

CONTEMPORARY WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

Unit 1

BERTRAND RUSSELL: Logic is the essence of philosophy, Logical atomism, Theory of description.

Q.1. Who is the propounded of logical atomism?

Ans. Bertrand Russell.

Q.2. Who has considered logic as the essence of philosophy?

Ans. Bertrand Russell.

Q.3. What is idealism according to Russell?

Ans. Russell defines idealism as "the doctrine that whatever exists, or at any rate whatever can be known to exist, must be in some sense mental."

Q.4. What are the two forms of knowledge does Russell distinguish between?

Ans. Russell distinguishes between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description.

Q. 5. What kind of experience do we have when we experience sense-data?

Ans. Neutral way.

Q. 6. From what logical process do we gain knowledge of universals by way of particulars?

Ans. Induction.

Q.7. What kind of philosophy does Russell profound?

Ans. Russell profounds analytic philosophy.

Q. 8. What does Russell mean by atom ?

Ans. By atom, Russell mean that point in analysis where further analysis is not possible. In other words, logical atom is the irreducible elements of logical analysis.

Q.9. What is meant by analysis?

Ans. Analysis means the mental process of splitting up a complex thing into its simplest elements which refers to atomic facts.

Q. 10. What are the three basic elements, an atomic fact contains according to Russell?

Ans. According to Russell, an atomic fact contains three basic elements, namely: (a) Particulars (b) Qualities and (c) Relations.

Q.11. What is knowledge by description?

Ans. Knowledge by description is predicated on something with which we are acquainted, sense data, and some knowledge of truth, like knowing that "such and such sense data are caused by the physical object.

Q.12. What is knowledge by acquaintance ?

Ans. Acquaintance knowledge is an awareness that occurs below the level of specific identifications of things.

Q. 13. What are atomic facts ?

Ans. An atomic fact is a combination of objects. According to Russell, an atomic fact consists of atleast one simple object and atleast one universal.

Q. 14. Mention one advantage of modern logic as pointed by B. Russell.

Ans. It was Russell' belief that by using the new logic of his day, Philosophers would be able to exhibit the underlying 'logical form' of natural language statements. A statements logical form, in turn would help resolve various problem of reference associated with the ambiguity and vagueness of natural language.

Q. 15. Russell's theory of proposition function is a theory about Universal/Particular. (Choose the correct option)

Ans. Universal.

Q. 16. Mention Russell's fundamental distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description.

Ans. Knowledge of things is attainable in two ways: knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. Our knowledge by acquaintance entails an immediate awareness of our own sense-dat. From this acquaintance we are directly aware of a thing without any inference. Knowledge by acquaintance is logically independent of any knowledge of truths, like knowing the description: "such-and-such sense-data are caused by the physical object." Thus, knowledge by description allows us to infer knowledge about things we have never experienced via things with which we have had direct acquaintance.

Q.17. What is idealism and how does Russell respond to its epistemic implications?

Ans. Idealism is the philosophical view that "whatever exists, or at any rate, whatever can be known to exist, must be in some sense mental." Russell rejects idealism because he believes the arguments for idealism to be based on fallacious reasoning. The arch-idealist, Bishop Berkeley, refers to two different things using the same word, "idea". One is the thing of which we become aware and the other is the actual act of apprehension. While the latter act seems obviously mental, the former "thing" does not seem so at all. Russell holds that idealists mistake the object sense of "idea", with the apprehensive, mental sense. Instead, Russell advocates a theory of knowledge where things exist independently of our minds and are constituted in the physical world of matter.

Q.18. Differentiate the universal from the particular. How does each fit into Russell's theory of knowledge?

Ans. Russell believes that objects in the physical world, like his famous table, are composed of matter. These are particulars. They exist in one place at any given time and exemplify universals. The universal is an ideal from which particulars derive their common essence. Universal include qualities, properties and relations. A white sheet of paper is a particular that exemplifies the universal "whiteness" which is common to all white things. A particular may be known by way of our acquaintance with sense-data. We grasp universals through a process of induction from particulars.

Q.19. What is sense-data according to Russell?

Ans. The theory of sense data was a popular view in 20th century. Sense data are taken to be mind-dependent objects whose existence and properties are known directly to us in perception. These objects are unanalysed experiences inside the mind, which appear to subsequent more advanced mental operations exactly as they are.

Q.20. What is logical atomism, according to Russell?

Ans. According to Russell, logical atomism is the view that the world is composed of simple facts each of which is fundamentally independent of all the other. Logical atomism supposes that a perfect one to one correspondence exists between an "atom" of language and an atomic fact. Thus, for each atomic fact there is a corresponding atomic proposition.

Q.21. Name two books of Bertrand Russell.

Ans. (i) A history of western philosophy.

(ii) The problem of philosophy.

Q. 22. What is the truth functional proposition?

Ans. Classical proposition logic is a truth functional logic, in that every statement has exactly one truth value which is either true or false, and every logical connective is truth functional, thus every compound statement is a truth functional.

Q. 23. Logic as the Essence of philosophy - Explain after Bertrand Russell.

Ans. Russell is one of the pioneering philosophers who discovered the close relationship between logic and philosophy. He uses logic as the instrument or tool to understand and analyse philosophy.

According to Russell, the task of philosophy is to give a correct logical account of the nature of reality, just as scientists are able to give precise and accurate results concerning scientific issues. So philosophers and metaphysicians should give precise account of the nature of reality. This can be done only when the method is logical. In the second chapter of his book "Our knowledge of the External World" Russell stated that every philosophical problem when it is subjected to the necessary analysis and purification turns out to be not philosophical at all. Such problems turn out to be logical problems.

According to Russell we can reduce all kinds of philosophical problems to logic. In philosophy we do not have any correct view as like as science, because in science we can explain a thing with the help of experiment. In philosophy we express our thought in language. Consistency of thought is the essence of philosophy. To express our thought in language, we take the help of judgement, statement, proposition etc. From the given judgement or argument or premises we can draw our conclusion. It may be tautology, or contingent or contradictory. Logic studies about the arguments, judgements and propositions.

When we say that logic is the essence of philosophy then naturally one question arises-what kind of logic is the essence of philosophy? Is it traditional, Aristotelian or Mill's inductive logic? Here Russell says that it is neither Aristotelian logic nor Mill's inductive logic. But modern mathematical logic or symbolic logic is the real logic which is the essence of philosophy. Let us discuss how Russell criticises the other logic? Here Russell says that it is neither Aristotelian logic nor Mill's inductive logic. But modern mathematical logic or symbolic logic is the real logic which is the essence of philosophy. But Russell criticises the other logic. He says that Aristotelian logic is defective. It is not sole model in understanding what logic is. The traditional subject-predicate form of proposition unable to admit the reality of relations. The first development of logic is made by Bacon and Galileo. Bacon in theoretical and Galileo in practical field introduced induction. Russell states that this kind of logic is also not free from error. Because when induction is regarded as a method of investigation, it does not seem to remain in the final form of a perfected science, it would seem that everything ought to be deductive.

Mill develops induction to a satisfactory form. According to him, Induction is based on law of causation. He says that the reason for believing in the law of causation is that the law is an empirical generation. Russell says that Hegelian logic is also not free from defects Russell criticises Hegelian logic because Hegel follows traditional subject-predicate form of logic. Bradley also accepts all ideas of Aristotelian logic uncritically. Hegel and Bradley formulated their own idealistic logic which was rejected by Russell. He criticises metaphysicians. Traditionally metaphysicians talk about reality of those things which cannot be perceived. The metaphysicians deny the real world by introducing an imaginary world. But Russell says about the reality of external world.

George Boole's 'Laws of Thought' is regarded as a beginning of modern logic. And the first serious advance in real logic is made independently by Boole and Frege. They show the distinction between concrete and abstract idea which was not discussed in traditional logic.

According to Russell, logic consists of two parts. The first part investigates what propositions are and what forms they may have and the second part consists of certain supremely general propositions which assert the truth of all propositions of certain form. Between these, the first part is the more difficult and philosophically more important and it is the recent progress in this first part that has rendered a truly scientific discussion of many philosophical problems possible. Russell states that the new logic has introduced the same kind of advance into philosophy, as Galileo introduced into physics making it possible at least to see what kinds of

problems may be capable of solution, and what kinds must be abandoned as beyond human powers.

Q. 24. Write note on Russell's Logical Atomism.

Ans. Logical atomism is propounded for the first time by B. Russell and later on by Wittgenstein, Wisdom and others. Russell is an eminent mathematician who thinks that the logic elaborated in the 'Principia Mathematica' is a language that would show at a glance the logical structure of facts asserted or denied.

