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EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Lectures with Guidelines

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Philosophy department

The edition provides a course in early modern philosophy, which includes empiricism and rationalism of XVII–XVIII centuries and classical German philosophy. The content of the lectures allows studying the basic philosophical categories and principles.

The lectures were prepared according to The State National programme ‘Education’, Doctrine of National Education as well as experience of compiling similar programmes of Ukrainian Humanities Centre and philosophy faculty of Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University and Vasyl Karazin Kharkiv National University.

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Topic 1. THE AGE OF REASON PHILOSOPHY (XVII–XVIII CENTURIES)

1. Empiricism and sensualism in the philosophical teachings of F. Bacon, T. Hobbes, J. Locke.

2. The essence of rationalism in XVII–XVIII century. R. Descartes', B. Spinoza's and H. Leibniz's teachings about substance.

The basic concepts and categories: picture of the world, scientific method, empiricism, sensualism, rationalism, idols, induction, deduction, innate idea, 'empty cabinet' ('tabula rasa'), substance, monad, dualism, pluralism, determinism.

Methodological Recommendations on Seminar Employments Conducting

Against the background of humanistic scholarship, the rise of the new science and the challenge of skepticism, modern philosophers were preoccupied with philosophical issues in several distinct areas:

Epistemology. Can human beings achieve any certain knowledge of the world? If so, what are the sources upon which genuine knowledge depends? In particular, how does sense perception operate in service of human knowledge?

Metaphysics. What kinds of things ultimately compose the universe? In particular, what are the distinctive features of human nature and how do they function in relation to each other and the world at large? Does god exist?

Ethics. By what standards should human conduct be evaluated? Which actions are morally right and what motivates us to perform them? Is moral life possible without the support of religious belief?

Metaphilosophy. Does philosophy have a distinctive place in human life generally? What are the proper aims and methods of philosophical inquiry?

Although not every philosopher addressed all of these issues and some philosophers had much more to say about some issues than

others, our survey of modern philosophy will trace the content of their responses to questions of these basic sorts.

British philosopher **Francis Bacon (1561–1626)**, for example, expressed the modern spirit well in a series of works designed to replace stultified. Bacon did not propose an actual philosophy, but rather a method of developing philosophy. In his opus *'Novum Organum'* (1620), he argued that although philosophy at the time used the deductive syllogism to interpret nature, the philosopher should instead proceed through inductive reasoning from fact to axiom to law (**induction** is a method of reasoning by which a general conclusion is drawn from a set of premises, based mainly on experimental evidence). Before beginning this induction, the inquirer is to free his or her mind from certain false notions or tendencies which distort the truth. These are called **'Idols'** (*idola*) and are of four kinds:

Idols of the Tribe, which arise from human nature generally, encourage us to over-estimate our own importance within the greater scheme of things by supposing that everything must truly be as it appears to us.

Idols of the Cave, which arise from our individual natures, lead each one of us to extrapolate inappropriately from his or her own case to a hasty generalization about humanity, life or nature generally.

Idols of the Marketplace, which arise from the use of language as a means of communication, interfere with an unbiased perception of natural phenomena by forcing us to express everything in traditional terms.

Idols of the Theatre, which arise from academic philosophy itself, produces an inclination to build and defend elaborate systems of thought that are founded on little evidence from ordinary experience.

Once we notice the effects that these 'Idols' have upon us, Bacon supposed, we are in a position to avoid them and our knowledge of nature will accordingly improve.

In a more positive spirit, Bacon proposed a patient method borrowed from the practice of the new scientists of the preceding

generation. First, we must use our senses (properly freed from the idols) to collect and organize many particular instances from experience. Resisting the urge to generalize whenever it is possible to do so, we adhere firmly to an experimental appreciation of the natural world. Only when it seems unavoidable will we then tentatively postulate modest rules about the coordination and regularity we observe among these cases, subject always to confirmation or refutation by future experiences.

So Bacon as the founder of empiricism guessed that all knowledge is based on experience derived from the senses and that the mind is not furnished with a set of concepts in advance of experience.

Other famous English political philosopher **Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)** was acquainted with both Bacon and Galileo. With the first he shared a strong concern for philosophical method, with the second an overwhelming interest in matter in motion.

For Hobbes, that conception is bound to be a mechanistic one: the movements of physical objects will turn out to be sufficient to explain everything in the universe. The chief purpose of scientific investigation, then, is to develop a geometrical account of the motion of bodies, which will reveal the genuine basis of their causal interactions and the regularity of the natural world. Thus, Hobbes defended a strictly materialist view of the world.

Human Nature

Human beings are physical objects, according to Hobbes, sophisticated machines all of whose functions and activities can be described and explained in purely mechanistic terms. Even thought itself, therefore, must be understood as an instance of the physical operation of the human body. Sensation, for example, involves a series of mechanical processes operating within the human nervous system, by means of which the sensible features of material things produce ideas in the brains of the human beings who perceive them (*‘Leviathan’; I, 1*).

Human action is similarly to be explained on Hobbes’s view. Specific desires and appetites arise in the human body and are experienced as discomforts or pains which must be overcome. Thus,

each of us is motivated to act in such ways as we believe likely to relieve our discomfort, to preserve and promote our own well-being. (*'Leviathan'; I, 6*). Everything we choose to do is strictly determined by this natural inclination to relieve the physical pressures that impinge upon our bodies. Human volition is nothing but the determination of the will by the strongest present desire.

Hobbes nevertheless supposed that human agents are free in the sense that their activities are not under constraint from anyone else. On this compatibilist view, we have no reason to complain about the strict determination of the will so long as we are not subject to interference from outside ourselves (*'Leviathan'; II, 21*).

As Hobbes acknowledged, this account of human nature emphasizes our animal nature, leaving each of us to live independently of everyone else, acting only in his or her own self-interest, without regard for others. This produces what he called the 'state of war', a way of life that is certain to prove 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short' (*'Leviathan'; I, 13*). The only escape is by entering into contracts with each other mutually beneficial agreements to surrender our individual interests in order to achieve the advantages of security that only a social existence can provide (*'Leviathan'; I, 14*).

Concept of Reason

Hobbes's concept of reason has more in common with the classical philosophical tradition stemming from Plato and Aristotle, where reason sets the ends of behaviour, than with the modern tradition stemming from Hume where the only function of reason is to discover the best means to ends set by the passions. For Hobbes, reason is very complex; it has a goal, lasting self-preservation, and it seeks the way to this goal. It also discovers the means to ends set by the passions, but it governs the passions or tries to, so that its own goal is not threatened. Since its goal is the same in all people, it is the source of rules applying to all people. All of this is surprisingly close to the generally accepted account of rationality. We generally agree that those who follow their passions when they threaten their life are acting irrationally. We also believe that everyone always ought to act rationally, though we know that few always do so. Perhaps it was just

the closeness of Hobbes's account of reason to the ordinary view of the matter that has led to its being so completely overlooked.

