more distinct things are distinguished from one another either by the difference of the attributes of the substances or by the difference of the affections of the substances.

Proof All things that are, are either in themselves or in something else (Ax. 1); that is (Defs. 3 and 5), nothing exists external to the intellect except substances and their affections. Therefore, there can be nothing external to the intellect through which several things can be distinguished from one another except substances or (which is the same thing) (Def. 4) the attributes and the affections of substances.

Proposition 5

In the universe there cannot be two or more substances of the same nature or attribute.

Proof If there were several such distinct substances, they would have to be distinguished from one another either by a difference of attributes or by a difference

of affections (Pr. 4). If they are distinguished only by a difference of attributes, then it will be granted that there cannot be more than one substance of the same attribute. But if they are distinguished by a difference of affections, then, since substance is by nature prior to its affections (Pr. 1), disregarding therefore its affections and considering substance in itself, that is (Def. 3 and Ax. 6), considering it truly, it cannot be conceived as distinguishable from another substance. That is (Pr. 4), there cannot be several such substances but only one.

Proposition 6

One substance cannot be produced by another substance.

Proof In the universe there cannot be two substances of the same attribute (Pr. 5), that is (Pr. 2), two substances having something in common. And so (Pr. 3) one cannot be the cause of the other; that is, one cannot be produced by the other.

Corollary Hence it follows that substance cannot be produced by anything else. For in the universe there exists nothing but substances and their affections, as is evident from Ax. 1 and Defs. 3 and 5. But, by Pr. 6, it cannot be produced by another substance. Therefore, substance cannot be produced by anything else whatsoever.

Another Proof This can be proved even more readily by the absurdity of the contradictory. For if substance could be produced by something else, the knowledge of substance would have to depend on the knowledge of its cause (Ax. 4), and so (Def. 3) it would not be substance.

Proposition 7

Existence belongs to the nature of substance.

Proof Substance cannot be produced by anything else (Cor. Pr. 6) and is therefore self-caused [*causa sui*]; that is (Def. 1), its essence necessarily involves existence; that is, existence belongs to its nature.

Proposition 8

Every substance is necessarily infinite.

Proof There cannot be more than one substance having the same attribute (Pr. 5), and existence belongs to the nature of substance (Pr. 7). It must therefore exist either as finite or as infinite. But it cannot exist as finite, for (Def. 2) it would have to be limited by another substance of the same nature, and that substance also would have to exist (Pr. 7). And so there would exist two substances of the same attribute, which is absurd (Pr. 5). Therefore, it exists as infinite.

Scholium 1 Since in fact to be finite is in part a negation and to be infinite is the unqualified affirmation of the existence of some nature, it follows from Proposition 7 alone that every substance must be infinite.

From *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding*: No Innate Ideas

[Project Gutenberg: http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10615/pg10615.html]

CHAPTER I.

NO INNATE SPECULATIVE PRINCIPLES.

1. The way shown how we come by any Knowledge, sufficient to prove it not innate.

It is an established opinion amongst some men, that there are in the understanding certain INNATE PRINCIPLES; some primary notions (*Koinai ennoiai*), 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 colours 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. General Assent the great Argument.

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. Universal Consent proves nothing innate.

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. "What is, is," and "It is impossible for the same Thing to be and not to be," not universally assented to.

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. Not on the Mind naturally imprinted, because not known to Children, Idiots, &c.

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.

From *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*: Esse Est Percipi (Being Is To Be Perceived)

[Project Gutenberg: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4723/4723-h/4723-h.htm]

OF THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

1. OBJECTS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.--It is evident to anyone who takes a survey of the objects of human knowledge, that they are either IDEAS actually imprinted on the senses; or else such as are perceived by attending to the passions and operations of the mind; or lastly, ideas formed by help of memory and imagination--either compounding, dividing, or barely representing those originally perceived in the aforesaid ways. By sight I have the ideas of light and colours, with their several degrees and variations. By touch I perceive hard and soft, heat and cold, motion and resistance, and of all these more and less either as to quantity or degree. Smelling furnishes me with odours; the palate with tastes; and hearing conveys sounds to the mind in all their variety of tone and composition. And as several of these are observed to accompany each other, they come to be marked by one name, and so to be reputed as one thing. Thus, for example a certain colour, taste, smell, figure and consistence having been observed to go together, are accounted one distinct thing, signified by the name APPLE. Other collections of ideas constitute a stone, a tree, a book, and the like sensible things--which as they are pleasing or disagreeable excite the passions of love, hatred, joy, grief, and so forth.

2. MIND--SPIRIT--SOUL.--But, besides all that endless variety of ideas or objects of knowledge, there is likewise something which knows or perceives them, and exercises divers operations, as willing, imagining, remembering, about them. This perceiving, active being is what I call MIND, SPIRIT, SOUL, or MYSELF. By which words I do not denote any one of my ideas, but a thing entirely distinct from them, WHEREIN THEY EXIST, or, which is the same thing, whereby they are perceived--for the existence of an idea consists in being perceived.

3. HOW FAR THE ASSENT OF THE VULGAR CONCEDED.--That neither our thoughts, nor passions, nor ideas formed by the imagination, exist WITHOUT the mind, is what EVERYBODY WILL ALLOW. And it seems no less evident that the various sensations or ideas imprinted on the sense, however blended or combined together (that is, whatever objects they compose), cannot exist otherwise than IN a mind perceiving them. I think an intuitive knowledge may be obtained of this by any one that shall attend to WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM EXIST, when applied to sensible things. The table I write on I say exists, that is, I see and feel it; and if I were out of my study I should say it existed--meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it.[Note.] There was an odour, that is, it was smelt; there was a sound, that is, it was heard; a colour or figure, and it was perceived by sight or touch. This is all that I can understand by these and the like expressions. For as to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, that seems perfectly unintelligible. Their ESSE is PERCIPI, nor is it possible they should have any existence out of the minds or thinking things which perceive them.

[Note: First argument in support of the author's theory.]

4. THE VULGAR OPINION INVOLVES A CONTRADICTION.--It is indeed an opinion STRANGELY prevailing amongst men, that houses, mountains, rivers, and in a word all sensible objects, have an existence, natural or real, distinct from their being perceived by the understanding. But, with how great an assurance and acquiescence soever this principle may be entertained in the world, yet whoever shall find in his heart to call it in question may, if I mistake not, perceive it to involve a manifest contradiction. For, what are the fore-mentioned objects but the things we perceive by sense? and what do we PERCEIVE BESIDES OUR OWN IDEAS OR SENSATIONS? and is it not plainly repugnant that any one of these, or any combination of them, should exist unperceived?

5. CAUSE OF THIS PREVALENT ERROR.--If we thoroughly examine this tenet it will, perhaps, be found at bottom to depend on the doctrine of ABSTRACT IDEAS. For can there be a nicer strain of abstraction than to distinguish the existence of sensible objects from their being perceived, so as to conceive them existing unperceived? Light and colours, heat and cold, extension and figures--in a word the things we see and feel--what are they but so many sensations, notions, ideas, or impressions on the sense? and is it possible to separate, even in thought, any of these from perception? For my part, I might as easily divide a thing from itself. I may, indeed, divide in my thoughts, or conceive apart from each other, those things which, perhaps I never perceived by sense so divided. Thus, I imagine the trunk of a human body without the limbs, or conceive the smell of a rose without thinking on the rose itself. So far, I will not deny, I can abstract--if that may properly be called ABSTRACTION which extends only to the conceiving separately such objects as it is possible may really exist or be actually perceived asunder. But my conceiving or imagining power does not extend beyond the possibility of real existence or perception. Hence, as it is impossible for me to see or feel anything without an actual sensation of that thing, so is it impossible for me to conceive in my thoughts any sensible thing or object distinct from the sensation or perception of it.[Note.]

[Note: "In truth the object and the sensation are the same thing, and cannot therefore be abstracted from each other--Edit 1710."]

6. Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, viz., that all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind, that their BEING (ESSE) is to be perceived or known; that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or that of any other CREATED SPIRIT, they must either have no existence at all, OR ELSE SUBSIST IN THE MIND OF SOME ETERNAL SPIRIT--it being perfectly unintelligible, and involving all the absurdity of abstraction, to attribute to any single part of them an existence independent of a spirit [Note.]. To be convinced of which, the reader need only reflect, and try to separate in his own thoughts the being of a sensible thing from its being perceived.