Russell says philosophy must be analytic and its method must be logical, analytical method. Analysis means the mental process of splitting up a complex thing into its simplest elements which refers to atomic facts. By atom, Russell means that point in analysis where further analysis is not possible. In other words, logical atom is the irreducible elements of logical analysis. Logical atomism is the view that the world is composed of simple facts each of which is fundamentally independent of all the other. The belief that the world is fundamentally plural is a reaction of Russell against Hegelianism. This belief is partly based on empirical grounds and partly on his realisation of the importance of relations for mathematics and science. A strictly empirical philosophy requires that whenever we make a statement we must be able to split it up into simpler statements and in the later again into still simpler statements which are simplest i.e. which cannot be further analysed into simpler statements.

A sentence as it is ordinarily understood may not primarily refer to any actual entities at all. Russell holds that the grammatical structure of a sentence may be misleading and under the influence of this false notion we think that the subject of a proposition must always refer to one entity, real or unreal. We can detect the correct meaning of a sentence only when we analyse it in the proper manner. To get clear and precise knowledge of facts, the language that pictures such facts must be perfect otherwise it will conceal the nature of facts. Mathematical logic supplies an ideal language which would analyse us to arrange such atomic facts with the utmost clarity and precision. An ideally, logically perfect language, according to Russell is one which is capable of expressing all that can accurately be said at all. Such an ideal language must consist wholly of symbols, terms of truth functional sentences, whose truths depend upon the truths of constituent sentences of which it is composed.

World is conceived by Russell as constituted of a number of entities called atomic facts, which are directly revealed by the logical language. A simple statement represents or pictures an atomic fact. An atomic fact contains three basic elements (a) Particular (b) Qualities and (c) Relations.

According to logical atomism to discover and construct an ideal perfect language which will picture the atomic facts, analysis is necessary. Russell in his theory of description exhibits one type of analysis with the help of which he replaces all the inferred entities by logical constructions by providing an equivalent statement to the proposition without altering its meaning. The theory of logical atomism is subjected to various criticisms.

The philosophers of the Vienna Circle abandon the notion of perfect language and consequently reject the metaphysics of logical atomism because from the structure of language revealed by analysis, nothing can be inferred. The logical atomists' theory of picturing is subjected to the

defect of Solipcism. Objection is raised against atomic propositions too. The type of proposition which logical atomists so much emphasised becomes an impossibility. Wisdom himself, has doubted wheather any one can give such example. The speedy downfall of logical atomism is due to the searching criticism from other quarters and also its upholder's self criticism.

Q. 3. In what way we can have knowledge of things, according to Russell? Explain.

Ans. Bertrand Russell was a British Philosopher, logician, essayist and social critic best known for his work in mathematical logic and analytic philosophy. Russell also made important contributions to a broad range of other subjects, including ethics, politics, educational theory and religious studies. The theory of descriptions is the philosopher Bertrand Russell's most significant contribution to the philosophy of language. It is also known as Russell's theory of descriptions. Russell argued that the syntactic form of descriptions is misleading, as it does not corelate their logical or semantic architecture. While description may seem fairly uncontroversial phrases, Russell argued that providing a satisfactory analysis of the linguistic and logical properties of a description is vital to clarity in important philosophical debates, particularly in semantic arguments, epistemology and metaphysics.

Since the first development of the theory in Russell's 1905 paper "On Denoting", Russell's theory of Description has been urgently influential and well-received within the philosophy of language. How- ever, it has not been without its critics. Russell view his theory of descriptions as a kind of analysis that is now called logical analysis or propositional analysis. The theory of descriptions was initially put forth in his 1905 essay "On Denoting", published in the journal of philosophy Mind. Russell's theory is focused on the logical form of expressions involving denoting phrases, which he divides into three groups:

1. Denoting phrases which denote anything, for example "the current Emperor of Kentucky".
2. Phrases which denote one definite object, for example, "the present president of the USA". We need not know which object the phrase refers to for it to be ambiguous, for example, "the cutest kitten" is a unique individual but his or her actual identity is unknown.
3. Phrases which denote ambiguously, for example, "an Aardvark."

Russell put forward his theory of descriptions to solve a number of problems in the philosophy of language. The two major problems are (i) co-referring expressions and (ii) non-referring expressions. The problem of co-referring expressions originated primarily with Frege as the problem of informative identities. For example, if the morning star and the evening star are the same planet in the sky seen at different times of day, how is it that someone can think that the morning star rises in the morning but the evening star does not ? This is apparently problematic because although the two expressions seems to denote the same thing, one cannot substitute one for the other, which one ought to be able to do with identical or synonymous expressions. The problem of non-referring expressions is that certain expressions that are meaningful do not truly refer to anything. For example, by "any dog is annoying" it is not meant that there is a particular individual dog, namely any dog, that has the properly of being annoying. Thus, what Russell wants to avoid is admitting mysterious non-existent objects into his ontology. Russell

analyses definite descriptions similarly to indefinite descriptions, except that the individual is now uniquely specified. Take as an example of definite description the sentence, "the current Emperor of Kentucky is gray". Russell analyses this phrase into the following component parts:

- (i) there is an X such that X is an emperor of Kentucky.
- (ii) for every X and every Y, if both X and Y are emperors of Kentucky, the Y is X.
- (iii) anything that is an emperor of Kentucky is gray.

An indefinite description the sentence "some dog is annoying".

Russell analyses this phrase into the following component parts :- There is an X such that :

- (i) X is a dog and
- (ii) X is being annoying.

Thus, an indefinite description becomes the following existentially quantified phrase in classic symbolic logic (where 'X' and 'Y' are variables and 'D' and 'A' are predicates), this reads as follows: There is something such that it is D and A.

Thus, Russell's theory seems to be a better analysis in-so-far as it solves several problems.

Strawson argued that Russell had failed to correctly represent what one means when one says a sentence in the form of "the current Emperor of Kentucky is gray". According to Strawson, this sentence is not contradicted by "No one is the current Emperor of Kentucky", for the former sentence contains not an existential assertion, but attempts to use "the current Emperor of Kentucky" as a referring phrase. Since there is no current Emperor of Kentucky, the phrase fails to refer to anything, and so the sentence is neither true nor false.

According to Donnellan, there are two distinct ways we may use a definite description such as "the current Emperor of Kentucky is gray" and thus makes his distinction between the referential and the attributive use of a definite description. He argues that both Russell and Strawson make the

mistake of attempting to analyse sentences removed from their context. We can mean different and distinct things while using the same sentence in different situations.

Unit 2

LOGICAL POSITIVISM : Principles of verification, Elimination of Metaphysics

Q. 1. Define logical positivism.

Ans. Logical positivism also called logical empiricism, a philosophical movement that arose in Vienna in the 1920s and was characterized by the view that scientific knowledge is only kind of factual knowledge and that all traditional metaphysical doctrines are to be rejected as meaningless.

Q. 2. What are the fundamental principles of logical positivism?

Ans. The fundamental principle of logical positivism is the principle of verification or verifiability theory of knowledge.

Q. 3. Define metaphysics.

Ans. 'Metaphysics' literally means what comes after physics. Metaphysics is synonymous with ontology. Ontology or metaphysics is the theory of Being or Reality.

Q. 4. Which group of logicians rejected Metaphysics?

Ans. Logical positivists.

Q. 5. Name two logical positivists.

Ans. Two logical positivists are:

(a) A. J. Ayer and

(b) Moritz Schlick.

Q. 6. What is the criteria by which the meaning of a sentence is determined, according to A. J. Ayer?

Ans. According to A. J. Ayer, the principle verification is the criteria by which the meaning of a sentence is determined.

Q.7. In what sense, Ayer accepts verifiability?

Ans. Ayer accepts verifiability in the weak sense.

Q. 8. Which group of philosophers considers metaphysics as non-sensical?

Ans. The logical positivists.

Q. 9. Who wrote "Language Truth and Logic"?

Ans. A. J. Ayer.

Q. 10. Who is the father of logical positivism?

Ans. Moritz Schlick. A.J. Ayer.

Q. 11. Is positivism inductive or deductive ?

Ans. Crowther and Lancaster argue that as a general rule, positivists studies usually adopt deductive approach, whereas inductive research approach is usually associated with a phenomenology philosophy.

Q. 12. What is the verification principle philosophy?

Ans. Verifiability principle, a philosophical doctrine fundamental to the school to Logical positivism holding that a statement is meaningful only if it is either empirically verifiable or else tautological.