The failure to recognize that the avoidance of violent death is the primary goal of reason has distorted almost all accounts of Hobbes's moral and political philosophy, yet it is a point on which Hobbes is completely clear and consistent.

He explicitly says that reason 'teaches every man to fly a contra-natural dissolution as the greatest mischief that can arrive to nature'. He continually points out that it is a dictate of right reason to seek peace when possible because people cannot 'expect any lasting preservation continuing thus in the state of nature, that is, of war'. And he calls temperance and fortitude precepts of reason because they tend to one's preservation.

It has not generally been recognized that Hobbes regarded it as an end of reason to avoid violent death because he often talks of the avoidance of death in a way that makes it seem merely an object of a passion. But it is reason that dictates that one take all those measures necessary for one's preservation; peace if possible, if not, defense. Reason's dictates are categorical; it would be a travesty of Hobbes's view to regard the dictates of reason as hypothetical judgments addressed to those whose desire for their own preservation happens to be greater than any conflicting desire. He explicitly deplores the power of the irrational appetites and expressly declares that it is a dictate of reason that one not scorn others because 'most men would rather lose their lives (that I say not, their peace) than suffer slander'. He does not say if you would rather die than suffer slander, it is rational to do so.

Human Society

Hobbes is one of the few philosophers to realize that to talk of that part of human nature which involves the passions is to talk about human populations. He says, 'though the wicked were fewer than the righteous, yet because we cannot distinguish them, there is a necessity of suspecting, heeding, anticipating, subjugating, self-defending, ever incident to the most honest and fairest conditioned'. Though we may be aware of small communities in which mutual trust and respect make law enforcement unnecessary, this is never the

case when we are dealing with a large group of people. Hobbes's point is that if a large group of people are to live together, there must be a common power set up to enforce the rules of the society. That there is not now, nor has there ever been, any large group of people living together without such a common power is sufficient to establish his point.

Often overlooked is Hobbes's distinction between people considered as if they were simply animals, not modified in any way by education or discipline, and civilized people. Though obviously an abstraction, people as animals are fairly well exemplified by children. 'Unless you give children all they ask for, they are peevish and cry, aye and strike their parents sometimes; and all this they have from nature'. In the state of nature, people have no education or training, so there is 'continual fear, and danger of violent death, and the life of man, [is] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short'. But real people have been brought up in families; they are, at least to some degree, civilized persons, and how they will behave depends on how they are brought up. Hobbes does not say that society is a collection of misfits and that this is why we have all the trouble that we do – a position congenial to the psychological egoist. But he does acknowledge that 'many also (perhaps most men) either through defect of mind, or want of education, remain unfit during the whole course of their lives; yet have they, infants as well as those of riper years, a human nature; wherefore man is made fit for society not by nature, but by education'. Education and training may change people so that they act out of genuine moral motives. That is why it is one of the most important functions of the sovereign to provide for the proper training and education of the citizens. In the current debate between nature and nurture, on the question of behaviour Hobbes would come down strongly on the side of nurture.

People, insofar as they are rational, want to live out their natural lives in peace and security. To do this, they must come together into cities or states of sufficient size to deter attack by any group. But when people come together in such a large group there will always be some that cannot be trusted, and thus it is necessary to set up a government with the power to make and enforce laws. This

government, which gets both its right to govern and its power to do so from the consent of the governed, has as its primary duty the people's safety. As long as the government provides this safety the citizens are obliged to obey the laws of the state in all things. Thus, the rationality of seeking lasting preservation requires seeking peace; this in turn requires setting up a state with sufficient power to keep the peace. Anything that threatens the stability of the state is to be avoided.

Attitude to Religion

As a practical matter, Hobbes took God and religion very seriously, for he thought they provided some of the strongest motives for action. Half of 'Leviathan' is devoted to trying to show that his moral and political views are supported by Scripture, and to discredit those religious views that may lead to civil strife. But accepting the sincerity of Hobbes's religious views does not require holding that Hobbes regarded God as the foundation of morality. He explicitly denies that atheists and deists are subject to the commands of God, but he never denies that they are subject to the laws of nature or of the civil state. Once one recognizes that, for Hobbes, reason itself provides a guide to conduct to be followed by all people, there is absolutely no need to bring in God. For in his moral and political theory there is nothing that God can do that is not already done by reason.

Other English philosopher **John Locke (1632–1704)** tried to apply Baconian methods to the pursuit of his own philosophical aims. In order to discover how the human understanding achieves knowledge, we must trace that knowledge to its origins in our experience.

The Self

Locke's theory of mind is often cited as the origin of modern conceptions of identity and the self, figuring prominently in the work of later philosophers such as Hume, Rousseau and Kant. Locke was the first to define the self through a continuity of consciousness. He postulated that the mind was a blank slate – **tabula rasa** or **empty cabinet**. Contrary to pre-existing Cartesian philosophy, he maintained that we are born without innate ideas, and that knowledge

is instead determined only by experience derived from sense perception.

Political Theory

Locke's political theory was founded on social contract theory. Unlike Thomas Hobbes, Locke believed that human nature is characterized by reason and tolerance. Like Hobbes, Locke believed that human nature allowed men to be selfish. This is apparent with the introduction of currency. In a natural state all people were equal and independent, and everyone had a natural right to defend his 'Life, health, Liberty or Possessions', basis for the phrase in the American Declaration of Independence; 'Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' (*'Two Treatises of Government'*).

Like Hobbes, Locke assumed that the sole right to defend in the state of nature was not enough, so people established a civil society to resolve conflicts in a civil way with help from government in a state of society. Locke also advocated governmental separation of powers and believed that revolution is not only a right but an obligation in some circumstances. These ideas would come to have profound influence on the Constitution of the United States and its Declaration of Independence.

Perhaps the most important figure in the intellectual revolution of the seventeenth century in which the traditional systems of understanding based on Aristotle were challenged and, ultimately, overthrown was French philosopher and mathematician **René Descartes (1596–1650)**.