[Note: "To make this appear with all the light and evidence of an axiom, it seems sufficient if I can but awaken the reflection of the reader, that he may take an impartial view of his own meaning, and in turn his thoughts upon the subject itself, free and disengaged from all embarrass of words and prepossession in favour of received mistakes."--Edit 1710]

From David Hume's "Abstract *of* A Treatise of Human Nature"

Appendix I, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, (Oxford, 2007: 137-9)

[8] 'Tis evident, that all reasonings concerning *matter of fact* are founded on the relation of **cause and effect**, and that we can never infer the existence of one object from another, unless they be connected together, either mediately or immediately. In order therefore to understand these reasonings, we must be perfectly acquainted with the idea of a cause; and in order to do that, must look about us to find something that is the cause of another.

[9] Here is a billiard-ball lying on the table, and another ball moving towards it with rapidity. They strike; and the ball, which was formerly at rest, now acquires a motion. This is as perfect an instance of the relation of cause and effect as any which we know, either by sensation or reflection. Let us therefore examine it. 'Tis evident, that the two balls touched one another before the motion was communicated, and that there was no interval betwixt the shock and the motion. *Contiguity* in time and place is therefore a requisite circumstance to the operation of all causes. 'Tis evident likewise, that the motion, which was the cause, is prior to the motion, which was the effect. *Priority* in time is therefore another requisite circumstance in every cause. But this is not all. Let us try any other balls of the same kind in a like situation, and we shall always find, that the impulse of the one produces motion in the other. Here therefore is a *third* circumstance, *viz*. that of a *constant conjunction* betwixt the cause and effect. Every object like the cause, produces always some object like the effect. Beyond these three circumstances of contiguity, priority, and constant conjunction, I can discover nothing in this cause. The first ball is in motion; touches the second; immediately the second is in motion: and when I try the experiment with the same or like balls, in the same or like circumstances, I find, that upon the motion and touch of the one ball, motion always follows in the other. In whatever shape I turn this matter, and however I examine it, I can find nothing farther.

[10] This is the case when both the cause and effect are present to the senses. Let us now see upon what our inference is founded, when we conclude from the one that the other has existed or will exist. Suppose I see a ball moving in a straight line towards another, I immediately conclude, that they will shock, and that the second will be in motion. This is the inference from cause to effect; and of this nature are all our reasonings in the conduct of life: on this is founded all our belief in history: and from hence is derived all philosophy, excepting only geometry and arithmetic. If we can explain the inference from the shock of two balls, we shall be able to account for this operation of the mind in all instances.

[11] Were a man, such as *Adam*, created in the full vigour of understanding, without experience, he would never be able to infer motion in the second ball from the motion and impulse of the first. It is not any thing that reason sees in the cause, which makes us *infer* the effect. Such an inference, were it possible, would amount to a demonstration, as being founded merely on the comparison of ideas. But no inference from cause to effect amounts to a demonstration. Of which there is this evident proof. The mind can always *conceive* any

effect to follow from any cause, and indeed any event to follow upon another: whatever we *conceive* is possible, at least in a metaphysical sense: but wherever a demonstration takes place, the contrary is impossible, and implies a contradiction. There is no demonstration, therefore, for any conjunction of cause and effect. And this is a principle, which is generally allowed by philosophers.

[12] It would have been necessary, therefore, for *Adam* (if he was not inspired) to have had *experience* of the effect, which followed upon the impulse of these two balls. He must have seen, in several instances, that when the one ball struck upon the other, the second always acquired motion. If he had seen a sufficient number of instances of this kind, whenever he saw the one ball moving towards the other, he would always conclude without hesitation, that the second would acquire motion. His understanding would anticipate his sight, and form a conclusion suitable to his past experience.

[13] It follows, then, that all reasonings concerning cause and effect, are founded on experience, and that all reasonings from experience are founded on the supposition, that the course of nature will continue uniformly the same. We conclude, that like causes, in like circumstances, will always produce like effects. It may now be worth while to consider, what determines us to form a conclusion of such infinite consequence.

[14] 'Tis evident, that *Adam* with all his science, would never have been able to *demonstrate*, that the course of nature must continue uniformly the same, and that the future must be conformable to the past. What is possible can never be demonstrated to be false; and 'tis possible the course of nature may change, since we can conceive such a change. Nay, I will go farther, and assert, that he could not so much as prove by any *probable* arguments, that the future must be conformable to the past. All probable arguments are built on the supposition, that there is this conformity betwixt the future and the past, and therefore can never prove it. This conformity is a *matter of fact*, and if it must be proved, will admit of no proof but from experience. But our experience in the past can be a proof of nothing for the future, but upon a supposition, that there is a resemblance betwixt them. This therefore is a point, which can admit of no proof at all, and which we take for granted without any proof.

[15] We are determined by custom alone to suppose the future conformable to the past. When I see a billiard-ball moving towards another, my mind is immediately carry'd by habit to the usual effect, and anticipates my sight by conceiving the second ball in motion. There is nothing in these objects, abstractly considered, and independent of experience, which leads me to form any such conclusion: and even after I have had experience of many repeated effects of this kind, there is no argument, which determines me to suppose, that the effect will be conformable to past experience. The powers, by which bodies operate, are entirely unknown. We perceive only their sensible qualities: and what *reason* have we to think, that the same powers will always be conjoined with the same sensible qualities?

[16] '**Tis not, therefore, reason, which is the guide of life, but custom**. That alone determines the mind, in all instances, to suppose the future conformable to the past. However easy this step may seem, reason would never, to all eternity, be able to make it.

History of Western Philosophy:
Chronology from Kant to Modern Philosophers

Kant | German Idealism

1724-1804	**Immanuel Kant**	German philosopher, professor, he was brought up devout Lutheran. He never married or travelled more than 10 miles out of his city, lived a very regular life. Father of German Idealism, he is famous for his "Copernican revolution" in philosophy, his idea of synthetic a priori knowledge and the noumenal world. Seminal to his thoughts is the saying, "The starry heavens above me and the moral law within me." He wrote *The Critique of Pure Reason* and *The Critique of Practical Reason* .
1762-1814	**J.G. Fichte**	German philosopher, professor, studied theology. He thought Kant's philosophy contained a radical inconsistency, cut out the concept of noumenal world, and made conscious experience the focal point of metaphysics, thus becoming the father of German Idealism. His ontology resembled Spinoza's pantheism.
1770-1831	**G.W.F. Hegel**	German philosopher, professor, studied theology. He was influenced by Fichte's pantheistic idealism, and he is well-known his ideas of Historicism, Dialectic, and Geist. He is very difficult to understand. His most famous work is *The Phenomenology of Spirit.*

Existentialism | Utilitarianism

1788-1860	**Arthur Schopenhauer**	Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) German philosopher, great pessimist, influenced by Eastern philosophy. He was independently wealthy, influenced by Kant, Plato, and Buddha. He did not like Hegel, and greatly influenced Nietzsche. He wrote *The World as Will and Representation* .
1813-1855	**Soren Kierkegaard**	Danish philosopher, theologian, poet, he emphasized individual person's existence, personality and situation. He is generally considered the first Existentialist philosopher. He wrote *Fear and Trembling* and *The Sickness unto Death.*
1748-1832	**Jeremy Bentham**	British empiricist, social reformer, advocate, he is the founder of modern utilitarianism. He was a political radical, advocated separation of church and state, equal rights for women, animal rights, abolition of slavery, death penalty, etc. He wrote *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation.*
1806-1873	**John Stuart Mill**	British empiricist, logician, political economist, reformer, he was a precocious child and his father James Mill was also philosopher and Bentham's student. He was a great defender of women's rights (married Harriet Taylor after 21 years of friendship). He wrote *On Liberty* and *Utilitarianism* (pamphlet).