Q. 13. What is knowledge according to A. J. Ayer?

Ans. In the problem of knowledge according to A. J. Ayer, the first requirement is that what is known should be true, but this is not sufficient, not even if we add to it the further condition that one must be completely sure of what one knows.

Q. 14. What was the main argument of logical positivism in the twentieth century?

Ans. Logical positivism's main tenet is that only beliefs that can be empirically proven are valid.

Q. 15. What is the source of knowledge according to logical positivists?

Ans. According to logical positivists, there are only two sources of knowledge - logical reasoning and empirical experience.

Q. 16. Does logical metaphysical propositions verifiable by experience ?

Ans. No.

Q. 17. Do Logical positivist accept the possibility of Metaphysics?

Ans. No. Logical positivist holds to the doctrine that metaphysics is non-sense.

Q. 18. Are propositions of ethics based on facts according to Russell?

Ans. No.

Q. 19. Is 'esse est percipi' a self evident proposition according to Logical positivists ?

Ans. Yes.

Q. 20. What does 'verifiable' mean?

Ans. In saying that a meaningful sentence must be verifiable means it should be verifiable in principle i.e., the logical possibility of verification. A proposition is said to be verifiable in the strong sense, if and only if its truth is conclusively established in experience but it is verifiable in the weak sense, if it is possible for experience to render it probable.

Q. 21. What two senses of the term verifiability does A. J. Ayer distinguish ?

Ans. A. J. Ayer distinguished between a "strong" and "weak" sense of the term verifiable. A proposition is said to be verifiable in the strong sense, but it is verifiable in the weak sense of the term if it is possible for experience to render it probable or improbable.

Q. 22. Why does logical positivism fail?

Ans. Logical positivism did not fail because it denied human emotion. Logical positivism failed because it tried to reduce the concept of meaning to the process of verification, and it became increasingly clear that this was an impossible task.

Q.23. What is the verification theory of meaning?

Ans. Verificationism, also known as the verification principle or the verifiability criterion of meaning, is the philosophical doctrine which maintains that only statements that are empirically verifiable are cognitively meaningful, or else they are truth of logic.

Q. 24. Is logical positivism dead?

Ans. Positivism is dead largely because a sort of consensus urged among analytic philosophers that it had been refuted with the development of the Frege/Russell classical logic as a foundation for mathematics, some philosophers thought they would develop a tool and a conception of philosophy.

Q. 25. Is logic an empirical science?

Ans. Logic as a structure of reasoning is not empirical. But reasoning can be based on observations and empirical can be based on observations and empirical data. Such a reasoning is a balanced approach between pure Rationalism and pure Empiricism. This approach must be part of scientific method.

Q. 26. What is strong verification?

Ans. The Vienna circle were a group of philosophers who developed what has come to be known as the strong verification principle or logical positivism. The verification principle states that statements can only be meaningful if they are analytic statements or if they can be empirically verified.

Q. 27. What is the weak sense of verification according to logical positivists?

Ans. A. J. Ayer concluded, "A proposition is said to be verifiable, in the strong sense of them, if and only if, its truth could be conclusively established by experience", but is verifiable in the weak sense. If it is possible for experience to render it probable.

Q. 28. What is principle of verification according to logical positivists? Explain.

Ans. The verifiability theory of meaning was initially put forward by the members of "Vienna Circle" (1920) called logical positivists.

The principle of verification is fundamental to logical positivism. According to Moritz Schlick, "Whenever we ask about a sentence what does it mean?" we want a description of the conditions under which the sentence will form a true proposition and of those which will make it false. The meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification.

According to A. J. Ayer, the principle of verification is criterion by which it can be determined whether or not a sentence is literally meaningful if it is either analytic or empirically verifiable. Analytic statements e.g. logical and mathematical are verified simply by appeal to the definition of the sign used in them. All other statements are capable of being verified by empirical observations i.e., by the evidence of our physical senses.

In saying that a meaningful sentence must be verifiable means it should be verifiable in principle i.e. the logical possibility of verification. The complete verifiability is much too

strong, for this excludes all unrestricted generalisations like, "Man is mortal" or "Arsenic is poisonous." Schlik treats these general propositions as an important type of non-sense.

To avoid these difficulties Ayer, distinguished between a 'strong' and a 'weak' sense of the term verifiable. A proposition is said to be verifiable in the strong sense, if and only if its truth is conclusively established in experience but it is verifiable in the weak sense if it is possible for experience to render it probable. Only analytic or apriori propositions are verifiable in the strong sense. But no empirical proposition can be conclusively verified in experience. It is verifiable only in the weak sense.

According to Ayer, a statement is directly verifiable, if it is either itself an observation statement or is such that it entails at least one observation statement which is not deducible from this either premises alone. And a statement is indirectly verifiable, if it satisfies the following condition. First, that in conjunction with certain other premises it entails one or more directly verifiable statements which are not deduced from these other premises alone.

Secondly, that these other premises don't include any statement that is not either analytic or directly verifiable or capable of being independently established as indirectly verifiable.

Thus according to the verification principle a literally meaningful statement which is not analytic must be either directly or indirectly verifiable in the above sense. Thus it is evident that the process of verification is never final.

The logical positivists' theory of meaning even in the modified form has many defects:

- (i) We can understand the meaning of a sentence without thinking at all of its verifiability.
- (ii) The principle of meaning as verifiability is neither rational nor self-evident. It is a form of dogmatism to suppose that there can be no meanings other than meanings verifiable in sense-experience. Our experience has simply no limitations of sense or anything else.
- (iii) It is pointed out by critics that the principle of verification is self-luminating. Because there is no way of verifying it.
- (iv) We cannot choose to describe a given statement as meaningless any more than we can choose to describe grass as green. It is a crucial mistake of logical positivism to think that a single hypothesis is verifiable by observation.

Q. 29. Critically discuss the elimination of metaphysics by Logical positivism.

Ans. Metaphysics is the science of being reality as such. Pure being or reality as such, is what only is or exists apart from any becoming - any changes, qualities, sub-divisions or movements. It makes distinction between appearance and reality. All objects of our sensible experience are appearances or phenomena. They are things as they appear to us and can not be regarded as reality. So reality must be something different from appearances and we have no way of knowing the reality as it is in itself. But if we have no way of knowing this reality, the possibility of metaphysics stands challenged. To this, the traditional idealists have given an emphatic affirmative answer. For them metaphysics is possible, knowledge if rightly understood, necessarily leads to the apprehension of reality. Epistemology is indistinguishable from

metaphysics because the conditions under which knowledge originates depend in the last resort on the character of the reality which knowledge apprehends. Thus, the metaphysicians while discussing the implication of knowledge its conditions, factors and specially validity - passed over into the problem of reality itself. Thus, knowing, when rightly fulfilled merges into reality. But against the idealistic view, there developed an empirical distaste to metaphysics. Empiricism by its psychological method is trying to show that what is known is not beyond mind. Empiricism received its culmination at the hand of Hume, according to whom, the phenomena at the hand the external world is an illusion. He demolished the entire structure of metaphysics.

In recent time, logical development of Humian and Kantian phenomenalism has given rise to a new group of thinkers called logical positivists of whom Schilick, Husserl, Carnap and Ayer are post prominent. For them, all metaphysical statements if any, are literally meaningless and nonsensical, where the question of truth and falsity does not arise. A proposition to be factually meaningful must point to fact or facts that will varify it. As all significant propositions are ultimately reducible to what Carnap calls "Protoco statement" i. e. simple propositions which are immediately derived from and verifiable in experience and no proposition which is so reducible to empirically verifiable proposition cannot possess any significance since metaphysical propositions

ultimately rest upon unvarifiable trans-empirical entities, they do not possess any sense. These are not propositions at all. They are not varifiable by experience. They are neither empirical nor analytic and is therefore, utterly meaningless.

However, the position of the logical positivists does not appear satisfactory and the rejection of metaphysics is not convincing. A clear formulation of the criteria of varifiability has not been possible. There are difficulties in the varifiability principle itself. If we rigorously stick to varifiability principle then many of the universal laws of science become meaningless. To avoid these difficulties Ayer distinguished between a 'strong' and 'weak' sense of the term varifiable. A proposition is said to be varifiable in the strong sense, if and only if it is truth is conclusively established, but it is varifiable in the weak sense of the term of it is possible for experience to render it probable or improbable. Ayer accepts varifiability in the weak sense.

Now, once this is accepted the logical positivist can not reject metaphysics as non-sensical. Though metaphysical propositions can not be conclusively varified by sense-experience these can at least be rendered probable and improbable i.e., weakly varifiable. Hence, if logical empiricism denies all objective reality then it not only cuts beneath its own ground as a theory of knowledge but also beneath the ground of ethics and aesthetics.