The Cartesian System

In a celebrated simile, Descartes described the whole of philosophy as like a tree: the roots are metaphysics, the trunk physics and the branches are the various particular sciences, including mechanics, medicine and morals. The analogy captures at least three important features of the Cartesian system. The first is its insistence on the essential unity of knowledge, which contrasts strongly with the Aristotelian conception of the sciences as a series of separate disciplines, each with its own methods and standards of precision. The sciences, as Descartes put it in an early notebook, are all 'linked together' in a sequence that is in principle as simple and

straightforward as the series of numbers. The second point conveyed by the tree simile is the utility of philosophy for ordinary living: the tree is valued for its fruits, and these are gathered, Descartes points out, 'not from the roots or the trunk but from the ends of the branches' – the practical sciences. Descartes frequently stresses that his principal motivation is not abstract theorizing for its own sake: in place of the 'speculative philosophy taught in the Schools', we can and should achieve knowledge that is 'useful in life' and that will one day make us 'masters and possessors of nature'. Third, the likening of metaphysics or 'first philosophy' to the roots of the tree nicely captures the Cartesian belief in what has come to be known as foundationalism – the view that knowledge must be constructed from the bottom up, and that nothing can be taken as established until we have gone back to first principles.

The Method of Deduction

The main similarly productive method of Descartes' philosophy is **deduction** – the inference of particular instances by reference to a general law or principle. His deduction characterized by four simple rules:

1. Accept as true only what is indubitable.
2. Divide every question into manageable parts.
3. Begin with the simplest issues and ascend to the more complex.
4. Review frequently enough to retain the whole argument at once.

The Method of Doubt and Foundations of Belief

In his *'Discourse on the Method'*, Descartes attempts to arrive at a fundamental set of principles that one can know as true without any doubt. To achieve this, he employs a method called **hyperbolical/metaphysical doubt**, also sometimes referred to as **methodological skepticism**: he rejects any ideas that can be doubted, and then reestablishes them in order to acquire a firm foundation for genuine knowledge. The basic strategy of Descartes's method of doubt is to defeat skepticism on its own ground. Begin by doubting the truth of everything – not only the evidence of the senses and the more extravagant cultural presuppositions, but even the fundamental

process of reasoning itself. If any particular truth about the world can survive this extreme skeptical challenge, then it must be truly indubitable and therefore a perfectly certain foundation for knowledge. The First Meditation, then, is an extended exercise in learning to doubt everything that I believe, considered at three distinct levels:

1. Perceptual Illusion

First, Descartes noted that the testimony of the senses with respect to any particular judgment about the external world may turn out to be mistaken. Things are not always just as they seem at first glance (or at first hearing, etc.) to be. But then, Descartes argues, it is prudent never wholly to trust in the truth of what we perceive. In ordinary life, of course, we adjust for mistaken perceptions by reference to correct perceptions. But since we cannot be sure at first which cases are veridical and which are not, it is possible (if not always feasible) to doubt any particular bit of apparent sensory knowledge.

2. The Dream Problem

Second, Descartes raised a more systematic method for doubting the legitimacy of all sensory perception. Since my most vivid dreams are internally indistinguishable from waking experience, he argued, it is possible that everything I now 'perceive' to be part of the physical world outside me is in fact nothing more than a fanciful fabrication of my own imagination. On this supposition, it is possible to doubt that any physical thing really exists, that there is an external world at all.

Severe as it is, this level of doubt is not utterly comprehensive, since the truths of mathematics and the content of simple natures remain unaffected. Even if there is no material world (and thus, even in my dreams) two plus three makes five and red looks red to me. In order to doubt the veracity of such fundamental beliefs, I must extend the method of doubting even more hyperbolically.

3. A Deceiving God

Finally, then, Descartes raises even more comprehensive doubts by inviting us to consider a radical hypothesis derived from

one of our most treasured traditional beliefs. What if (as religion teaches) there is an omnipotent God, but that deity devotes its full attention to deceiving me? The problem here is not merely that I might be forced by God to believe what something which is in fact false. Descartes means to raise the far more devastating possibility that whenever I believe anything, even if it has always been true up until now, a truly omnipotent deceiver could at that very moment choose to change the world so as to render my belief false. On this supposition, it seems possible to doubt the truth of absolutely anything I might come to believe.

Do I exist?

Descartes arrives at only a single principle: thought exists. Thought cannot be separated from me, therefore, I exist (‘*Discourse on the Method and Principles of Philosophy’*). Most famously, this is known as *cogito ergo sum* (English: ‘I think, therefore I am’). Therefore, Descartes concluded, if he doubted, then something or someone must be doing the doubting, therefore the very fact that he doubted proved his existence. ‘The simple meaning of the phrase is that if one is skeptical of existence, that is in and of itself proof that he does exist’.

Dualism

Descartes in his *‘Passions of the Soul’* and *‘The Description of the Human Body’* suggested that the body works like a machine, that it has the material properties of extension and motion, and that it follows the laws of physics. The mind (or soul), on the other hand, was described as a nonmaterial entity that lacks extension and motion, and does not follow the laws of physics. Descartes argued that only humans have minds, and that the mind interacts with the body at the pineal gland. This form of dualism or duality proposes that the mind controls the body, but that the body can also influence the otherwise rational mind, such as when people act out of passion. Most of the previous accounts of the relationship between mind and body had been unidirectional.

Descartes suggested that the pineal gland is ‘the seat of the soul’ for several reasons. First, the soul is unitary, and unlike many areas of the brain the pineal gland appeared to be unitary (though

subsequent microscopic inspection has revealed it is formed of two hemispheres). Second, Descartes observed that the pineal gland was located near the ventricles. He believed the cerebrospinal fluid of the ventricles acted through the nerves to control the body, and that the pineal gland influenced this process. Finally, although Descartes realized that both humans and animals have pineal glands, he believed that only humans have minds. This led him to the belief that animals cannot feel pain.

Descartes' Epistemology: Innate Ideas

Descartes argues that ideas may be either innate, adventitious or factitious. **Innate ideas** are ideas which are not dependent on our perceptions or on our own will. Innate ideas are inherently present in the reasoning of the mind. Adventitious ideas are ideas derived from our experience of the world. Factitious ideas are ideas which may be illusory or invented by the imagination.

Descartes also argues that all innate ideas are clear and distinct concepts of reality. Adventitious or factitious ideas, however, may be unclear and indistinct.

Descartes explains that an idea may be clear and distinct insofar as it sufficiently and accurately represents reality. An idea may be clear without being distinct. However, any idea which is distinct is also clear.

In the *'Fifth Meditation'*, Descartes argues that the idea of God, as an infinite, eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful Being, is an innate idea which has more objective reality than the ideas by which finite substances are represented in the mind.

In the *'Sixth Meditation'*, having asserted that innate ideas or self-evident truths can be known by reason, Descartes describes how we can know that material things exist in the physical world. God can produce everything in the world exactly as we perceive it. When we have clear and distinct ideas about the world, we can know true reality.

Descartes explains that if we agree that God exists and that all things depend on God, then we can no longer doubt that we can have true and certain knowledge of material things. Knowledge of the truth

of things may depend on knowledge of God. The more that we know God, the more that we may know the truth of things.