Masters of Suspicion | Wittgenstein

1809-1882	**Charles Darwin**	An English naturalist, geologist, he wrote *On the Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* . He is most famous for his theory of evolution.
1818-1883	**Karl Marx**	German philosopher, economist, historian, he advocated Historical materialism (economic determinism / communism) and Theory of alienation. His most famous works are *The Communist Manifesto* and *Das Kapital (Capital)* . He was a visionary / prophet. He is famous for saying, “Philosophers have only interpreted the world; the point is to change it,” and “Workers of the world, unite!”
1844-1900	**Friedrich Nietzsche**	German philologist, philosopher, poet, musician, he fell mentally ill (insane) toward the end of his life and had a tragic death. Unfortunate legacy due to sister (anti-Semitism, Nazism). He is well known for his Perspectivism, “God is Dead,” Will to Power; Eternal Return, and Ubermensch (Superman). He wrote *Beyond Good and Evil* and *On the Genealogy of Morals.*
1856-1939	**Sigmund Freud**	Austrian neurologist, doctor, he is the Father of psychoanalysis, which he developed as a means of treating the mentally ill. He was a Pessimist, suffered from cancer. He had to flee Vienna to escape Nazi persecution. He wrote *Civilization and Its Discontents.*
1889–1951	**Ludwig Wittgenstein**	Born in Austria to a wealthy family, he was first a student of engineering before becoming interested in ester. He soon became interested in pure mathematics and philosophy. He was a student of Bertrand Russell at Cambridge. He served in the Austrian army during World War I and was captured in Italy at the end of the war. He published only one book Tractatus. The other major work Philosophical Investigations was posthumously published.

Philosophy of Science / Language

1902-1994	**Karl Popper**	Austrian-British philosopher, contributed to the development of modern philosophy of science. He problematised induction and instead advocated falsifiability as the better method for doing science. He wrote *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* .
1908-2000	**W.V. Quine**	American analytic philosopher and logician, became famous with his writings, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" and *Word and Object* . He questioned the truth of traditional "analytic" propositions in analytic philosophy and argued for a kind of naturalized semantic holism or coherentism. He also wrote *Ontological Relativity* .
1922-1996	**Thomas Kuhn**	American physicist and historian. Although scientist by training, he introduced the concept of "paradigm shifts" to explain progress and changing views of truths, which influenced many different disciplines. His most famous work is *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* .

Kant

(b) The common principle of all analytic judgments is the principle of contradiction

All analytic judgments rest entirely on the principle of contradiction and are by their nature *a priori* cognitions, whether the concepts that serve for their material be empirical or not. For since the predicate of an affirmative analytic judgment is already thought beforehand in the concept of the subject, it cannot be denied of that subject without contradiction; exactly so is its opposite necessarily denied of the subject in an analytic, but negative, judgment, and indeed also according to the principle of contradiction. So it stands with the propositions: Every body is extended, and: No body is unextended (simple).

For that reason all analytic propositions are still *a priori* judgments even if their concepts are empirical, as in: Gold is a yellow metal; for in order to know this, I need no further experience outside my concept of gold, which includes that this body is yellow and a metal; for this constitutes my very concept, and I did not have to do anything except analyze it, without looking beyond it to something else.

(c) Synthetic judgments require a principle other than the principle of contradiction

There are synthetic judgments *a posteriori* whose origin is empirical; but there are also synthetic judgments that are *a priori* certain and that arise from pure understanding and reason. Both however agree in this, that they can by no means arise solely from the principle[e] of analysis, namely the principle of contradiction; they demand yet a completely different principle,[f] though they always must be derived from some fundamental proposition,[g] whichever it may be, *in accordance with the principle of contradiction*; for nothing can run counter to this principle, even though everything cannot be derived from it. I shall first classify the synthetic judgments.

1. *Judgments of experience* are always synthetic. For it would be absurd [4:268]
to base an analytic judgment on experience, since I do not at all need to go beyond my concept in order to formulate the judgment and therefore have no need for any testimony from experience. That a body is extended, is a proposition that stands certain *a priori*, and not a judgment of experience.

[e] *Grundsätze* [f] *Prinzip* [g] *Grundsätze*

For before I go to experience, I have all the conditions for my judgment already in the concept, from which I merely extract the predicate in accordance with the principle of contradiction, and by this means can simultaneously become conscious of the *necessity* of the judgment, which experience could never teach me.

2. *Mathematical judgments* are one and all synthetic. This proposition appears to have completely escaped the observations of analysts of human reason up to the present, and indeed to be directly opposed to all of their conjectures, although it is incontrovertibly certain and very important in its consequences. Because they found that the inferences of the mathematicians all proceed in accordance with the principle of contradiction (which, by nature, is required of any apodictic certainty), they were persuaded that the fundamental propositions were also known through the principle of contradiction, in which they were very mistaken; for a synthetic proposition can of course be discerned in accordance with the principle of contradiction, but only insofar as another synthetic proposition is presupposed from which the first can be deduced, never however in itself.

First of all it must be observed: that properly mathematical propositions are always *a priori* and not empirical judgments, because they carry necessity with them, which cannot be taken from experience. But if this will not be granted me, very well, I will restrict my proposition to *pure mathematics*, the concept of which already conveys that it contains not empirical but only pure cognition *a priori*.

One might well at first think: that the proposition $7 + 5 = 12$ is a purely analytic proposition that follows from the concept of a sum of seven and five according to the principle of contradiction. However, upon closer inspection, one finds that the concept of the sum of 7 and 5 contains nothing further than the unification of the two numbers into one, through which by no means is thought what this single number may be that combines the two. The concept of twelve is in no way already thought because I merely think to myself this unification of seven and five, and I may analyze my concept of such a possible sum for as long as may be,
[4:269] still I will not meet with twelve therein. One must go beyond these concepts, in making use of the intuition that corresponds to one of the two, such as one's five fingers, or (like *Segner* in his arithmetic)[3] five points,

[3] Johann Andreas Segner (1704–77), *Anfangsgründe der Mathematik*, 2nd edn. (Halle, 1773).

and in that manner adding the units of the five given in intuition step by step to the concept of seven. One therefore truly amplifies one's concept through this proposition $7 + 5 = 12$ and adds to the first concept a new one that was not thought in it; that is, an arithmetical proposition is always synthetic, which can be seen all the more plainly in the case of somewhat larger numbers, for it is then clearly evident that, though we may turn and twist our concept as we like, we could never find the sum through the mere analysis of our concepts, without making use of intuition.

Nor is any fundamental proposition of pure geometry analytic. That the straight line between two points is the shortest is a synthetic proposition. For my concept of the straight contains nothing of magnitude,[h] but only a quality. The concept of the shortest is therefore wholly an addition and cannot be extracted by any analysis from the concept of the straight line. Intuition must therefore be made use of here, by means of which alone the synthesis is possible.[4]

Some other fundamental propositions that geometers presuppose are indeed actually analytic and rest on the principle of contradiction; however, they serve only, like identical propositions, as links in the chain of method and not as principles: e.g., $a = a$, the whole is equal to itself, or $(a + b) > a$, i.e., the whole is greater than its part. And indeed even these, although they are valid from concepts alone, are admitted into mathematics only because they can be exhibited in intuition.

It[i] is merely ambiguity of expression which makes us commonly believe here that the predicate of such apodictic judgments already lies in our concept and that the judgment is therefore analytic. Namely, we *are required* to add in thought a particular predicate to a given concept, and this necessity is already attached to the concepts. But the question is not, what we *are required to add in thought* to a given concept, but what we *actually think* in it, even if only obscurely, and then it becomes evident that the predicate attaches to such concepts indeed necessarily, though not immediately, but rather through an intuition that has to be added.[j]

[h] *Grösse*

[i] Paragraph break added to reflect continuity with the three paragraphs prior to the preceding two sentences.

[j] The following five paragraphs are taken from §4 in accordance with Vaihinger's galley-switching thesis (see Note on texts and translation).

[4] On the terms "intuition," "concept," "judgment," and "synthesis," see Selections, pp. 156–7, 161–6.

from Immanuel Kant's ***Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals***

[Translated by Thomas Kingsmill Abbott]

Second Section: Transition from Popular Moral Philosophy to the Metaphysics of Morals

… Now all imperatives command either *hypothetically* or *categorically*. The former represent the practical necessity of a possible action as means to something else that is willed (or at least which one might possibly will). The **categorical imperative** would be that which represented an action as necessary of itself without reference to another end, i.e., as objectively necessary.

Since every practical law represents a possible action as good and, on this account, for a subject who is practically determinable by reason, necessary, all imperatives are formulae determining an action which is necessary according to the principle of a will good in some respects. If now the action is good only as a means to something else, then the imperative is *hypothetical*; if it is conceived as good in itself and consequently as being necessarily the principle of a will which of itself conforms to reason, then it is *categorical*.

Thus the imperative declares what action possible by me would be good and presents the practical rule in relation to a will which does not forthwith perform an action simply because it is good, whether because the subject does not always know that it is good, or because, even if it know this, yet its maxims might be opposed to the objective principles of practical reason.