The critics of metaphysics in holding that reality is unknown and unknowable have given us an alternative theory of reality. It is through appearances. Appearances are the appearance of reality. There is no logical opposition between them. Philosophy comprehends both phenomenology of the sciences and metaphysics within its scope. Metaphysics is the core of philosophy because philosophy tries to understand phenomena not as phenomena only but as phenomena of some reality.

Q. 30. Evaluate Logical Positivist's contribution to philosophy.

Ans. The logical positivists were originally scientists who have rebelled against the overbearing and lordly attitude of philosophers of that time who little understood science but pretend to know its basic and fundamental principles. These scientists in reaction so overvalued science that they tried to apply wholesale the methods, techniques and criterion of science to philosophy. Thus they postulated that only scientific analysis and physical demonstration were the criteria of meaning and truth. As a consequence of this application of science to philosophy, the philosophy appeared to be will of the wisp and beating about the bush. Thus metaphysics was rejected. However in their zeal the positivists failed to realize that they were cutting under their own ground. Truly philosophy is a science of sciences.

The attempt to extend the scope of principle of empirical verification to entire realm of knowledge is grossly exaggerated. There are many beliefs which are so fundamental that without them life is meaningless, but they are unverifiable. This is because all experience possible can obviously not be proved in experience. The idea of identity or equality is not abstracted from any experience though it is presupposed when we say two lines were equal or that these twins are identical.

The logical positivist's conception of knowledge is too mechanical to be true. They are mistaken in rejecting the value and importance of imagination and creativity.

When logical positivists maintain that values are unrelated to and underived from facts, they forget that without postulating the idea of value we can hardly know a fact. Therefore, value is prior to and presupposed by a fact which we know. Unless we value knowledge why should we take any interest in facts.

It is truly said that metaphysics cannot be condemned without postulating a counter theory of metaphysics. Indeed, the principle of verification by which metaphysics is condemned is not an empirical but a non-empirical state. Therefore, it cannot be validated in terms of its own theory of validation.

God, soul etc. are not empirical entities but are presuppositions of all experience. These are beliefs having pragmatic value. To condemn life itself. As a matter of fact logical positivists have denigrated philosophy.

Unit 3

L. WITTGENSTEIN : Picture theory of meaning, Language Game

Q. 1. What is Wittgenstein famous for?

Ans. Wittgenstein made a major contribution to conversations on language, logic and metaphysics, but also ethics, the way that we should live in the world. He published two important books : The Tractatus Logico Philosophicus and the philosophical investigations, for which he is best known.

Q. 2. What is the full name of Wittgenstein ?

Ans. Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein.

Q. 3. Who wrote the famous work "The Tractatus Logico Philosophicus"?

Ans. Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Q. 4. What is religious belief?

Ans. Religious belief means the belief in a religion's central articles of faith, for example, within Christianity that Jesus is the son of God. It also means beliefs which exist within a religion, but which are not shared by everybody within that religion.

Q. 5. What do you mean by language game?

Ans. A language-game is a system of manipulating spoken words to render them incomprehensible to the untrained ear. Language games are used primarily by groups attempting to conceal their conversations from others.

Q. 6. What is picture language called ?

Ans. Picture language is a visual language. It uses simple pictures to represent both concrete and abstract ideas.

Q. 7. What are the ultimate constituents of the world according to Wittgenstein?

Ans. According to Wittgenstein, the ultimate constituents of the world are :-

(i) Objects make up the substance of the world.

(ii) If the world had no substance then whether a proposition had sense would depend on another proposition was true.

(iii) We could not sketch any picture of the world.

Q. 8. Who wrote Philosophical investigation?

Ans. Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Q. 9. What did Wittgenstein say?

Ans. In the Tractatus Logico philosophicus, Wittgenstein argued for a representational theory of language. He described this as a 'picture theory' of language, reality is a vast collection of facts that we can picture in language, assuming that our language has an adequate logical form.

Q. 10. What is philosophy according to Wittgenstein ?

Ans. Wittgenstein view of what philosophy is, or should be, changed little over his life. In the Tractatus he says that "Philosophy is not one of the natural sciences," and "Philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts." Philosophy is not descriptive but elucidatory.

Q. 11. What is the relationship between philosophy and language?

Ans. The linguistic interpretation of the history of philosophy affirms that the forms of language, the mode of syntax, tend to be projected by thinkers as the substance of reality.

Linguistic determinants, of which the thinker is often unconscious, are thus held to shape his metaphysical outlook.

Q. 12. What is Wittgenstein picture theory of meaning?

Ans. The picture theory of language, also known as the picture theory of meaning, is a theory of linguistic reference and meaning articulated by Ludwig Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Picture theory of language states that statements are meaningful if they can be defined or pictured in the real world.

Q. 13. What did Wittgenstein say about language?

Ans. In his work philosophical investigations, Ludwig Wittgenstein regularly referred to the concept of language-games. Wittgenstein rejected the idea that language is somehow separate and corresponding to reality, and he argued that concepts do not need clarity for meaning.

Q. 14. What does language game mean, according to Wittgenstein ?

Ans. A language-game is a philosophical concept developed by Ludwig Wittgenstein, referring to simple examples of language use and the actions into which the language is woven. Wittgenstein argued that a word or even a sentence has meaning only as a result of the 'rule' of the 'game' being played.

Q. 15. Does Wittgenstein believe in God?

Ans. According to Wittgenstein, the unscientific and transcendental character of religion is its very essence. Another constant in his work, I believe, is Wittgenstein's conception of God. Although it may function as grammar in religious language games, for him theology does not make sense.

Q. 16. Why is language important in philosophy?

Ans. Some philosophers have even thought that it is impossible to have thoughts without having learned a language. The philosophy of language is important because language is important because it is so useful in our relationships and in our development and education.

Q. 17. What are the types of language games?

Ans. The types of language games are: vocabulary games, Number games, Structure games, Conversation games, writing games, spelling games etc.

Q. 18. Name two books of Wittgenstein.

Ans. (i) *The principles of Linguistic Philosophy*.

(ii) *The duty of Genius*.

Q. 19. "The world is the totality of facts, not of things" - Is it True?

Ans. No.

Q. 20. "Language is the picture of reality" - Who said this?

Ans. Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Q. 21. Does Philosophy the atomic analysis of language?

Ans. Yes.

Q. 22. What is fact ?

Ans. According to Wittgenstein facts are as equally real as object. The world is determined by the facts, and by these being all the facts.

Q. 23. What is Reality ?

Ans. Reality, according to Wittgenstein, is the existence and non- existence of states of affairs.

Q. 24. What is family resemblance?

Ans. Family resemblance is a philosophical idea made popular by Wittgenstien. He asserts that there is a kind of family resemblance which runs through the meanings of the world. When one looks at the members of a family it is easy to see numerous similarities shared by them. They are not identical but they have many common features.

Q. 25. Why did Wittgenstein refute the picture theory?

Ans. Yet, although being quite convenient, such a pictorial account of propositional signs is not utterly satisfactory; the later Wittgenstein was therefore to refute it, mostly because of its rigidity. In his philosophical investigation, Wittgenstein observes that picture held up captive.

Q. 26. Explain and examine Wittgenstein's Picture Theory of Meaning?

Ans. In his magnum opus "Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus" Wittgenstein maintain that the truth value and meaning of any compound proposition depends upon the truth value of its constituent propositions. He believes that all the genuine propositions have one and only one complete analysis which terminate in the empirically grounded elementary propositions. Wittgenstein writes in Tractatus, an elementary proposition is an arrangement of names or primitive signs. Wittgenstein states that the simple signs employed in propositions are called names, and the meaning of each simple name would be a simple object. Therefore, in order to understand an elementary proposition one needs only to understand the names that is to know what objects they stand for. Wittgenstein maintain that a proposition is a picture of reality. This picture theory is meant to hold good for all genuine propositions, and not merely for elementary propositions. Elementary and non-elementary propositions are equally pictures: the difference is that in the elementary proposition an arrangement of names which pictures a possible arrangement of simple things. It is a logical picture of an elementary state of affairs. According to him, such propositions must exist, otherwise language would be unrelated to reality. Since the elementary propositions are considered to be the arrangement of names or primitive signs, the vienna circle took this to mean that primitive sign must refer to objects of acquaintance and these objects are the objects which we directly experience. This seems to lead inevitably to the supposition that Wittgenstein's elementary propositions are observable statements or

what the logical positivists called protocol sentences. The sentences are supposed to designate "what is immediately given in experience."