The Idea of God

In the *'Third Meditation'*, Descartes offers a proof for the existence of God, arguing that the idea of God as Infinite Being could not occur in the finite mind of a human being unless God really existed. The idea of God as Infinite Being is an innate idea in the human mind, an idea which cannot be created by any finite being. This perfect idea can only be created by God.

Descartes argues that in God perfection is actually existent, rather than potentially existent. The idea of God cannot be caused by something which is merely potentially existent, but only by an actually existing reality.

Descartes also argues that God is Absolute Being. Nothingness is Non-Being. Reality depends for its being on God. Truth is the degree to which an idea corresponds to reality. Error is the degree to which an idea does not correspond to reality.

Descartes explains that in order to determine the truth of an idea, we must determine to what degree the idea corresponds to reality. Human susceptibility to error is caused by the fact that we, as human beings, do not have an unlimited ability to recognize the truth, and by the fact that we are free to choose either truth or falsehood.

According to Descartes, God is perfect and is not the cause of any error. When we think of God, we find no cause of error or falsehood. The reason why we doubt the truth is that we are incomplete in our ability to recognize the truth. We depend for our existence on God, who is complete and independent.

In the *'Fifth Meditation'*, Descartes gives another proof of the existence of God. Descartes argues that existence cannot be separated from the essence of God. 'I cannot think of God as not actually existing... I cannot think of God other than as existing... I cannot say that God does not exist if I am thinking about God'. God has all perfections, including the idea of every perfection. Perfection of existence is found in God. Thus, 'I can be certain of the knowledge that God exists, because existence is a perfection that belongs to God'.

Two philosophers of genius carried on the tradition of continental rationalism: the Dutch **Benedict de Spinoza (1632–1677)** and his younger contemporary **Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716)**.

Spinoza borrowed much of the basic apparatus of Descartes: aim at rational understanding of principles, terminology of 'substance' and of 'clear and distinct ideas', and mathematical method that seeks to convert philosophical knowledge into a complete deductive system.

Metaphysics

Spinoza often uses the term 'God or Nature', and this identification of God with Nature is at the heart of his metaphysics. Because of this identification, his philosophy is often regarded as a version of pantheism and/or naturalism. But although philosophy begins with metaphysics for Spinoza, his metaphysics is ultimately in the service of his ethics. Because his naturalized God has no desires or purposes, human ethics cannot properly be derived from divine command. Rather, Spinozistic ethics seeks to demonstrate, from an adequate understanding of the divine nature and its expression in human nature, the way in which human beings can maximize their advantage. Central to the successful pursuit of this advantage is adequate knowledge, which leads to increasing control of the passions and to cooperative action.

Spinoza's ontology, like that of Descartes, consists of substances, their attributes (which Descartes called 'principal attributes') and their modes. In the '*Ethics'*, Spinoza defines **'substance'** as what is 'in itself, and is conceived through itself'; 'attribute' as that which 'the intellect perceives of a substance as constituting its essence'; and 'mode' as 'the affections of a substance or that which is in another through which also it is conceived'. While Descartes had recognized a strict sense in which only God is a substance, he also recognized a second sense in which there are two kinds of created substances, each with its own principal attribute: extended substances, whose only principal attribute is extension; and minds, whose only principal attribute is thought. Spinoza, in contrast, consistently maintains that there is only one substance. His

metaphysics is thus a form of **substantial monism**. This one substance is God, which Spinoza defines as 'a being absolutely infinite, i.e., a substance consisting of an infinity of attributes, of which each expresses an eternal and infinite essence'. Thus, whereas Descartes limited each created substance to one principal attribute, Spinoza claims that the one substance has infinite attributes, each expressing the divine nature without limitation in its own way. Of these infinite attributes, however, humans can comprehend only two: extension and thought. Within each attribute, the modes of God are of two kinds: infinite modes, which are pervasive features of each attribute, such as the laws of nature; and finite modes, which are local and limited modifications of substance. There is an infinite sequence of finite modes.

Descartes regarded a human being as a substantial union of two different substances, the thinking soul and the extended body, in causal interaction with each other. Spinoza, in contrast, regards a human being as a finite mode of God, existing simultaneously in God as a mode of thought and as a mode of extension. He holds that every mode of extension is literally identical with the mode of thought that is the 'idea of' that mode of extension. Since the human mind is the idea of the human body, it follows that the human mind and the human body are literally the same thing, conceived under two different attributes. Because they are actually identical, there is no causal interaction between the mind and the body; but there is a complete parallelism between what occurs in the mind and what occurs in the body. Since every mode of extension has a corresponding and identical mode of thought (however rudimentary that might be), Spinoza allows that every mode of extension is 'animated to some degree'; his view is thus a form of **panpsychism** (the doctrine or belief that everything material, however small, has an element of individual consciousness).

Determinism

Another central feature of Spinoza's metaphysics is his **necessitarianism**, expressed in his claim that 'things could have been produced ... in no other way, and in no other order' than that in which they have been produced. He derives this necessitarianism from his

doctrine that God exists necessarily (for which he offers several arguments, including a version of the ontological argument) and his doctrine that everything that can follow from the divine nature must necessarily do so. Thus, although he does not use the term, he accepts a very strong version of the principle of sufficient reason. At the outset of the '*Ethics'*, he defines a thing as free when its actions are determined by its own nature alone. Only God – whose actions are determined entirely by the necessity of his own nature, and for whom nothing is external – is completely free in this sense. Nevertheless, human beings can achieve a relative freedom to the extent that they live the kind of life described in the later parts of the '*Ethics'*. Hence, Spinoza is a compatibilist concerning the relation between freedom and determinism. 'Freedom of the will' in any sense that implies a lack of causal determination, however, is simply an illusion based on ignorance of the true causes of a being's actions. The recognition that all occurrences are causally determined, Spinoza holds, has a positive consolatory power that aids one in controlling the passions. So genuine freedom comes only with knowledge of what it is that necessitates our actions. Recognizing the invariable influence of desire over our passionate natures, we then strive for the peace of mind that comes through an impartial attachment to reason. Although such an attitude is not easy to maintain, Spinoza concluded that 'All noble things are as difficult as they are rare'.

Ethics and Epistemology

Spinoza held good and evil to be relative concepts, claiming that nothing is intrinsically good or bad except relative to a particular individual. Things that had classically been seen as good or evil, Spinoza argued, were simply good or bad for humans. In the universe anything that happens comes from the essential nature of objects or of God/Nature. According to Spinoza, reality is perfection. If circumstances are seen as unfortunate it is only because of our inadequate conception of reality and the world as it exists looks imperfect only because of our limited perception.