Accordingly the hypothetical imperative only says that the action is good for some purpose, possible or actual. In the first case it is a problematical, in the second an assertorial practical principle. The categorical imperative which declares an action to be objectively necessary in itself without reference to any purpose, i.e., without any other end, is valid as an apodeictic (practical) principle.

… Finally, there is an imperative which commands a certain conduct immediately, without having as its condition any other purpose to be attained by it. This imperative is *categorical*. It concerns not the matter of the action, or its intended result, but its form and the principle of which it is itself a result; and what is essentially good in it consists in the mental disposition, let the consequence be what it may. **This imperative may be called that of morality**.

There is a marked distinction also between the volitions on these three sorts of principles in the dissimilarity of the obligation of the will. In order to mark this difference more clearly, I think they would be most suitably named in their order if we said they are either *rules of skill*, or *counsels of prudence*, or *commands (laws) of morality*. For it is law only that involves the conception of an unconditional and objective necessity, which is consequently universally valid; and commands are laws which must be obeyed, that is, must be followed, even in opposition to inclination. Counsels, indeed, involve necessity, but one which can only hold under a contingent subjective condition, viz., they depend on whether this or that man reckons this or that as part of his happiness; the categorical imperative, on the contrary, is not limited by any condition, and as being absolutely, although practically, necessary, may be quite properly called a command. We might also call the first kind of imperatives technical (belonging to art), the second pragmatic* (to welfare), the third moral (belonging to free conduct generally, that is, to morals).

Wikipedia: on **the Philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard**

Subjectivity / Being an Individual
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_S%C3%B8ren_Kierkegaard#Subjectivity]

From Soren Kierkegaard's *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits* (1847):

> … Everyone must make an accounting to God as an *individual*; the king must make an accounting to God as an individual, and the most wretched beggar must make an accounting to God as an individual – lest anyone be arrogant by being more than an individual, lest anyone despondently think that he is not an individual, perhaps because in the busyness of the world he does not even have a name but is designated only by a number. What else, indeed, is the accounting of eternity than that the voice of conscience is installed eternally in its eternal right to be the only voice!
>
> .... Are you now living in such a way that you are aware of being a single individual and thereby aware of your eternal responsibility before God; are you living in such a way that this awareness can acquire the time and stillness and liberty to withdraw from life, from an honorable occupation, from a happy domestic life—on the contrary, that awareness will support and transfigure and illuminate your conduct in the relationships of life. You are not to withdraw and sit brooding over your eternal accounting, whereby you only take on a new responsibility. You will find more and more time for your duties and tasks, while concern for your eternal responsibility will keep you from being busy and from busily taking part in everything possible—an activity that can best be called a waste of time.
>
> .... Have you made up your mind about how you want to perform your work, or are you continually of two minds because you want to be in agreement with the crowd? Do you stick to your bid, not defiantly, not despondently, but eternally concerned; do you, unchanged, continue to bid on the same thing and want to buy only the same thing while the terms are variously being changed?

… [Wikipedia] Subjectivity comes with consciousness of myself as a self. It encompasses the emotional and intellectual resources that the individual is born with. **Subjectivity is what the individual is as a human being**.

… In Kierkegaard's meaning, purely theological assertions are subjective truths and they cannot be either verified or invalidated by science, i.e. through objective knowledge.[18] For him, choosing if one is for or against a certain subjective truth is a purely arbitrary choice.[18] He calls the jump from objective knowledge to religious faith a **leap of faith**, since it means subjectively accepting statements which cannot be rationally justified.[18] For him the Christian faith is the result of the trajectory initiated by such choices, which don't have and cannot have a rational ground (meaning that reason is neither for or against making such choices).[18] Objectively regarded, purely theological assertions are neither true nor false.[18]

From Nietzsche's ***Gay Science***

The Eternal Return

Section 341) *The greatest weight*.—What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: "This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence—even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!"

Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment when you would have answered him: "You are a god and never have I heard anything more divine." If this thought gained possession of you, it would change you as you are or perhaps crush you. The question in each and every thing, "Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?" would lie upon your actions as the greatest weight. Or how well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life to crave nothing more fervently than this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal?

From Jeremy Bentham's *Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1781)

Chapter I: Of The Principle of Utility (I ~ VII)

I. Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to abjure their empire: but in reality he will remain, subject to it all the while. The *principle of utility* recognizes this subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and of law. Systems which attempt to question it, deal in sounds instead of sense, in caprice instead of reason, in darkness instead of light. But enough of metaphor and declamation: it is not by such means that moral science is to be improved.

II. The principle of utility is the foundation of the present work: it will be proper therefore at the outset to give an explicit and determinate account of what is meant by it. By the **principle of utility** is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words to promote or to oppose that happiness. I say of every action whatsoever, and therefore not only of every action of a private individual, but of every measure of government.

III. By utility is meant that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness, (all this in the present case comes to the same thing) or (what comes again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community: if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual.

IV. The interest of the community is one of the most general expressions that can occur in the phraseology of morals: no wonder that the meaning of it is often lost. When it has a meaning, it is this. The community is a fictitious *body*, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its *members*. The interest of the community then is, what is it?—the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it.

V. It is in vain to talk of the interest of the community, without understanding what is the interest of the individual. A thing is said to promote the interest, or to be *for* the interest, of an individual, when it tends to add to the sum total of his pleasures: or, what comes to the same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains.

VI. An action then may be said to be conformable to then principle of utility, or, for shortness sake, to utility, (meaning with respect to the community at large) when the tendency it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any it has to diminish it.

VII. A measure of government (which is but a particular kind of action, performed by a particular person or persons) may be said to be conformable to or dictated by the principle of utility, when in like manner the tendency which it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any which it has to diminish it.

From John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*

[accessed from http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/11224/pg11224.txt]

Two types of pleasures:

If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.

Now it is an unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying, both, do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their *higher faculties*. Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he for the most complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him. If they ever fancy they would, it is only in cases of unhappiness so extreme, that to escape from it they would exchange their lot for almost any other, however undesirable in their own eyes. A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish to sink into what he feels to be a *lower grade of existence*. We may give what explanation we please of this unwillingness; we may attribute it to pride, a name which is given indiscriminately to some of the most and to some of the least estimable feelings of which mankind are capable: we may refer it to the love of liberty and personal independence, an appeal to which was with the Stoics one of the most effective means for the inculcation of it; to the love of power, or to the love of excitement, both of which do really enter into and contribute to it: but its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity, which all human beings possess in one form or other, and in some, though by no means in exact, proportion to their higher faculties, and which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong, that nothing which conflicts with it could be, otherwise than momentarily, an object of desire to them.

Whoever supposes that this preference takes place at a sacrifice of happiness—that the superior being, in anything like equal circumstances, is not happier than the inferior—confounds the two very different ideas, of happiness, and content. It is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low, has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied; and a highly endowed being will always feel that any happiness which he can look for, as the world is constituted, is imperfect. But he can learn to bear its imperfections, if they are at all bearable; and they will not make him envy the being who is indeed unconscious of the imperfections, but only because he feels not at all the good which those imperfections qualify. **It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied.** And if the fool, or the pig, are a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

It may be objected, that many who are capable of the higher pleasures, occasionally, under the influence of temptation, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures, than when it is between bodily and mental. They pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good. It may be further objected, that many who begin with youthful enthusiasm for everything noble, as they advance in years sink into indolence and selfishness. But I do not believe that those who undergo this very common change, voluntarily choose the lower description of pleasures in preference to the higher. I believe that before they devote themselves exclusively to the one, they have already become incapable of the other. Capacity for the nobler feelings is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young persons it speedily dies away if the occupations to which their position in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favourable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access, or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying.