But it seems difficult to ascribe this doctrine of the Vienna Circle to the Tractatus. The logical positivists have appropriated or rather misappropriated Wittgenstein's idea for their own special purposes. What Wittgenstein's theory of elementary propositions holds is that to understand any sentence one must know the references of names that compose it, that is all when you understand a sentence you know how reality is constituted if the sentence is true; regarded as whether we know how to verify what it says. The picture theory is not a verification theory of meaning, as has been put by Anscombe.

Hence, the elementary propositions cannot be interpreted as observable-sentences. Wittgenstein himself completely disfavoured any relations with the logical positivists. And it seems quite

obvious that one cannot interpret the Tractatus on logical positivist lines without doing violence to it.

Language pictures reality. But Wittgenstein has committed the mistake of identifying the two, fact is fact and language is language. How much ever close long may be do a fact it cannot usurp the place of facts. As Wittgenstein attempted of doing this, he finally fell a prey of solipsism. A serious analysis of early Wittgenstein revealed that in this type of philosophy the philosopher lives in his own charmed world. Thus solipsism is the end.

Rush has remarked the idea that there was elementary proposition is not an arbitrary assumption. Wittgenstein has no criteria for identifying elementary propositions and would give no general account of their subject matter. Wittgenstein's picture theory and his explanation of logical truth lead to an interesting doctrine of necessity and also to a denial of any knowledge of the future. Therefore, there is no necessity in the world.

"Outside of logic everything is accidental." The existence of one state of affairs cannot be inferred from the existence of another entirely different state of affairs. Thus Wittgenstein declares that we do not know whether the sun will rise tomorrow or not.

Q. 27. Explain critically language game theory of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Ans. Ludwig Wittgenstein in his book "philosophical investigations" propounded the theory of 'Language-games and Forms of life.' This theory put forward the 'use criterion' of meaning. According to this, "meaning of a word is its use in the language". The concept of "language-game" is basic to the whole theory of meaning. Wittgenstein talks of the multiplicity of language game. This is due to the multiple usage to which language is put, 'to imagine a language is to imagine a form of life'. Again the forms of life are - 'the given' and have to be accepted.

Another important point in language games is the 'model components' which is illustrated by Wittgenstein with the help of an example of a 'picture of boxer in a particular stance.' This picture of the boxer can be interpreted in different ways. Wittgenstein being aware of these difficulties involved in the interpretation makes a distinction between 'surface grammar' and

'depth grammar'. The importance of this distinction is apparent in the use of language, e.g. the sentence - 'you will go there' can be put in different ways - (i) By an officer to a subordinate during army manoeuvres, (ii) By an actor to another in course of a play, etc.

In case of the 'surface grammar' the construction of sentences is the same in all cases. But the sentence 'you will go there' has multiple use - used for the purpose of request an order to get at the necessary to penetrate below its 'surface grammar' to its 'depth grammar.'

Language games are dynamic in nature. This is due to the fact of the requirement in a form of life. To meet these requirements new words and new language games came into existence and some of them become absolute and are forgotten. Language is a vehicle of thought and means of communications. Religious language and beliefs are rejected by some people on the ground that

"the expressions of religious beliefs are self- contradictory." Wittgenstein says that it happens to use of pictures, and are unverifiable or verifiable in quite a different way, than the scientific statements or common sense statements.

Now there are objections raised by logical positivists against the untenability of religious language. Firstly, the statement using the words like 'God' etc. are not verifiable as they do not refer to any public object. These objections can be repudiated. First of all as seen above we must put these utterances to their original inhabitant and see that whether they are meaningful or not.

Secondly, if religious language is not an idiosyncratic language then only normal language of words can be used.

Unit 4

E. HUSSERL: Phenomenological standpoint, Intentionality of Consciousness, Transcendental ego

Q. 1. Who founded of phenomenology?

Ans. Edmund Husserl.

Q. 2. What is the opposite of phenomenology?

Ans. Ontology.

Q. 3. Is Husserl phenomenology a priori or posteriori science ?

Ans. Husserl seeks to arrive at pure knowledge through directed conscious experience - a priori science.

Q. 4. Why is phenomenology useful?

Ans. Phenomenology helps us to understand the meaning of people's lived experience. A phenomenological study explores what people experienced and focuses on their experience of a phenomena.

Q. 5. Is Phenomenology qualitative or quantitative ?

Ans. Phenomenology is a type of qualitative research in that its focus is in answering the 'what is it' question rather than questions of frequency or magnitude such as 'how much' and 'how many'.

Q. 6. What are the types of phenomenology?

Ans. We can use the historical perspective to clarify the earlier statement that there are several types of phenomenology. It is considered that there are two main approaches to phenomenology, descriptive and interpretive.

Q. 7. What are the key characteristics of phenomenology?

Ans. Phenomenology as a method has four characteristics, namely descriptive, reduction, essence and intentionality. To investigate as it happens, observations and ensure that the form of the description as the things themselves.

Q. 8. What is intentionality in phenomenology?

Ans. Intentionality in phenomenology, the characteristic of consciousness whereby it is conscious of something - i.e., its directedness toward an object.

Q. 9. Who is the father of hermeneutics?

Ans. Friedrich Schleiermacher.

Q. 10. What are the phenomenological features?

Ans. Phenomenology is the study of experience and how we experience. It studies structures of conscious experience from a subjective or first-person point of view, along with its 'intentionality.

Q. 11. What is Husserl's phenomenology?

Ans. Husserl's phenomenology stands in opposition to naturalism, for which material nature is simply a given and conscious life itself is part of nature, to be approached with natural-scientific methods oriented toward empirical facts and causal explanations.

Q. 12. What does Husserl mean by transcendental ego?

Ans. By transcendental ego, Edmund Husserl meant, pure consciousness.

Q. 13. What point of view is central to the phenomenological method?

Ans. First-person point of view.

Q. 14. What is subjectivity?

Ans. Subjectivity means the quality of being based on or influenced by personal feelings, taste or opinions.

Q. 15. Name one important book of Husserl.

Ans. Philosophie de Arithmetik.

Q. 16. Name one philosopher who influenced Husserl most.

Ans. Franz Brentano.

Q. 17. What is empathy in phenomenology?

Ans. Empathy is a mode of intentionality that makes it possible to access the subjective experience of another person, with the awareness of others experience as being different from one's own.

Q. 18. Who is Edmund Husserl? Ans. Edmund Husserl was an Austrian German Philosopher and mathematician who establish the school of phenomenology. In his early work he elaborated critiques of historicism and of psychologism in logic based on analysis of intentionality.

Q. 19. What does phenomenology focus on?

Ans. Phenomenology helps us to understand the meaning of people's lived experienced. A phenomenological study explores what people experienced and focuses on their experience of a phenomenon.

Q. 20. What is phenomenological method?

Ans. The phenomenological method aims to describe, understand and interpret the meanings of experiences of human life. It focuses on research questions such as what it is like to experience a particular situation. Phenomenology has roots in both philosophy and psychology.

Q. 21. What questions would a phenomenologist ask?

Ans. The phenomenologist may be interested in questions such as how an individual experiences a mental illness. Any prejudgements about that reality must be suspended, so that the researcher can "understand and describe the participants' experiences of their everyday world as they see it."

Q. 22. What is an example of phenomenology?

Ans. Phenomenology is the philosophical study of observed unusual people or events as they appear without any further study or explanation. An example of phenomenology is studying the green flash that sometimes happens just after sunset and just before sunrise.

Q. 23. Is phenomenology a science?

Ans. There is quite a lot of use of phenomenological principles and practices, theorized as part of qualitative research methods, used in psychology and the social sciences. In short, phenomenology is not itself a science, but is part of research practices in some other systematic fields of studies.

Q. 24. What is hermeneutic phenomenology?

Ans. Hermeneutic phenomenology is a research method used in qualitative research in the fields of education and other human sciences, for example nursing science. Hermeneutic is

oriented to historical and relative meanings. Phenomenology in Husserlian sense is oriented to universal and absolute essences.

Q. 25. What are the three basic aspects of hermeneutics?

Ans. In the history of biblical interpretation, four major types of hermeneutics have emerged: the literal, moral, allegorical and anagogical. Literal interpretation asserts that a biblical text is to be interpreted according to the "plain meaning" conveyed by its grammatical construction and historical context.

Q. 26. What is phenomenological reflection ?

Ans. Phenomenology online Reflective Methods. The purpose of phenomenological reflection is to try to grasp the meaning of something. Phenomenological reflection is both easy and difficult. It is easy because to perceive the meanings of human experiences is something everyone does constantly in everyday life.

