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EXPERIMENT NO – 8

The ship of Theseus, also known as Theseus' paradox, is a thought experiment that raises the question of whether an object that has had all of its components replaced remains fundamentally the same object. The paradox is most notably recorded by Plutarch in *Life of Theseus* from the late first century.

The Ship of Theseus is what it is by the individual parts that make it up.

In this case, the second you removed the first wooden plank from the Ship, it ceased to be. But the individual atoms in the wood are forever changing, with the result that the Ship is never itself.

The Ship of Theseus is what it is because of its structure.

In this case, the Ship remains the same ship throughout the change from wood to aluminum, so you have the seemingly contradictory result that the Ship of Theseus is both an aluminum and a wooden ship. Furthermore, when you have two ships (as in the last thought experiment), they both have identical structures, so you wind up with the result that both are THE Ship of Theseus – meaning that two discrete things are one numerical thing.

The Ship of Theseus is what it is because of its history.

In this case, the Ship remains the same because of its particular role in the history of the world. Parts come and go, but the actor remains the same. You'll still wind up with the problem in the case of Theseus duplicates, because each share a relevant history with the "original" ship.

Ans.

Ontology refers to what sort of things exist in the social world and assumptions about the form and nature of that social reality. It is concerned with whether or not social reality exists independently of human understanding and interpretation; for instance, is there a shared social reality or 'multiple context-specific realities'.

Broadly speaking, three distinct ontological positions identified are realism, idealism and materialism. Realism claims that there is an external reality independent of what people may think or understand it to be, whereas, idealism maintains that reality can only be understood via the human mind and socially constructed meanings. Similar to realism, materialism also claims that there is a real world but it is only the material or physical world that is considered to be real. Other phenomena, for instance, beliefs, values or experiences arise from the material world but do not shape it.

Epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge and ways of knowing and learning about social reality. Two main perspectives for knowing are positivism and interpretivism. Constructivism and 'naturalistic' are terms commonly referred to in the literature and sometimes in an inconsistent way for interpretivism. The term constructivism is helpful because it identifies the basic principle that reality is socially constructed; a relativist position that holds the view that there is no external reality independent of human consciousness.