Leibniz's contributions to philosophy were known to his contemporaries through doctrine named pluralism – a theory that recognizes a few ultimate principles or substances (as opposed to the

dualism of Descartes's thought and extension and the monism of Spinoza's single substance, which is God). There were for him an infinite number of spiritual substances (which he called 'monads'), each different, each a percipient of the universe around it and each mirroring that universe from its own point of view. Monads are the ultimate elements of the universe. The monads are 'substantial forms of being' with the following properties: they are eternal, indecomposable, individual, subject to their own laws, un-interacting and each reflecting the entire universe in a pre-established harmony (a historically important example of panpsychism). Monads are centres of force; substance is force, while space, matter and motion are merely phenomenal.

The ontological essence of a monad is its irreducible simplicity. Unlike atoms, monads possess no material or spatial character. They also differ from atoms by their complete mutual independence, so that interactions among monads are only apparent. Instead, by virtue of the principle of pre-established harmony, each monad follows a preprogrammed set of 'instructions' peculiar to itself, so that a monad 'knows' what to do at each moment. (These 'instructions' may be seen as analogs of the scientific laws governing subatomic particles). By virtue of these intrinsic instructions, each monad is like a little mirror of the universe. Monads need not be 'small'; e.g., each human being constitutes a monad, in which case free will is problematic. God, too, is a monad, and the existence of God can be inferred from the harmony prevailing among all other monads; God wills the pre-established harmony.

Checklist

1. Identify the main features of the Age of Reason philosophy? What do they caused?

2. Name the most outstanding empiric philosophy representatives of the XVII–XVIII centuries and characterize their doctrines.

3. Describe the main ideas and representatives of rationalism of the Age of Reason philosophy.

4. Write a philosophical essay “The scientific methods of Rene Descartes and Francis Bacon”.

Topic 2. CLASSICAL GERMAN PHILOSOPHY

1. The theory of cognition and ethics of Immanuel Kant.
2. Georg Hegel’s philosophical system and method. The main principles of his dialectical logic.
3. Materialism and dialectics in the K. Marx and F. Engels philosophy. Materialistic understanding of history in sociology of Marxism. Theory of alienation.

The basic concepts and categories: ‘Copernican revolution’, activity concept, object, subject, a priori, a posteriori, analytic and synthetic judgments, phenomenon and noumenon, ‘thing-in-itself’, transcendental ideas, apperception, antinomy, categorical imperative (the moral order), dialectics, dialectical logic, absolute idea, triad, thesis, antithesis, synthesis, progress, contradictions, negation of the negation, quantity, quality, measure, atheism, alienation, social and economic structure, social class, capital, proletariat, communism, socialism, capitalism, productive tools and resources, productive relations, basis and superstructure, private property, revolution.

Methodological Recommendations on Seminar Employments Conducting

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) was the last influential 18th-century German philosopher of modern Europe in the classic sequence of the theory of knowledge. He created a new perspective in philosophy which had widespread influences on philosophy continuing through to the 21st century. He published important works

on epistemology, as well as works relevant to religion, law and history. One of his most prominent works is the *'Critique of Pure Reason'*, an investigation into the limitations and structure of reason itself. It encompasses an attack on traditional metaphysics and epistemology, and highlights Kant's own contribution to these areas. The other main works of his maturity are the *'Critique of Practical Reason'*, which concentrates on ethics and the *'Critique of Judgment'*, which investigates aesthetics and teleology.

Kant's Copernican Revolution: Mind Making Nature

We can understand Kant's argument by considering his predecessors. According to the rationalist and empiricist traditions, the mind is passive either because it finds itself possessing innate, well-formed ideas ready for analysis, or because it receives ideas of objects into a kind of empty theatre or blank slate. Kant's crucial insight here is to argue that experience of a world as we have it is only possible if the mind provides a systematic structuring of its representations. He supposed that the only adequate response would be a **'Copernican revolution'** in philosophy, a recognition that the appearance of the external world depends in some measure upon the position and movement of its observers. So the conditions and qualities he ascribed to the subject of knowledge placed man at the centre of all conceptual and empirical experience, and overcame the rationalism-empiricism impasse, characteristic of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Varieties of Judgment

In the *'Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysic'* (1783) Kant presented the central themes of the first *'Critique'* in a somewhat different manner, starting from instances in which we do appear to have achieved knowledge and asking under what conditions each case becomes possible. So he began by carefully drawing a pair of crucial distinctions among the judgments we do actually make.

The first distinction separates a priori from a posteriori judgments by reference to the origin of our knowledge of them. **A priori judgments** are based upon reason alone, independently of all sensory experience, and therefore apply with strict universality. **A posteriori judgments**, on the other hand, must be grounded upon

experience and are consequently limited and uncertain in their application to specific cases. Thus, this distinction also marks the difference traditionally noted in logic between necessary and contingent truths.

But Kant also made a less familiar distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments, according to the information conveyed as their content. **Analytic judgments** are those whose predicates are wholly contained in their subjects; since they add nothing to our concept of the subject, such judgments are purely explicative and can be deduced from the principle of non-contradiction. **Synthetic judgments**, on the other hand, are those whose predicates are wholly distinct from their subjects, to which they must be shown to relate because of some real connection external to the concepts themselves. Hence, synthetic judgments are genuinely informative but require justification by reference to some outside principle.

Kant supposed that previous philosophers had failed to differentiate properly between these two distinctions. Both Leibniz and Hume had made just one distinction, between matters of fact based on sensory experience and the uninformative truths of pure reason. In fact, Kant held, the two distinctions are not entirely coextensive; we need at least to consider all four of their logically possible combinations:

Analytic a posteriori judgments cannot arise, since there is never any need to appeal to experience in support of a purely explicative assertion.

Synthetic a posteriori judgments are the relatively uncontroversial matters of fact we come to know by means of our sensory experience (though Wolff had tried to derive even these from the principle of contradiction).

Analytic a priori judgments, everyone agrees, include all merely logical truths and straightforward matters of definition; they are necessarily true.

Synthetic a priori judgments are the crucial case, since only they could provide new information that is necessarily true. But neither Leibniz nor Hume considered the possibility of any such case.

Unlike his predecessors, Kant maintained that synthetic a priori judgments not only are possible but actually provide the basis for significant portions of human knowledge. In fact, he supposed (pace Hume) that arithmetic and geometry comprise such judgments and that natural science depends on them for its power to explain and predict events. What is more, metaphysics – if it turns out to be possible at all – must rest upon synthetic a priori judgments, since anything else would be either uninformative or unjustifiable. But how are synthetic a priori judgments possible at all? This is the central question Kant sought to answer.

Phenomena and Noumena

Having seen Kant's transcendental deduction of the categories as pure concepts of the understanding applicable a priori to every possible experience, we might naturally wish to ask the further question whether these regulative principles are really true. Are there substances? Does every event have a cause? Do all things interact? Given that we must suppose them in order to have any experience, do they obtain in the world itself? To these further questions, Kant firmly refused to offer any answer.