Q. 27. What is the difference between phenomenology and existentialism?

Ans. Phenomenology is a study of how phenomena affects us from a first person view. It is also defined as a study on the structure of thought, affect our conscious view. Existentialism is the study of philosophy from the view point of being a living feeling human.

Q. 28. What does Husserl mean by intentionality?

Ans. Edmund Husserl, Intentionality and intentional content. For Husserl, intentionality includes a wide range of phenomena, from perceptions, judgements and memories to the experience of other conscious subjects as subjects (inter-subjective experience) and aesthetic experience, just to name a few.

Q. 29. What is essence in phenomenology?

Ans. In phenomenology one has to find essences. Essence is found through performing imaginative variation on the studied cases. One imaginatively varies the details found in the studied cases and tries to figure out what remained invariant in imaginatively varied examples.

Q. 30. What is phenomenology?

Ans. Phenomenology is the study of phenomena or appearance in a systematic way to explain the possibility of our valid knowledge in different fields such as science, mathematics and philosophy etc. It describes phenomena as they are given in immediate experience.

Q. 31. What is Phenomenological Reduction?

Ans. Phenomenological reduction is a method of logical constant. It is performed for countering the naturalistic attitude which naturalizes consciousness and all ideas and all norms. The suspension of this natural cognitive attitude is required to reach the true nature of the object of knowledge. Phenomenological reduction must be distinguished from naturalistic reduction that pushes the appeared phenomenon back to its natural metaphysical basis.

Q. 32. What is intentionality?

Ans. Intentionality is the power of minds to be about something to represent or to stand for things properties and states of affairs. It is primarily ascribed to mental states, like perceptions, beliefs or desires, which is why it has been regarded as the characteristic mark of the mental by many Philosophers.

Q. 33. What is phenomenological stand point, according to Husserl? Explain.

Ans. Phenomenology is the study of phenomena or appearance in a systematic way to explain the possibility of our valid knowledge in different fields such as science, mathematics and philosophy etc. It describes phenomena as they are given in immediate experience. Phenomenology does not offer any fixed doctrine or theory regarding reality or being - not even regarding consciousness as such. Phenomenology does not originally seek to present anything more or less than a radical programme and method in the matter of philosophical investigations. Originally proposed as a methodological discipline, phenomenology is more a mode of investigating and analysing the essential structures of experience than a theory of reality.

The phenomenological approach is concerned with the modes of objectivity, or the possible ways in which objects may be presented to the knowing mind at various stages of reflection. Thus the object as meant, rather than the object as real, constitutes the subject-matter of phenomenological investigation.

One is disposed to remind the so-called "coperican standpoint" in Kantian philosophy - that is the standpoint of knowing subject rather than that of the object known. The phenomenological philosopher would assume somewhat similar attitude and standpoint in the treatment of knowledge and experience. Accordingly there should be no prima facie commitment to any theory regarding the nature of reality scientific or metaphysical.

The standpoint of phenomenology depart from the naturalistic standpoint. What Husserl calls the 'naturalistic standpoint', or the natural mode of thinking indicates the unphilosophical stage where our judgement is committed to the factual reality of the things of experience. The proposed standpoint of phenomenology should proceed by neutralizing this natural standpoint, so that a genuine critique of knowledge and experience would be gained.

Husserl however does not mean an outright negation or denial of the existential reality of the objects posited in the natural attitude. Such reality is rather sought to be disconnected or "bracketed". From its typical standpoint, phenomenology does not ask about the supposed reality behind the phenomena, it only proceeds with the given.

The phenomenological standpoint can come into effect through what is generally called 'reflection' in phenomenological literature.

Q. 34. Discuss the concept of intentionality of consciousness in Husserl's phenomenology.

Ans. The main trend of traditional philosophical thinking runs counter to the thesis of intentionality. Idealists speak of a 'pure consciousness' of subjectivity as freedom from attachment to the subject. They suspect the intentionality thesis to be a kind of denial of such freedom in respect of consciousness. Subjective idealists recognise objective consciousness,

but locate the object within consciousness as an idea or a representation, as an akara of consciousness itself. This is tantamount to a denial of intentionality.

The thesis of intentionality is opposed by the realities. Within the framework of a realistic ontology, there can only be a real relatedness of consciousness to its objects, both the relata being equally real their qualitative differences notwithstanding. Intentional directness is replaced either by a natural compresence or by a causal relation or at best by some not to be further analysed relation which is none the less quite real.

Some idealists may argue, as Samkara seems to have done that consciousness and object are opposed to each other as light and darkness, the one is half-illuminating, other is opaque. The factual association of consciousness with object, howsoever intimate it may pretend to be is not logically intelligible and so should be regarded as false. For one thing it assumes, that there is an opposition consciousness and object, analogous to that between light and darkness. For another, it assumes that whatever is logically intelligible in a certain sense is false although it may nevertheless be a fact. As regards the first, there appears to be no satisfactory argument for showing that consciousness and its objects are opposed to each other.

One may use of Cartesian doubt to prove the idealistic regarding the essential non-intentionality of consciousness. The Cartesian logic is intentional. Its peculiarity certainly which appears to survive the otherwise universal doubt, derives precisely from its entire intentionality. The supposed representative consciousness is the product of theory, the intentional consciousness is a phenomenon not a theory. The realistic analogy provides no better framework for a satisfactory theory of consciousness. Russell seems to be thinking that the concept of intentionality is defined in terms of the concept of act and consequently of there are no acts. The intentionality thesis will have to be abandoned. He is wrong for in fact it is the concept of act that is defined in terms of that of intentionality and not vice versa.

Husserl's analysis of intentionality gives us an alternative version of the content theory which does not entail any form of theory of representative consciousness. On Husserl's theory, the content, if it is a real component of mutual life is the life and if it is not to be real component of mutual life it is the noema. The critics of intentionality thesis are bothered by several quite different things. Some like Quine are concerned about the notion of the mental in general, others like Russell worry not about the mental as such but about the notion of mental acts.

This discussion makes it clear that intentionality thesis as a thesis about the alleged criterion of the mental can not hold its own any more. Surely, not the mental alone is intentional, for bodily behaviour and human action is also so.

Q. 35. What does Husserl mean by transcendental ego? Explain elaborately.

Ans. The concept of the transcendental ego is the fundamental concept of Husserl's Phenomenology. It is the foundation on which, in Husserl's own view, the entire edifice of transcendental phenomenology and scientific philosophy rests and which is thus of crucial importance for the understanding of his doctrine. It is to be expected that a concept of so great an importance would be considerable complexity and rather difficult to understand and that Husserl would warn us, on many occasions, against various possible misunderstandings of it.

Since the transcendental ego is described by Husserl as the agent that performs innumerable activities of various kinds and thus serves as the ultimate foundation not only for transcendental philosophy and psychology but for all the natural and social sciences. One is tempted to infer from this that this ego is essentially different and perhaps even separate from the natural ego. So it comes as a bit of surprise when Husserl explicitly denies that the transcendental ego is separate or even different from the human ego in its natural attitudes. The human ego or mind is, according to Husserl, in the natural attitude when it naively believes that it can attain to a genuine knowledge of things and of the world which they make up as they are in themselves rather than merely of their phenomena which constitute the internal world of the transcendental ego.

The transcendental ego comes into existence when the human ego abandons its natural attitude or a naive belief in its ability to know things as they are in themselves and comes to the all important insight that it can know only their phenomena, and know them reliably and with certainty. This abandoning of the natural attitude is achieved through what Husserl calls; by a technical term, *epoche*, which is a universal suspension of our belief in the existence of the entire external world including even our bodies and our minds in their natural attitudes. We do not deny that the external world exists, but we do deny to ourselves belief in its existence. The process through which the transcendental ego arises is consistency called by Husserl phenomenological, transcendental reduction rather than formation or production in order to avoid the slightest suggestion that it is something newly created. The truth is that there is only one ego or mind, which, in Husserl's own words, alternates between the natural and transcendental attitudes. One could perhaps express the same idea more simply by speaking of two distinct and essentially different function of one and the same human ego or mind - the natural and the transcendental.

In Husserl's view, the transcendental *epoche* is not his own invention. It was already employed by Descartes as the point of departure for his philosophy, as it is evident from his explicit resolve to treat all of his past beliefs about this worldly and even other worldly realities to be not only doubtful but outright false at least for a certain time. In agreement with Gassendi's charge that Descartes, by deciding to treat all of his beliefs as false is only replacing his previous prejudice of indiscriminate belief with a prejudice of indiscriminate unbelief. Husserl's points out that, by his radical *epoche*, Descartes instead of enabling himself to explore the world of phenomena and develop a truly scientific philosophy, winds up by burning the bridges that connect the world of philosophy and science with the everyday world.