From *The Communist Manifesto* (Marx & Engels, 1848)

Selections from Chapter 1: Bourgeois and Proletarians

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of **class struggles**.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — **Bourgeoisie** and **Proletariat**.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.
…

… Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune: here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany); there taxable “third estate” of the monarchy (as in France); afterwards, in the period of manufacturing proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his “natural superiors”, and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous “cash payment”. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom — Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.
…

… We see then: the means of production and of exchange, on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up, were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organisation of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word, the feudal relations of property became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they became so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder.
…

… Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of the feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

Masters of Suspicion: Marx, Nietzsche, Freud

From Marx's *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1844)

Introduction

> ... The foundation of irreligious criticism is: *Man makes religion*, religion does not make man. Religion is, indeed, the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself, or has already lost himself again. But *man* is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is *the world of man* – state, society. This state and this society produce religion, which is an *inverted consciousness of the world*, because they are an *inverted world*. Religion is the general theory of this world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in popular form, its spiritual *point d'honneur*, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, and its universal basis of consolation and justification. It is the *fantastic realization* of the human essence since the *human essence* has not acquired any true reality. The struggle against religion is, therefore, indirectly the struggle *against that world* whose spiritual *aroma* is religion.
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> *Religious* suffering is, at one and the same time, the *expression* of real suffering and a *protest* against real suffering. **Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people**.
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> The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for their *real* happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to *give up a condition that requires illusions*. The criticism of religion is, therefore, *in embryo, the criticism of that vale of tears* of which religion is the *halo*.
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> Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers on the chain not in order that man shall continue to bear that chain without fantasy or consolation, but so that he shall throw off the chain and pluck the **living flower**. The criticism of religion disillusions man, so that he will think, act, and fashion his reality like a man who has discarded his illusions and regained his senses, so that he will move around himself as his own true Sun. Religion is only the illusory Sun which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself.
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> It is, therefore, the *task of history*, once the *other-world of truth* has vanished, to establish the *truth of this world*. It is the immediate *task of* ***philosophy***, which is in the service of history, to unmask self-estrangement in its *unholy forms* once the *holy form* of human self-estrangement has been unmasked. Thus, the criticism of Heaven turns into the criticism of Earth, the *criticism of religion* into the *criticism of law*, and the *criticism of theology* into the *criticism of politics*.

From Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality*

First essay: 'Good and Evil', 'Good and Bad': 10

The beginning of the slaves' revolt in morality occurs when ***resentment* itself turns creative and gives birth to values**: the resentment of those beings who, denied the proper response of action, compensate for it only with imaginary revenge. Whereas all **noble morality** grows out of a triumphant saying 'yes' to itself, **slave morality** says 'no' on principle to everything that is 'outside', 'other', 'non-self ': and this 'no' is its creative deed.

This reversal of the evaluating glance – this essential orientation to the outside instead of back onto itself – is a feature of resentment: in order to come about, slave morality first has to have an opposing, external world, it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all, – its action is basically a reaction.

The opposite is the case with the noble method of valuation: this acts and grows spontaneously, seeking out its opposite only so that it can say 'yes' to itself even more thankfully and exultantly, – its negative concept 'low', 'common', 'bad' is only a pale contrast created after the event compared to its positive basic concept, saturated with life and passion, 'we the noble, the good, the beautiful and the happy!'

...

The 'well-born' felt they were 'the happy'; they did not need first of all to construct their happiness artificially by looking at their enemies, or in some cases by talking themselves into it, lying themselves into it (as all men of resentment are wont to do); and also, as complete men bursting with strength and therefore necessarily active, they knew they must not separate happiness from action – being active is by necessity counted as part of happiness – all very much the opposite of 'happiness' at the level of the powerless, the oppressed, and those rankled with poisonous and hostile feelings, for whom it manifests itself as essentially a narcotic, an anaesthetic, rest, peace, 'sabbath', relaxation of the mind and stretching of the limbs, in short as something passive.

While the noble man is confident and frank with himself, the man of resentment is neither upright nor naïve, nor honest and straight with himself. His soul squints; his mind loves dark corners, secret paths and back-doors, everything secretive appeals to him as being his world, his security, his comfort; he knows all about keeping quiet, not forgetting, waiting, temporarily humbling and abasing himself. **A race of such men of resentment will inevitably end up cleverer than any noble race, and will respect cleverness to a quite different degree as well: namely, as a condition of existence of the first rank ...**

From Freud's ***Civilization and Its Discontents***

"Man is Wolf to Man"

… I think I can now hear a dignified voice admonishing me: 'It is precisely because your neighbor is not worthy of love, and is on the contrary your enemy, that you should love him as yourself.' I then understand that the case is one like that of *Credo quia absurdum* (I believe because it is absurd).

Now it is very probable that my neighbor, when he is enjoined to love me as himself, will answer exactly as I have done and will repel me for the same reasons. I hope he will not have the same objective grounds for doing so, but he will have the same idea as I have. Even so, the behavior of human beings shows differences, which ethics, disregarding the fact that such differences are determined, classifies as 'good' or 'bad.' So long as these undeniable differences have not been removed, obedience to high ethical demands entails damage to the aims of civilization, for it puts a positive premium on being bad. One is irresistibly reminded of an incident in the French Chamber when capital punishment was being debated. A member had been passionately supporting its abolition and his speech was being received with tumultuous applause, when a voice from the hall called out: '*Que messieurs les assassins commencent*! (Let the gentlemen who are assassins begin)'

The element of truth behind all this, which people are so ready to disavow, is that men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved, and who at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness. As a result, their neighbor is for them not only a potential helper or sexual object, but also someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill him. ***Homo homini lupus*** **(Man is Wolf to Man)**. Who, in the face of all his experience of life and of history, will have the courage to dispute this assertion? As a rule this cruel aggressiveness waits for some provocation or puts itself at the service of some other purpose, whose goal might also have been reached by milder measures. In circumstances that are favorable to it, when the mental counter-forces which ordinarily inhibit it are out of action, it also manifests itself spontaneously and reveals man as a savage beast to whom consideration towards his own kind is something alien. Anyone who calls to mind the atrocities committed during the racial migrations or the invasions of the Huns, or by the people known as Mongols under Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, or at the capture of Jerusalem by the pious Crusaders, or even, indeed, the horrors of the recent World War—anyone who calls these things to mind will have to bow humbly before the truth of this view.

From **Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations***

The Private Language Arguments:

[Beetle]

293. If I say of myself that it is only from my own case that I know what the word "pain" means—must I not say the same of other people too? And how can I generalize the one case so irresponsibly?

Now someone tells me that he knows what pain is only from his own case!——Suppose everyone had a box with something in it: we call it a "beetle". No one can look into anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at his beetle.—Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing.—But suppose the word "beetle" had a use in these people's language?—If so it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all; not even as a something: for the box might even be empty.—No, one can 'divide through' by the thing in the box; it cancels out, whatever it is.

That is to say: if we construe the grammar of the expression of sensation on the model of 'object and designation' the object drops out of consideration as irrelevant.

[Picture]

294. If you say he sees a private picture before him, which he is describing, you have still made an assumption about what he has before him. And that means that you can describe it or do describe it more closely. If you admit that you haven't any notion what kind of thing it might be that he has before him—then what leads you into saying, in spite of that, that he has something before him? Isn't it as if I were to say of someone: "He has something. But I don't know whether it is money, or debts, or an empty till."

19

WITTGENSTEIN

Our discussion has brought us, by various routes, to that point in philosophical history from which, for a long time, many philosophers have dated its commencement. The discovery of the new logic precipitated 'analytical' philosophy, bringing about, first logical atomism, then logical positivism and finally linguistic analysis, the practitioners of which have often paid scant heed to the arguments and aims of their predecessors. A single figure contributed decisively to the formation of each of these schools, and the same figure sowed in each of them the seeds of its destruction.

The rise of 'analytical' philosophy

Much has been written in recent years about the life and philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951). It is now widely thought that he is the most important philosopher of our century. It is hard, nevertheless, to fit his thought into the history of the subject, partly because of its later iconoclasm, partly because, like Frege, he began from reflections which, in the light of that history, may seem parochial and even without philosophical relevance. As a prelude, therefore, it is necessary to say something about the state of English philosophy at the time when Wittgenstein first took an interest in it. This interest presaged the prolonged influence of Viennese ideas on Anglo-American thought. We must return a little in time, to the ideas of Russell and Moore.

Bertrand Arthur, third Earl Russell (1872–1970) has been mentioned so far in connection with the new logic, which he transformed into a powerful tool of philosophical analysis. No less important historically was his friend G.E.Moore (1873–1958), the writer of an important treatise on ethics, *Principia Ethica* (1903), and the relentless foe of all forms of metaphysical speculation that seemed to be the enemies of common sense. Together, Moore and Russell devoted themselves to the demolition of the arguments of British idealism, as these were represented by Bradley (at Oxford) and J.M.McTaggart (1866–1925) at their own university of Cambridge. Russell, in his early work on the foundations of geometry, acknowledges the influence of Bradley's *Logic*. But this did not prevent him from discerning, in Bradley's famous proof of the makeshift character of both objects and qualities (see p. 233), a confusion between the 'is' of predication and the 'is' of identity, or from accusing Bradley and McTaggart of sleight of hand in almost all their proofs for the inadequacy of our common sense conceptions of space, time and matter. Moore joined in the battle, adding not so much arguments as peculiarly dramatic assertions. How is it possible, he asked, for my belief that I have two hands to be less certain than the validity of all the philosophical arguments which have been adduced to disprove it? The combination of Russell's mercurial logic, and Moore's robust refusal to think further than his nose, or hands, proved extremely destructive, and it became fashionable to describe idealist metaphysics not as false, but as meaningless. Other philosophers—notably Hume—had said similar things. But now more than ever it seemed possible to prove the point, by developing a theory of the structure of language that would show precisely what could and what could not be said. And it was supposed that among the things that could not be said, metaphysics was the most easily recognisable.