According to Kant, it is vital always to distinguish between the distinct realms of phenomena and noumena. **Phenomena** are the appearances, which constitute the our experience; **noumena** are the (presumed) things themselves, which constitute reality. All of our synthetic a priori judgments apply only to the phenomenal realm, not the noumenal. (It is only at this level, with respect to what we can experience, that we are justified in imposing the structure of our concepts onto the objects of our knowledge). Since the **thing in itself** would by definition (as an actual object, which properties independent of any observer) be entirely independent of our experience of it, we are utterly ignorant of the noumenal realm.

Thus, on Kant's view, the most fundamental laws of nature, like the truths of mathematics are knowable precisely because they make no effort to describe the world as it really is but rather prescribe the structure of the world as we experience it. By applying the pure forms of sensible intuition and the pure concepts of the understanding, we achieve a systematic view of the phenomenal

realm but learn nothing of the noumenal realm. Math and science are certainly true of the phenomena; only metaphysics claims to instruct us about the noumena.

Transcendental Ideas

Kant's exposition of the transcendental ideas begins once again from the logical distinction among categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive syllogisms. From this distinction, as we have seen, the understanding derives the concepts of substance, cause and community, which provide the basis for rules that obtain as natural laws within our experience. Now, from the same distinction, the reason must carry things further in order derive the transcendental ideas of the complete subject, the complete series of conditions, and the complete complex of what is possible. Thus, the 'completion' of metaphysical reasoning requires transcendental ideas of three sorts, but Kant argued that each leads to its characteristic irresolvable difficulty.

The **Psychological Idea** is the concept of the soul as a permanent substance which lives forever. It is entirely natural to reason (as in Descartes's cogito) from knowledge that 'I think' to my real existence as one and the same thinking thing through all time, but Kant held that our efforts to reach such conclusions are 'Paralogisms', with only illusory validity. It is true that thought presupposes the unity of apperception and that every change presupposes an underlying substance, but these rules apply only to the phenomena we experience. Since substantial unity and immortality are supposed to be noumenal features of the soul as a thing in itself, Kant held, legitimate a priori judgments can never prove them and the effort to transcend in this case fails.

The **Cosmological Idea** is the concept of a complete determination of the nature of the world as it must be constituted in itself. In this case, Kant held, the difficulty is not that we can conclude too little but rather that we can prove too much. From the structure of our experience of the world, it is easy to deduce contradictory particular claims about reality: finitude vs. infinity; simplicity vs. complexity; freedom vs. determinism; necessity vs. contingency. These **'antinomies'** of Pure Reason can be avoided

only when we recognize that one or both of the contradictory proofs in each antinomy holds only for the phenomenal realm (antinomy is a contradiction between two beliefs or conclusions that are in themselves reasonable). Once again, it is the effort to achieve transcendental knowledge of noumena that necessarily fails.

The **Theological Idea** is the concept of an absolutely perfect and most real being (or god). Again it is natural to move from our recognition of dependence within the phenomenal realm to the notion of a perfectly independent noumenal being, the 'Transcendental Ideal'. But traditional attempts to prove that god really exists, founded as they are on what we experience, cannot establish the reality of a being necessarily beyond all experience.

The general point of the transcendental dialectic should by now be clear: metaphysical speculation about the ultimate nature of reality invariably fails. The synthetic a priori judgments which properly serve as regulative principles governing our experience can never be shown to have any force as constitutive of the real nature of the world. Pure reason inevitably reaches for what it cannot grasp.

The Limits of Reason

Now that we've seen Kant's answers to all three parts of the *'Prolegomena's' 'Main Transcendental Question'* and have traced their sources in the *'Critique of Pure Reason'*, we are in a position to appreciate his careful delineation of what is possible in metaphysical thought and what is not.

What most clearly is not possible is any legitimate synthetic a priori judgment about things in themselves. The only thing that justifies the application of regulative principles in mathematics and natural science is their limitation to phenomena. Both sensible intuition and understanding deal with the conditions under which experience is possible. But the whole point of speculative metaphysics is to transcend experience entirely in order to achieve knowledge of the noumenal realm. Here, only the faculty of reason is relevant, but its most crucial speculative conclusions, its deepest convictions about the self, the world and god are all drawn illegitimately.

What is possible – indeed, according to Kant what we are bound by our very nature as rational beings to do – is to think of the noumenal realm as if the speculative principles were true (whether or not they are). By the nature of reason itself, we are required to suppose our own existence as substantial beings, the possibility of our free action in a world of causal regularity and the existence of god. The absence of any formal justification for these notions makes it impossible for us to claim that we know them to be true, but it can in no way diminish the depth for our belief that they are.

According to Kant, then, the rational human faculties lead us to the very boundaries of what can be known, by clarifying the conditions under which experience of the world as we know it is possible. But beyond those boundaries our faculties are useless. The shape of the boundary itself, as evidenced in the Paralogisms and antinomies naturally impels us to postulate that the unknown does indeed have certain features, but these further speculations are inherently unjustifiable.

The only legitimate, 'scientific' metaphysics that the future may hold, Kant therefore held, would be a thoroughly critical, non-speculative examination of the bounds of pure reason, a careful description of what we can know accompanied by a clear recognition that our transcendental concepts (however useful they may seem) are entirely unreliable as guides to the nature of reality. It is this task, of course, that Kant himself had pursued in the First *'Critique'*.

Ethics:

1. Reason and Freedom

For Kant, as we have seen, the drive for total, systematic knowledge in reason can only be fulfilled with assumptions that empirical observation cannot support. The metaphysical facts about the ultimate nature of things in themselves must remain a mystery to us because of the spatiotemporal constraints on sensibility. When we think about the nature of things in themselves or the ultimate ground of the empirical world, Kant has argued that we are still constrained to think through the categories, we cannot think otherwise, but we can have no knowledge because sensation provides our concepts with no content. So, reason is put at odds with itself because it is

constrained by the limits of its transcendental structure, but it seeks to have complete knowledge that would take it beyond those limits.

Freedom plays a central role in Kant's ethics because the possibility of moral judgments presupposes it. Freedom is an idea of reason that serves an indispensable practical function. Without the assumption of freedom, reason cannot act. If we think of ourselves as completely causally determined, and not as uncaused causes ourselves, then any attempt to conceive of a rule that prescribes the means by which some end can be achieved is pointless. I cannot both think of myself as entirely subject to causal law and as being able to act according to the conception of a principle that gives guidance to my will. We cannot help but think of our actions as the result of an uncaused cause if we are to act at all and employ reason to accomplish ends and understand the world.