The correctness of the above assessment of Descartes project can be seen from the fact that the three indubitable truths that are alleged to constitute the axiomatic base of his philosophy are, in essence, nothing more than an expansion of the notorious ontological argument. For it is hardly debatable, at least after Kant, that from the idea of a Supremely Perfect Being nothing more than the idea of the existence of such a being can be informed and not a real existence itself, and that, likewise, from the idea of infinite holiness or truthfulness nothing more than the idea of the existence of the external world, but not the existence itself of that world, can be inferred.

More generally, one can say that Husserl's thought brought to its ultimate conclusion runs into the dilemma of any thought in the line of Berkeley, Kant and Fichte, that attempts to achieve final certainty based on the sole starting point of self-consciousness. Husserl's stated aim to achieve knowledge of "apodictic certainty" through his phenomenological method thus ran into difficulties that prompted him to admit towards the end of his life that "the dream was over".

Unit 5

J.P. SARTRE: Salient features of Existentialist, Theistic, Atheistic, Existentialism and Humanism

Q. 1. Define Existentialism.

Ans. Existentialism is an attitude and outlook which emphasizes human existence and the qualities which are distinctive in the individual persons rather than man in abstract or nature and the world in general.

Q. 2. Who coined the term "existentialism"?

Ans. The French Philosopher Gabriel Marcel coined the term 'existentialism' in the mid 1940.

Q. 3. Write the full name of Sartre.

Ans. The full name of Sartre is Jean-Paul-Sartre.

Q. 4. Does Sartre believe in God?

Ans. No, Sartre does not believe in God.

Q. 5. What all existentialists have in common, according to Sartre?

Ans. According to Sartre, all existentialists have in common is the view that existence precedes essence.

Q. 6. According to Sartre, existentialism is a doctrine intended strictly for ?

Ans. According to Sartre, existentialism is a doctrine intended strictly for specialists and philosophers.

Q. 7. What is humanism according to Sartre ?

Ans. Humanism according to Sartre is that theory which emphasises the dignity of human beings. It also stresses the centrality of human choice to the creation of all values.

Q. 8. Which sort of humanism does Sartre deplore?

Ans. Sartre deplores a certain type of humanism, one that sees all human beings as 'magnificent', as people who must be loved no matter what they may have done, simply because they are human.

Q. 9. What is the difference between existentialism and humanism?

Ans. The major difference between existentialism and humanism is that, humanism assumes people are basically good, whereas existentialism assumes people are neither good nor bad.

Q. 10. Does Existentialism believe in God?

Ans. Existentialism holds that there is no God or any other transcendent force.

Q. 11. What is nothingness?

Ans. Nothingness means the absence or cessation of life or existence.

Q. 12. What is existence ?

Ans. The meaning of existence is the state or fact of having being especially independently of human consciousness as contrasted with non-existence.

Q. 13. What is Satre's notion of "Being for itself" ?

Ans. The being for itself is defined by its knowledge of being not in itself.

Q. 14. "The concept of concrete 'man' is the concern of existentialism" - Is it true?

Ans. No.

Q. 15. Who is Soren Kierkegaard?

Ans. Soren Kierkegaard was Danish theologian, philosopher, poet, social critic and religious author who is widely considered to be the first existentialist philosopher.

Q. 16. Name one book of Jean Paul Sartre.

Ans. Nausea.

Q.17. What is the problem of being?

Ans. The problem of being historically speaking is by no means a simple one. The source of difficulty is that the term 'being' has different connotations which it has gathered through the course of history of philosophy.

Q. 18. What is the meaning of 'death' for Sartre ?

Ans. According to Sartre, I am not capable of expecting 'my death' death is not a conspicuous possibility that is intrinsic to the for itself, and it does not give meaning to the existence of the free for itself. Death is extrinsic to life.

Q. 19. Define Existentialism.

Ans. Existentialism as a philosophic and educational tradition may be "characterized as a reawakening of man's interest in himself." Existentialism is an attitude and outlook which emphasizes human existence and the qualities which are distinctive in the individual persons rather than man in abstract or nature and the world in general. Existentialism is a humanistic perspective on the individual situation, a philosophy of existence, of being, of authenticity and of universal freedom.

Q. 20. Mention two salient features of Existentialism.

Ans. The two salient features of Existentialism are :-

(i) Existentialism has emerged and developed as a reaction against idealism. Existentialist philosophers are highly critical of idealism and conceptualism.

(ii) The existentialist philosophers are also critical of the philosophy of naturalism. According to naturalists, life is subject to physico-bio-chemical laws, which in turn, are subject to the universal law of causation.

Q.21. What are the two basic forms of existentialism?

Ans. The two basic forms of existentialism are:

(i) Theistic Existentialism and

(ii) Atheistic Existentialism.

Q. 22. 'Existence precedes essence' - What does it mean?

Ans. The term 'existence precedes essence' according to Sartre means, that the existence of a person is prior to their essence. Put simply, this means that there is nothing to dictate that person's character, goals in life, and so on, that only the individual can define their essence. According to Sartre, "man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world - and defines himself afterwards."

Q. 23. Define theistic existentialism.

Ans. Theistic existentialism is that kind of existentialism which considers God to be the 'source of one's being', the ground of all being, or 'one's ultimate concern'. This is not a personal God, but is the meaning that arises out of the deepest concern of anguish of a person's life.

Q. 24. Define Atheistic existentialism.

Ans. Atheistic existentialism is a kind of existentialism which strongly diverged from the Christian existential works of Kierkegaard and developed within the context of an atheistic world view. Atheistic existentialism is the exclusion of any transcendental, metaphysical, or religious beliefs from philosophical existentialist thought.

Q. 25. Name two atheistic existentialists.

Ans. Two atheistic existentialists are:

(i) Jean-Paul Sartre and (ii) Albert Camus.

Q. 26. Name two famous works of Sartre.

Ans. Two famous works of Sartre are:

(a) Being and Nothingness and

(b) Existentialism is a Humanism.

Q. 27. Why existentialism is called humanism?

Ans. Man is focal point of attention of all Existentialism. Man is the only being who has, as it were, a hole in his heart. He experiences hollowness within him. Man is as well as is not. The root of thinking is nothingness. Man has a tendency to think over these. This is why Existentialism is called Humanism.

Q. 28. What does Sartre mean by bad faith?

Ans. In existential philosophy, bad faith is the psychological phenomenon whereby men and women act inauthentically, by yielding to the external pressures of society to adopt false values and disown their innate freedom as sentient human beings. "Bad faith" may be said to be a bad way of dealing with a problem. The habit of using escapist methods and inauthentic postures is termed by Sartre "Bad faith".

Q. 29. Name two theistic existentialists.

Ans. Two theistic existentialists are:

(a) Soren Kierkegaard and

(b) Karl Jasper.

Q. 30. Define Existentialism. What are the general characteristics of Existentialism.

Ans. Existentialism is a philosophy that emphasizes individual existence, freedom and choice. It is the view that humans define their own meaning in life, and try to make rational decisions despite existing in an irrational universe. It focuses on the question of human existence and the feeling that there is no purpose or explanation at the core of existence. Some of the well known existentialists are Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, Jaspers, Marcel and Nietzsche. They do not form a well knit school, nor do they hold any well defined set of doctrine.

Existentialists resemble one another more in their negative attitudes - their common revolt against certain religion, social, political and literary ideas and trends than in their positive teachings. Seen in this perspective all existentialists are found to have certain general characteristics.

Firstly, according to existentialism, existence is prior to essence. By 'essence' is meant the inherent individual nature common to all individuals (e.g. humanity) common to all individuals or particulars. Existence means the actual being of the individual (e.g. the particular human being).

Essence is therefore a universal, a possibility and existence is a particular, an individual actuality belonging to a specific space and time. Essence is conceivable by reason or intellect but existence can be grasped by one's own immediate experience. Universalists, rationalists, objectivists have advocated the priority of essence to existence. But existentialists advocated the priority of existence to essence.

Secondly, existentialists advocate the utmost freedom and responsibility for the individual in ethical, religious, political, cultural and social matters. It is a revolt against authority. It is a

revolt against religious authoritarianism which tends to destroy the inner spiritual development of the individual. It is also a revolt against the authorative leaders and totalitarian govt. Existentialism emerged as a reaction against naturalism and idealism. According to naturalism, actions of man are determined by motives and impulses which are ultimately functions of matter. Hence, man's sense of freedom is illusory. According to idealism, absolute is the ultimate ground of every- thing including human mind. Hence, human freedom is only as illusion. Thus both naturalism and idealism deny human freedom.