The first such theory was logical atomism, adumbrated by Russell, and more or less completely expressed in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921). This work, more succinct even than Leibniz's *Monadology*, claimed to give the final answers to the questions of philosophy. It was inspired in part by Russell's famous theory of descriptions, published in 1905, in an article that F.P.Ramsey (1903–1930) described as 'a paradigm of philosophy'. This theory will therefore serve as a fitting introduction to Wittgenstein's work.

The theory of descriptions

It is strange, but nevertheless true, that one of the most important publications in modern philosophy should have had, as its ostensible purpose, the explanation of the meaning of the word 'the'. What is the difference, Russell asks, between the sentence 'a golden mountain exists' and the sentence 'the golden mountain exists'? The first expression is explained by the new logic as follows: the predicate 'golden mountain' is instantiated, or, more formally, there exists an *x* such that *x* is a golden mountain. This proposition is clearly false. But what about the second proposition? Here the word 'the' seems to change the predicate 'golden mountain' into what Russell would call a denoting phrase (and what Frege had called a name). This is a strange effect of grammar. It has a yet stranger logical consequence, namely, that the sentence seems to refer to something—the golden mountain. But how is that possible, if no golden mountain exists? Here, Russell argued, we have a paradigm case of a grammatical form which conceals the logical form of a sentence. Taking his cue from his own and Frege's implicit definition of number, he offers an implicit definition of the word 'the'. We cannot say explicitly what the term 'the' denotes, but we can show how to eliminate it from all the sentences in which it occurs.

Consider the sentence, 'the King of France is bald'. For this to be true, there must be a king of France, and he must be bald. Moreover, to capture the distinctive sense of the word 'the' we have to add that there is only *one* king of France. The conditions which make the sentence true give us its meaning; hence we can say that 'the King of France is bald' is equivalent to the conjunction of three propositions: 'there exists a king of France; everything which is a king of France is bald; and there is only one king of France.' (More formally—there exists an *x* such that: *x* is a king of France and *x* is bald, and, for all *y,* if *y* is a king of France, *y* is identical to *x*.) It follows from this analysis that, if there is no king of France, then the original sentence is false. The phrase 'the King of France', which seemed to be a denoting phrase or name, is in fact no such thing, but rather a predicate attached to a concealed existential claim. The King of France is, as Russell put it, a logical fiction. (There is a historical antecedent for this kind of philosophical theory in Bentham's theory of fictions.)

Philosophically, Russell directed his arguments against certain phenomenologists (notably Alexius Meinong (1853–1920)) who had

wanted to conclude that, if we can think of something, such as the golden mountain, then that thing must, in some sense, exist. (If you don't like the word 'exist', then another—'subsist'—is offered to allay your logical susceptibilities.) Russell did not fully grasp that Meinong and his associates were not so much engaged in exploring the logic of denotation, as in examining the 'intentional object' of thought. Be that as it may, however, Russell's argument lent itself to instant generalisation, and in this generalised form provided a basis for the philosophy of the *Tractatus*.

Logical atomism and the *Tractatus*

According to the *Tractatus,* everything that can be thought can also be said. The limits of language are, therefore, the limits of thought, so that a complete philosophy of the 'sayable' will be a complete theory of what Kant had called 'the understanding'. All metaphysical problems arise because of the attempt to say what cannot be said. A proper analysis of the structure of the terms used in that attempt will show this to be so, and thus either solve or dissolve the problems.

What then is the structure of language? Wittgenstein divided all sentences into the complex and the atomic, and asserted that the former were built up from the latter by rules of formation which could be fully interpreted in terms of Russell's logic (as this had been expounded in Russell and Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica* (1910–1913)). Atomic sentences are those which employ the *primitives* of the language: the elementary names and predicates which, being themselves indefinable serve to pick out (or 'picture') what Wittgenstein called atomic facts. Only a completed proposition can be true or false, and so only a completed proposition can tell us anything about the world. Hence there can be no more basic constituent of the world than that which corresponds to the atomic sentence. This basic constituent is the atomic fact, and the world is therefore the totality of such facts.

Corresponding to complex propositions are complex facts, and to understand these complex facts we must understand the complexity of the language used to express them. This complexity is entirely given by the Fregean and Russellian logic. Thus 'the King of France is bald' is (although it seems not to be) a complex sentence, since its true structure (that is, its structure as represented by the new logic) shows it to consist of three incomplete sentences, combined and completed by quantification

and the connective 'and'. Many sentences are like that. They seem to be basic, but are in fact complex. In general many of the things we refer to are logical constructions (or fictions). Sentences which describe them are shorthand for more complex sentences referring to the constituents of quite different, but more basic, facts, in which these 'logical constructions' do not occur. A sentence like 'the average man has 2.6 children' is really shorthand for a complex mathematical sentence relating the numbers of children of men to the numbers of men. 'The average man' features in no atomic sentence, which is to say that 'the average man' names no constituent of reality. The same is true of the English nation, and of many 'metaphysical' entities that have seemed to pose philosophical problems. Wittgenstein was less specific than Russell, and certainly less specific than the logical positivists, for whom nevertheless the *Tractatus* provided the complete apparatus of philosophical argument, as to which facts are atomic and which are not. He wished to give the clear, statement of the logical *structure* of the world: its actual contents did not concern him.

The all-important feature of complex sentences is that the connectives which are used to build them must be 'truth-functional'. That is to say, they must be such that the truth-value of the complex sentence is entirely determined by the truth-values of its parts. This is the 'principle of extensionality' that we have already encountered in discussing Frege, and which, according to Wittgenstein, is a precondition of logical thought and analysis. Logic is concerned purely with the systematic transformation of truth-values, and hence a logical language must be *transparent* to truth-values. It must be possible to see every operation in terms of the transformation of truth and falsehood. (The word 'not' has the sense that it turns truth to falsehood and falsehood to truth; 'if' that it makes a complex sentence that is false if the antecedent is true and the consequent false, otherwise true; and so on.)

The notion of a truth-functional language gives exactness and cogency to Wittgenstein's claim that there is a real distinction between atomic and non-atomic sentences. He is able to say not only what the distinction is, but more importantly, how we are able to understand it. There is no difficulty, with a truth-functional language, in explaining how the understanding of atomic sentences leads to an understanding of all the infinite complexes that can be built from them. (This is another application of a principle of Frege's, discussed here on pp. 245–6.) The conditions for

the truth of a complex sentence formed truth-functionally can be derived immediately from the truth-conditions of its parts. And hence if we understand the truth-conditions of the parts, we understand the whole.

Moreover, Wittgenstein is able to provide a novel and seemingly utterly clear distinction between the necessary and the contingent, the analytic and the synthetic, the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*. These distinctions become one distinction, that between logical truth and contingency. A sentence is a logical truth if it is made true by every substitution of terms for the 'primitive' parts which it contains. (A primitive part being one which admits of no further definition.) The paradigm example of the logical truth is the truth-functional 'tautology'. Consider the sentence '*p* or *q*'. The definition of 'or' reads thus: *p* or *q* is false if both *p* and *q* are false, otherwise true. The definition of 'not' is: not-p is true if *p* is false, false if *p* is true. From which it follows that the sentence '*p* or not-*p*' is always true, whatever the truth-value of '*p*'. So, no matter what we substitute for the primitive term '*p*', the resulting sentence will always be true. Sentences of this form are therefore necessarily true, and can be seen to be true *a priori* by anyone who understands the logical operations of the language.