So reason has an unavoidable interest in thinking of itself as free. That is, theoretical reason cannot demonstrate freedom, but practical reason must assume for the purpose of action. Having the ability to make judgments and apply reason puts us outside that system of causally necessitated events. 'Reason creates for itself the idea of a spontaneity that can, on its own, start to act – without, i.e., needing to be preceded by another cause by means of which it is determined to action in turn, according to the law of causal connection', Kant says. In its intellectual domain, reason must think of itself as free.

It is dissatisfying that he cannot demonstrate freedom, nevertheless, it comes as no surprise that we must think of ourselves as free. In a sense, Kant is agreeing with the common sense view that how I choose to act makes a difference in how I actually act. Even if it were possible to give a predictive empirical account of why I act as I do, say on the grounds of a functionalist psychological theory, those considerations would mean nothing to me in my deliberations. When I make a decision about what to do, about which car to buy, for instance, the mechanism at work in my nervous system makes no difference to me. I still have to peruse Consumer Reports, consider my options, reflect on my needs, and decide on the basis of the application of general principles. My first person perspective is

unavoidable, hence the deliberative, intellectual process of choice is unavoidable.

2. The Good Will

The will, Kant says, is the faculty of acting according to a conception of law. When we act, whether or not we achieve what we intend with our actions is often beyond our control, so the morality of our actions does not depend upon their outcome. What we can control, however, is the will behind the action. That is, we can will to act according to one law rather than another. The morality of an action, therefore, must be assessed in terms of the motivation behind it. If two people, Smith and Jones, perform the same act, from the same conception of the law, but events beyond Smith's control prevent her from achieving her goal, Smith is not less praiseworthy for not succeeding. We must consider them on equal moral ground in terms of the will behind their actions.

The only thing that is good without qualification is the good will, Kant says. All other candidates for an intrinsic good have problems, Kant argues. Courage, health and wealth can all be used for ill purposes, Kant argues, and therefore cannot be intrinsically good. Happiness is not intrinsically good because even being worthy of happiness, Kant says, requires that one possess a good will. The good will is the only unconditional good despite all encroachments. Misfortune may render someone incapable of achieving her goals, for instance, but the goodness of her will remains.

Goodness cannot arise from acting on impulse or natural inclination, even if impulse coincides with duty. It can only arise from conceiving of one's actions in a certain way. A shopkeeper, Kant says, might do what is in accord with duty and not overcharge a child. Kant argues, 'it is not sufficient to do that which should be morally good that it conform to the law; it must be done for the sake of the law'. There is a clear moral difference between the shopkeeper that does it for his own advantage to keep from offending other customers and the shopkeeper who does it from duty and the principle of honesty. Likewise, in another of Kant's carefully studied examples, the kind act of the person who overcomes a natural lack of sympathy for other people out of respect for duty has moral worth,

whereas the same kind act of the person who naturally takes pleasure in spreading joy does not. A person's moral worth cannot be dependent upon what nature endowed them with accidentally. The selfishly motivated shopkeeper and the naturally kind person both act on equally subjective and accidental grounds. What matters to morality is that the actor think about their actions in the right manner.

We might be tempted to think that the motivation that makes an action good is having a positive goal – to make people happy or to provide some benefit. But that is not the right sort of motive, Kant says. No outcome, should we achieve it, can be unconditionally good. Fortune can be misused, what we thought would induce benefit might actually bring harm and happiness might be undeserved. Hoping to achieve some particular end, no matter how beneficial it may seem, is not purely and unconditionally good. It is not the effect or even the intended effect that bestows moral character on an action. All intended effects 'could be brought about through other causes and would not require the will of a rational being, while the highest and unconditional good can be found only in such a will'. It is the possession of a rationally guided will that adds a moral dimension to one's acts. So it is the recognition and appreciation of duty itself that must drive our actions.

3. Duty

What is the duty that is to motivate our actions and to give them moral value? Kant distinguishes two kinds of law produced by reason. Given some end we wish to achieve, reason can provide a **hypothetical imperative** or rule of action for achieving that end. A hypothetical imperative says that *if* you wish to buy a new car, *then* you must determine what sort of cars are available for purchase. Conceiving of a means to achieve some desired end is by far the most common employment of reason. But Kant has shown that the acceptable conception of the moral law cannot be merely hypothetical. Our actions cannot be moral on the ground of some conditional purpose or goal. Morality requires an unconditional statement of one's duty.

And in fact, reason produces an absolute statement of moral action. The moral imperative is unconditional; that is, its imperative

force is not tempered by the conditional '*if* I want to achieve some end, *then* do X'. It simply states, do X. Kant believes that reason dictates a **categorical imperative** for moral action. He gives at least three formulations of the Categorical Imperative.

1. 'Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law'.

2. 'Act as though the maxim of your action were by your will to become a universal law of nature'.

3. Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only'.

What are Kant's arguments for the categorical imperative? First, consider an example. Consider the person who needs to borrow money and is considering making a false promise to pay it back. The maxim that could be invoked is, 'when I need of money, borrow it, promising to repay it, even though I do not intend to'. But when we apply the universality test to this maxim it becomes clear that if everyone were to act in this fashion, the institution of promising itself would be undermined. The borrower makes a promise, willing that there be no such thing as promises. Thus such an action fails the universality test.

The argument for the first formulation of the categorical imperative can be thought of this way. We have seen that in order to be good, we must remove inclination and the consideration of any particular goal from our motivation to act. The act cannot be good if it arises from subjective impulse. Nor can it be good because it seeks after some particular goal which might not attain the good we seek or could come about through happenstance. We must abstract away from all hoped for effects. If we remove all subjectivity and particularity from motivation we are only left with will to universality. The question 'what rule determines what I ought to do in this situation?' becomes 'what rule ought to universally guide action?' What we must do in any situation of moral choice is act according to a maxim that we would will everyone to act according to.

The second version of the Categorical Imperative invokes Kant's conception of nature and draws on the first *'Critique'*. In the

earlier discussion of nature, we saw that the mind necessarily structures nature. And reason, in its seeking of ever higher grounds of explanation, strives to achieve unified knowledge of nature. A guide for us in moral matters is to think of what would not be possible to will universally. Maxims that fail the test of the categorical imperative generate a contradiction. Laws of nature cannot be contradictory. So if a maxim cannot be willed to be a law of nature, it is not moral.

The third version of the categorical imperative ties Kant's whole moral theory together. Insofar as they possess a rational will, people are set off in the natural order of things. They are not merely subject to the forces that act upon them; they are not merely means to ends. They are ends in themselves. All means to an end have a merely conditional worth because they are valuable only for achieving something else. The possessor of a rational will, however, is the only thing with unconditional worth. The possession of rationality puts all beings on the same footing, 'every other rational being thinks of his existence by means of the same rational ground which holds also for myself; thus it is at the same time an objective principle from which, as a supreme practical ground, it must be possible to derive all laws of the will'.