Thirdly, in Epistemology the existentialists are anti-rationalists, anti-intellectualists and anti-objectivists. All existentialists decry reason and intellect which try to pick out the abstract aspect of things and ignore and miss the inner individual experience. They mostly denounce the concept of objectivity as a criterion and advocate subjectivism, intuitionism, romanticism and even ever hyper emotionalism of different types.

Fourthly, the existentialists are opposed to all metaphysical speculations regarding ultimate things which cannot penetrate beneath the common husk of reality. Their honest motto is 'to be' (e.g. to exist) rather than to know.

Lastly, existentialists are often charged with preaching pessimism and negativism in so far as they lay undue stress on estrangement, dread, nothingness, etc. But according to Sartre, existentialism is optimism rather than pessimism. Existentialism enthuses man to action in so far as it admits freedom of choice. Man creates his own destiny. This naturally energise human mind. According to Sartre, existentialism is a form of humanism.

Q. 31. Existentialism is a Humanism - Explain after J. P. Sartre.

Ans. Existentialism is a Humanism is a 1946 work by the philosopher Jean Paul Sartre, based on a lecture by the same name he gave at Club Maintenant in Paris, on 29th October, 1945. In early translations, Existentialism and Humanism was the title used in the united kingdom; the work was originally published in the United States as Existentialism, and a later translations employs the original title.

Sartre asserts that the key defining concept of existentialism is that the existence of a person is prior to their essence. The term "existence precedes essence" subsequently became a maxim of the existentialist movement put simply, this means that there is nothing to dictate that person's character, goals in life, and so on; that only the individual can define their essence. According to Satre, "man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world - and defines himself afterwards."

Thus, Sartre rejects what he calls "deterministic excuses" and claims that people must take responsibility for their behaviour. Sartre defines anguish as the emotion that people feel once they realize that they are responsible not just for themselves, but for all humanity. Anguish leads people to realize that their actions guide humanity and allows them to make judgements about others based on their attitude towards freedom. Anguish is also associated with Sartre's notion of despair, which he defines as optimistic reliance on a set of possibilities that make action possible.

Sartre claims that "In fashioning myself, I fashion Man", saying that the individual's action will affect and shape mankind. The being-for-itself uses despair to embrace freedom and take meaningful action in full acceptance of whatever consequences may arise as a result. He also describes abandonment as the loneliness that atheists feel when they realize that there is no God to prescribe a way of life, no guidance for people on how to live; that we're abandoned in the sense of being alone in the universe and the arbiters of our own essence. Sartre closes his work by emphasizing that existentialism, as it is a philosophy of action and one's defining oneself, is optimistic and liberating.

Existentialism is a Humanism has been "a popular starting-point in discussions of existentialist thought," and the philosopher Baldwin's words, "seized the imagination of a generation." However, Sartre himself later rejected some of the views he expressed in the work, and regretted its publication. Other philosophers have critiqued the lecture on various grounds; Heidegger wrote in a letter to the philosopher and Germanist Beaufret that while Sartre's statement that "existence precedes essence" reverses the metaphysical statement that essence precedes existence, "the reversal of metaphysical statement remains a metaphysical statement." In Heidegger's view, Sartre "stays with metaphysics in oblivion of the truth of Being.

Greene found Sartre's discussion of "the problem of the relation between individuals" in Existentialism and Humanism to be weaker than the one he had previously offered in Being and Nothingness. Kaufmann commented that the lecture "has been widely mistaken for the definitive statement of existentialism, "but is rather" a brilliant lecture which bears the stamp of the moment." According to Kaufmann, Sartre makes factual errors, including misidentifying philosopher Karl Jaspers as a catholic, and presenting a definition of existentialism that is open to question.

Q. 32. Write a short essay on Atheistic Existentialism.

Ans. Atheistic existentialism is a kind of existentialism which strongly diverged from the Christian existential works of Kierkegaard and developed within the context of an atheistic world view) The philosophies of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche provided existentialism's theoretical foundation in the 19th Century, although their differing views on religion proved essential to the development of alternate types of existentialism. (Atheistic existentialism was formally recognized after the 1943 publication of Being and Nothingness by Sartre and Sartre later explicitly alluded to it in Existentialism is a Humanism in 1946.

Atheistic existentialism is the exclusion of any transcendental, metaphysical or religious beliefs from philosophical existentialist thought. Nevertheless, it shares elements with religious existentialism and with metaphysical existentialism. Atheistic existentialism confronts death anxiety without appealing to a hope of somehow being saved by a God and often without any appeal to alternate forms of supernatural salvation such as reincarnation. For some thinkers, existential malaise is mostly theoretical, while others are quite affected by existential anguish.

Sartre is a well-known French Philosopher who was concerned with human authenticity and individuality. His novel Nausea is in some ways a manifesto of atheistic existentialism. Sartre

once said, "existence precedes essence." What he meant was "that, first of all, man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and only afterwards, defines himself. If man, as the existentialist conceives him, is indefinable, it is because at first he is nothing. Only afterward will he be something, and he himself will have made what he will be. Thus, there is no human nature, since there is no God

to conceive it. Not only is man what he conceives himself to be, but he is also only what he wills himself to be after this thrust toward existence."

Sartre rejects the traditional conception of God as almighty, omnipotent, omniscient Being. He is, therefore, said to be an atheist. However, in spite of his disbelief in God, Sartre is not an irreligious person. As a matter of fact he is a deeply religious person. He only rejects the intellectual conception of God, which is tried to be established philosophic arguments. According to Sartre God is not an Absolute Being, nor an omnipotent, omniscient person. God is like a writer of a book. The writer is responsible for the creation of each and every word in the book. But having written it he has no control over it. It is an objective fact which may be used in any way by anybody, similarly though God creates the universe he does not exercise any control over it.

Sartre is very anxious not to compromise in any way the absolute freedom of man. He maintains that man is utterly free and fully responsible. There is no force which in anywise determines or limits him. Therefore, Sartre finds that in regard to God the situation is paradoxical. If a man feels responsible and free, there is no need, no place for God in his life. If on the otherhand, man is dependent upon God, how can he be free? As Sartre says, "yet the single fact that our essence has not been chosen by us shows that all this freedom in particulars actually is a cover over a slavery". But since Sartre is a most ardent and militant advocate of freedom without any fetters whatsoever, he rejects the idea of God wherein man has to depend upon God.

Sartre examines the various arguments about God and concludes that it is illogical to believe that God is necessary for the creation of the world. If God creates world, who creates Him? If he is responsible for his own creation there has to be a division of God as God the creator and the created God. All this goes to show that God is unnecessary. His conception is gratuitous.

Q. 33. What is Existentialism? What are the two forms of Existentialism? Explain.

Ans. The term "existentialism" seems to have been coined by the French Philosopher Gabriel Marcel in the Mid 1940s and adopted by J. P. Sartre. Some definitions of existentialism are:

Existentialism as a philosophic and educational tradition may be "characterized as a reawakening of man's interest in himself". "Existentialism is an attitude and outlook which emphasizes human existence and the qualities which are distinctive in the individual persons rather than man in abstract or nature and the world in general.

Existentialism is not easily definable. "The philosophy varies with its proponents, some of whom insist that they are not existentialists at all." But despite their profound doctrinal differences, they generally held that the focus of philosophical thought should be to deal with

the conditions of existence of the individual person and his or her emotions, actions, responsibilities and thoughts.

Existentialism emphasizes human existence and the qualities which are distinctive in man. It signifies restoration of man to himself and calls him to face the problems and to realize the possibilities of his own existence as a 'concrete individual'. Existentialism is a humanistic

perspective on the individual situation, a philosophy of existence, of being, of authenticity and of universal freedom. Common observations made about existentialism revealed that it can assume both a theistic form or a radical atheism.

Theistic existentialists consider God to be 'the source of one's being', 'the ground of all being', or 'one's ultimate concern.' This is not a personal God, but is the meaning that arises out of the deepest concern of anguish of a person's life. Theistic existentialism has marked theology since the first war." It emphasis on the negative qualities of man on human estrangement and the tragedy of human existence, have supported the resurgence of the dogma of original sin and the entire structure of eschatological theology." Religious existentialists include Soren Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel, Martin Buber and Paul Tillich.

The secular or atheistic existentialists are concerned with the same themes as the religious existentialists, but their presuppositions and belief systems preclude any supernatural or any idea of God. The atheistic existentialism has been popularized since the second world war. Atheistic existentialists include J. P. Sartre, Albert Camus, Martin Heidegger and Simone de Beauvoir.