This theory of necessary truth has the consequence, Wittgenstein thought, that necessary truths are empty: they say nothing because they exclude nothing. They are compatible with every state of affairs. The world is described by the totality of true atomic propositions: these are true, but, being atomic, might have been false, since there is nothing in their structure to determine their truth-value. Another way of putting this is that facts exist in 'logical space'. This logical space defines the possibilities; the true atomic sentences describe what is actual, while tautologies reflect properties of logical space itself.

There are deep metaphysical problems raised by this account of language. First there is the problem of the relation between atomic sentences and atomic facts. Wittgenstein calls this relation one of 'picturing', and this metaphor has misled many of his commentators. He also says that the relation cannot be described, but only shown: indeed it was his view that what is most basic *must* be shown; otherwise description could never begin. Precisely what is meant by 'showing' is not clear. Perhaps the best way to understand this theory—sometimes called the 'picture theory of meaning'—is as a denial, to use a later phrase of Wittgenstein's, that we can use language 'to get between

language and the world'. We cannot give an account in words of the relation between an atomic fact and an atomic proposition except by using the proposition whose truth we are trying to explain. We cannot 'think' the atomic fact without thinking the sentence which 'pictures' it. The limits of thought are the limits of language. Wittgenstein concludes his book with the laconic statement: 'that whereof we cannot speak we must consign to silence.'

One of the problems for the philosophy of the *Tractatus* is indicated in that very utterance. Only atomic sentences, truth-functional complexes, and tautologies are meaningful. But what of the theory which says so? It is not an atomic sentence, nor any complex of such: it purports to say, not how things are but how they must be. But it is not a tautology. Is it then meaningless? Wittgenstein actually says 'yes', and with that bold gesture moves on to the conclusion of his philosophy, adding that his propositions must serve as a ladder to be thrown away by those who have managed to ascend it.

Wittgenstein and linguistic analysis

There is about the *Tractatus* something of the fascination of Kant's first *Critique*: the fascination of a doctrine that struggles as hard as possible to describe the limits of the intelligible only to be compelled, in the course of doing so, to transcend them. Wittgenstein nowhere acknowledges the likeness of his thought to Kant's, or indeed to anyone's except Russell's, but the parallel between the two philosophers becomes more and more striking, so striking, indeed, that some have seen the argument of the posthumous *Philosophical Investigations* as completing at last the work of Kant's Transcendental Deduction.

Wittgenstein's later philosophy evolved out of a reaction to the earlier, or rather to a certain extremely influential interpretation of it. In the *Tractatus* the metaphysics of logical atomism is presented with almost no reference to any specific theory of knowledge. Russell's own version of the theory was decidedly empiricist, identifying the 'atomic facts' as facts about the immediate contents of experience (or 'sense-data' as Russell called them). Using the apparatus of Wittgenstein's theory, Russell was then able to restate a version of empiricism in the sceptical spirit of Hume, proposing to construe every entity in the world other than sense-data as a 'logical construction'. Whether or not we do mean, when referring to

tables, to refer to logical constructions out of sense-data, it is, Russell thought, all that we ought to mean. As he put it, 'wherever possible, logical constructions are to be substituted for inferred entities'. Philosophy thus took a step in the direction of logical positivism, according to which all metaphysical, ethical and theological doctrines are meaningless, not because of any defect of logical thought, but because they are unverifiable. The slogan of positivism—that the meaning of a sentence is its method of verification—is taken from the *Tractatus,* as was much of the apparatus whereby it sought to rid the world of metaphysical entities. But its spirit was that of Hume, and its principal theories were restatements of Hume's ideas concerning causality, the physical world and morality, in terms of an 'analytic' rather than a 'genetic' theory of meaning. By the time this programme was under way, in the work of Rudolf Carnap (1891–1970) and others of the so-called 'Vienna Circle' (see especially Carnap's *Logical Structure of the World,* 1928), Wittgenstein had renounced all allegiance to atomism and its progeny, had ceased publication and begun a hermetic, and often nomadic, existence which ensured that, until his death, what influence he had was confined to those privileged to know him personally, or to catch sight of the manuscripts which he occasionally allowed to pass from his hands. Among these manuscripts the most famous—*The Blue and Brown Books*—reached Oxford in the 1940s, and there precipitated the school of 'linguistic analysis' for which J.L.Austin (1911–1960) and Gilbert Ryle (1900–1977) were already preparing the way. But that school, consisting as it does of figures too many and too minor to warrant our attention, and being characterised less by any theory than by the refusal to subscribe to one, is not one that I shall discuss. Nor shall I consider the later development of logical positivism in America, where it entered into a fruitful marriage—through Carnap's pupils Nelson Goodman and Willard van Orman Quine—with the local 'pragmatism' of C.S.Peirce, (1839–1914), William James (1842–1910) and C.I.Lewis (1883–1964). Instead I shall conclude this work with an outline of certain arguments expressed in the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), *The Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (1956) and elsewhere. Because they relate directly to the history of the subject as I have so far described it, these arguments will give some indication, however slight, of the extent to which Wittgenstein's later philosophy has transformed and even brought to an end the tradition of intellectual enquiry which began with Descartes.

The later Wittgenstein

The emphasis of Wittgenstein's later philosophy is decidedly anthropocentric. While still interested in questions concerning meaning and the limits of significant utterance, the starting-point has become, not the immutable abstractions of an ideal logic, but the fallible efforts of human communication. At the same time, the human element has not entered through the usual channel of epistemology, but in a wholly surprising way. Wittgenstein introduces it through *a priori* reflections on the nature of the human mind, and on the social behaviour which endows that mind with its characteristic structure. What is 'given' is not the 'sense-data' of the positivists, but the 'forms of life' of Kantian philosophical anthropology. To put it in another way: the subject of any theory of meaning and understanding is the public practice of utterance, and all that makes this practice possible. Thus Wittgenstein begins his later investigations into the nature of language at the point where Frege broke off. He develops the thesis of the 'publicity' of sense, which had already led Frege to reject traditional empiricist theories of meaning. The result is not only a new account of the nature of language, but also a revolutionary philosophy of mind. The metaphysical problems that had occupied Kant, Hegel and Schopenhauer are rephrased as difficulties in the interpretation of consciousness. Construed thus they suddenly seem capable of resolution.

The social perspective caused Wittgenstein to move away from Frege's emphasis on the concept of truth, or rather, to see this emphasis as reflecting a more fundamental demand that human utterance be answerable to a standard of correctness. This standard is not God-given, nor does it lie dormant in the order of nature. It is a human artifact, as much the product as the producer of the linguistic practices which it governs. This does not mean that an individual can decide for himself what is right and wrong in the art of communication. On the contrary, the constraint of publicity binds each and all of us; moreover that constraint is intimately bound up with our conception of ourselves as beings who observe and act upon an independent world. Nevertheless, it is true that there is no constraint involved in common usage other than usage itself. If we come up against truths which seem to us to be necessary, this can only be because we have created the rules that make them so, and what we create we can also forgo. The compulsion that

we experience in logical inference, for example, is no compulsion, independently of our disposition so to experience it.

This kind of reflection led Wittgenstein towards a highly sophisticated form of nominalism: a denial that we can look outside linguistic practice for the thing which governs it. The ultimate facts are language, and the forms of life which grow from language and make language possible. Nominalism is not new, nor has it lacked exponents in our day. Nelson Goodman (b. 1906), for example, has advocated, using arguments that often resemble Wittgenstein's, a kind of nominalism that incorporates a whole philosophy of science together with a theory of knowledge. What is peculiar to Wittgenstein is the transition that he makes at this juncture from the philosophy of language to the philosophy of mind. During the course of this transition, he attempts to overthrow the major premise of almost all Western philosophy since Descartes—the premise of the 'priority of the first-person case'.

Wittgenstein uses a variety of arguments, designed to show what this premise really means, and in the course of doing so to demonstrate its untenability. Together these arguments provide what can best be described as a 'picture' of human consciousness. This picture has many aspects, some metaphysical, some epistemological: it involves the rejection of the Cartesian quest for certainty, the demolition of the view that mental events are private episodes observable to one person alone, the rejection of all attempts to understand the human mind in isolation from the social practices through which it finds expression. It is impossible here to give all the considerations whereby Wittgenstein upholds 'the priority of the third-person case'. I shall therefore mention one or two central strands of argument and draw some conclusions as to the historical and philosophical significance of the thesis.

The private language argument

The most famous argument advanced for the Wittgensteinian position is that which has come to be known as 'the private language argument'. This occurs in many versions in the *Philosophical Investigations* and has been the subject of much commentary. In outline, it seems to me the argument is as follows: there is a peculiar 'privilege' or 'immediacy' involved in the knowledge of our own present experiences. In some sense it is nonsense to suggest that I have to find out about them, or that

I could, in the normal run of things, be mistaken. (This is the thought which also underlies Kant's thesis of the 'Transcendental Unity of Apperception', see pp. 137–8.) As a result there has arisen what we might call the 'first-person illusion'. I can be more certain about my mental states than about yours. This can only be because I observe my mental states directly, yours indirectly. When I see you in pain, I see physical behaviour, its causes, a certain complex state of an organism. But this is not the pain that you have, only some contingent accompaniment of it. The pain itself lies hidden behind its expression, directly observable to its sufferer alone.

That is, in brief, the Cartesian theory of mind, presented as an explanation of the first-person case. Both the theory, Wittgenstein argues, and the thing that it is put forward to explain, are illusions. Suppose the theory were true. Then, Wittgenstein argues, we could not refer to our sensations by means of words intelligible in a public language. For words in a public language get their sense publicly, by being attached to publicly accessible conditions that warrant their application. These conditions will determine not only their sense, but also their reference. The assumption that this reference is private (in the sense of being observable, in principle, to one person alone) is, Wittgenstein argues, incompatible with the hypothesis that the sense is public. Hence, if mental events are as the Cartesian describes them to be, no word in our public language could actually refer to them.

In effect, however, Cartesians and their empiricist progeny have always, wittingly or unwittingly, accepted that conclusion, and written as though we each describe our sensations and other present mental episodes in a language which, because its field of reference is inaccessible in principle to others, is intelligible to the speaker alone. Wittgenstein argues against the possibility of such a private language. He attempts to prove that there can be no difference made, by the speaker of that language, between how things seem to him and how things are. He would lose the distinction between being and seeming. But this means losing the idea of objective reference. The language is not aimed at reality at all; it becomes instead an arbitrary game. What seems right is what is right; hence one can no longer speak of right.

The conclusion is this: we cannot refer to Cartesian mental events (private objects) in a public language; nor can we refer to them in a private language. Hence we cannot refer to them. But, someone might say, they may nevertheless *exist*! To which Wittgenstein replies, in a

manner reminiscent of Kant's attack on the noumenon, that a nothing will do as well as a something about which nothing can be said. Moreover, we *can* refer to sensations; so whatever they are, sensations are not Cartesian mental events.

Wittgenstein accompanies this argument with an acute description, from the third-person point of view, of many complex mental phenomena—in particular those of perception, intention, expectation and desire. His arguments, as he acknowledges, refute, if successful, the possibility of a 'pure phenomenology', since they have the implication that nothing about the essence of the mental (or about the essence of anything) can be learned from the study (in Cartesian isolation) of the first person alone. The 'immediacy' of the first-person case is an index only of its shallowness. It is true that I know my own mental states without observing my behaviour; but this is not because I am observing something *else*. It is simply an illusion, thrown up by self-consciousness, that the necessary authority that accompanies the public usage of 'I', is an authority about some matter of which only the 'I' has knowledge.

The priority of the third person

Despite this rejection of the 'method' of phenomenology, however, Wittgenstein showed himself sympathetic to an ambition which had become—through a series of historical accidents—allied to it. Thinkers like the Kantian Dilthey (see p. 255) had sought for the foundations of a peculiarly 'human' understanding, according to which the world would be seen, not scientifically, but under the aspect of 'meaning'. Wittgenstein, in common with some phenomenologists, such as Merleau-Ponty and Sartre, argued that we perceive and understand human behaviour in a manner different from that in which we perceive and understand the natural world. We explain human behaviour by giving reasons, not causes. We address ourselves to our future by making decisions, not predictions. We understand the past and present of mankind through our aims, emotions and activity, and not through predictive theories. All these distinctions seem to create the idea, if not of a specifically human world, at least of a specifically human way of seeing things. Much of Wittgenstein's later philosophy is devoted to describing and analysing the characteristics of human understanding, and demolishing what he thought to be the vulgar illusion that science could generate a description

of all those things with which our humanity (or to put it more philosophically, our existence as rational agents) is mingled. He defends the positions not only that our knowledge of our own minds presupposes the knowledge of the minds of others, but also that as the phenomenologist Max Scheler (1874–1928) put it—'our conviction of the existence of other minds is earlier and deeper than our belief in the existence of nature'. In other words, despite the attack on the method and metaphysics of phenomenology, Wittgenstein shares with the phenomenologists the sense that there is a mystery in human things that will not yield to scientific investigation. This mystery is dispelled not by explanation, but only by careful philosophical description of the 'given'. The difference is that, for Wittgenstein, what is 'given' is not the contents of immediate experience, but the forms of life which make experience possible.

The demolition of the first-person illusion has two consequences. First, we cannot begin our enquiries from the first-person case and think that it gives us a paradigm of certainty. For, taken in isolation, it gives us nothing at all. Secondly, while the distinction between being and seeming does not exist for me when I contemplate my own sensations, this is only because I speak a public language which determines this peculiar property of first-person knowledge. The collapse of being and seeming into each other, as in first-person awareness, is a 'degenerate' case. I can know, therefore, that if this collapse is possible, it is because there are people in the world besides myself, and because I have a nature and form of life in common with them. I do indeed inhabit an objective world, a world where things are or can be other than they seem. So, in a standing way, the argument of Kant's Transcendental Deduction is found. The precondition of self-knowledge (of the Transcendental Unity of Apperception) is, after all, the knowledge of others, and of the objective world which contains them.

Much has changed in philosophy since Wittgenstein produced his arguments. One thing is certain, however. The assumption that there is first-person certainty, which provides a starting-point for philosophical enquiry, this assumption which led to the rationalism of Descartes and to the empiricism of Hume, to so much of modern epistemology and so much of modern metaphysics, has been finally removed from the centre of philosophy. The ambition of Kant and Hegel, to achieve a philosophy which removes the 'self' from the beginning of knowledge so as to return it in an enriched and completed form at the end, has perhaps now been fulfilled.

From Darwin's *Origin of Species*

Recapitulation and Conclusion:

In the distant future I see open fields for far more important researches. Psychology will be based on a new foundation, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation. Light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history.

…

And as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection.

It is interesting to contemplate an entangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; Inheritance which is almost implied by reproduction; Variability from the indirect and direct action of the external conditions of life, and from use and disuse; a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.

From: https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Quantum_mechanics

[Because I don't understand it, here are a few quotes from those who (supposedly) do]

Niels Bohr (1952):
For those who are not shocked when they first come across quantum theory cannot possibly have understood it.

Richard Feynman (1965):
I think I can safely say that nobody understands quantum mechanics.

Roger Penrose (1986):
I should begin by expressing my general attitude to present-day quantum theory, by which I mean standard non-relativistic quantum mechanics. The theory has, indeed, two powerful bodies of fact in its favour, and only one thing against it. First, in its favour are all the marvellous agreements that the theory has had with every experimental result to date. Second, and to me almost as important, it is a theory of astonishing and profound mathematical beauty. The one thing that can be said against it is that it makes absolutely no sense!

Anton Zeilinger (2005):
The world is not as real as we think.… My personal opinion is that the world is even weirder than what quantum physics tells us.

David Bohm (1951):
The entire universe must, on a very accurate level, be regarded as a single indivisible unit in which separate parts appear as idealisations permissible only on a classical level of accuracy of description. This means that the view of the world being analogous to a huge machine, the predominant view from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, is now shown to be only approximately correct. The underlying structure of matter, however, is not mechanical. This means that the term "quantum mechanics" is very much a misnomer. It should, perhaps, be called "quantum nonmechanics".

Dennis Overbye (2005):

In his standoff with Dr. Ramsay of Harvard last fall, Dr. Leggett suggested that his colleagues should consider the merits of the latter theory. "Why should we think of an electron as being in two states at once but not a cat, when the theory is ostensibly the same in both cases?" Dr. Leggett asked.

Dr. Ramsay said that Dr. Leggett had missed the point. How the wave function mutates is not what you calculate. "What you calculate is the prediction of a measurement," he said.

"If it's a cat, I can guarantee you will get that it's alive or dead," Dr. Ramsay said.

David Gross, a recent Nobel winner and director of the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics in Santa Barbara, leapt into the free-for-all, saying that 80 years had not been enough time for the new concepts to sink in. "We're just too young. We should wait until 2200 when quantum mechanics is taught in kindergarten."