The greatest of all German idealists was **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831)**, who methodically constructed a comprehensive system of thought about the world.

Absolute Idealism

Focused like Kant on the goal of showing how some fundamental unity underlies the confusing multiplicity of experiential contents, Hegel took a much more systematic approach by making absolute consciousness the key source of ultimate connections among all other things. Above all else, Hegel held that reality must be rational, so that its ultimate structure is revealed in the structure of our thought. Everything that is thinkable, especially apparent contradictions, must be resolvable under some common concept of the reason. In what follows, we will examine in detail the logical apparatus Hegel employed in pursuit of knowledge.

Even more than Aristotle and the Stoics, Hegel believed that the study of logic is an investigation into the fundamental structure of reality itself. According to Hegel, all logic (and, hence, all of reality) is dialectical in character. As Kant had noted in the antinomies, serious thought about one general description of the world commonly leads us into a contemplation of its opposite. But Hegel did not suppose this to be the end of the matter; he made the further supposition that the two concepts so held in opposition can always be united by a shift to some higher level of thought. Thus, the human mind invariably moves from thesis to antithesis to synthesis, employing each synthesis as the thesis for a new opposition to be transcended by yet a higher level, continuing in a perpetual waltz of intellectual achievement.

Being, for example, is a basic concept that serves as a clear starting-point for any serious thinker, but serious contemplation of its nature reveals it to be so utterly devoid of specific content that the mind is naturally led to the thought of Nothing as its opposite; but these two are not really contradictory, since both may be unified under the more sophisticated and comprehensive notion of Becoming. If, on the other hand, our thesis is the concept of Being as a naive immediate presentation of experience, then its natural antithesis is the idea of Essence as knowledge mediated by classification; and the synthesis that unites these concepts is that of the Notion as a self-mediating interpretation of thought and reality combined.

On the grandest scale of conceivability, all of thought (including the dialectical logic itself) is comprised by the thesis Idea, whose natural antithesis is Nature, the otherness of the known considered independently of its relation to the knower; and the grand synthesis of the two is Spirit, the self-knowing, self-actualizing totality of all that is – namely, the Absolute itself. This embodies Hegel's fundamental convictions that reality is wholly rational and that whatever is rational must be real. Human thought is merely one portion of the Becoming of Absolute Spirit, which is (through us) thinking and creating itself as it goes. Even this development, as Hegel described it in the *'Phenomenology of Spirit'*, is best

understood as the triadic transition from subjective to objective to absolute Spirit.

Subjective Spirit

Considered as subjective, Spirit may be observed, through truths about human nature described by the discipline of psychology, in the structure of thought exhibited by each individual human being. In every concrete instantiation, consciousness strives to reach perfect knowledge and the path of its struggle can, of course, be described as the movement from thesis through antithesis to synthesis:

The first level of consciousness is that of sensory awareness of objects. Despite the fact that sensory images invariably appear to us as concrete particulars, wholly unrelated to each other, we naturally universalize the apparent regularities of their appearance, imposing upon them the forms of space and time and the generalized laws of nature.

Recognition of the role we ourselves play in the origination of these Kantian regulative principles, Hegel supposed, leads us directly to the antithesis of sensory experience, the self-conscious awareness of the individual thinker, who acknowledges self as individual ego. Although this ultimately implies the existence of other selves as well, its immediate consequence is a tendency toward skepticism about the world of objects.

But Hegel held that these levels are transcended by their synthesis in universal consciousness, an abstract awareness of one's own place within the greater scheme of absolute spirit. The objects of my experience and my awareness of myself are unified by the recognition that each is wholly contained in the fundamental reality of a common whole. Here the faculty of reason is crucial, since it most clearly draws upon what is common to us all.

Objective Spirit

Considered objectively, Spirit involves the interaction among many selves that are the proper subject of ethics and social or political theory. Once again, of course, Hegel maintained that a correct understanding of these fields is to be derived not by generalizing from what we observe, but rather by tracing the dialectic through new triads.

Ethics, on Hegel's view, begins with the concept of freedom understood as the right of each individual human being to act independently in pursuit of its own self-interest. The antithesis to this is the emergence of moral rules, which require the imposition of duty as a constraint upon the natural liberty of human desire. The synthesis of the two for Hegel is 'the ethical life', which emerges from a sincere recognition of the significance of one's own stake in the greater good of the whole.

Political order has its origins in family life, in which the basic needs of all individuals are served by mutual feeling, without any formal principle of organization. The antithesis to this is civil life, in which the incorporation of so many more individual units often leads to a system of purely formal regulation of conduct, demanded by law without any emotional bond. The synthesis of the two, then, is the State, which Hegel believed to unite society into a sort of civil family, organized in legal fashion but bound together by a profound emotional sense of devotion.

According to Hegel, then, the modern nation must serve as an actualization of the self-conscious ethical will of a people. Although this sounds something like Rousseau's general will, Hegel's version puts all of the emphasis on the collective expression of what is best for the people rather than on each individual's capacity to discover it for herself or himself. This view of the state fits well with the rise of modern nationalism in Europe during the nineteenth century, where the national spirit of each group emerges distinctively from every other.

Absolute Spirit

Finally, when considered most purely, as absolute in itself, Spirit is just the historical process of human thought toward ever-greater awareness of the fundamental unity of all reality. In order to see how the Absolute gradually discovers and expresses its own nature, Hegel proposed, we need only observe the way in which the Spirit of the World (Weltgeist) develops dialectically in three distinguishable arenas, a triad of triads through which human culture achieves its transcendental aim.

Since it appreciates and evaluates the Absolute entirely through its presentations among the senses, Art is first to be considered. Effective artistic expression, Hegel supposed, must always transcend the subject/object dichotomy by leading us to awareness of some underlying unity. Historically, human art has embodied the dialectical development of the Absolute's sensory being, starting with the thesis of symbolic representation of natural objects and proceeding to its antithesis in highly stylized classical art before rising to the synthesis of Romantic expression.

The antithesis of Art as a whole is the abstract notion of the Absolute as an objectified other, the divine being contemplated by Religion. Although traditional religion often speaks of god in personal terms, its theological exposition usually emphasizes the radical differentness of the deity and its incomprehensibility to us. Again, the historical development of religion displays a dialectical structure: the thesis is worship of nature, which gives rise to a religion of individuality tempered by revealed law and both are transcended in the synthesis of Protestant Christianity, which unifies them under the notion of god in human form.

This leaves room for the grand culminating synthesis of human culture, which is (of course!) Philosophy, in which the Absolute learns to cognize itself in perfectly literal terms. As the self-conscious awareness of the Absolute, Hegel's philosophy unifies the sensibility of art and the objectivication of religion by regarding the dialectical logic of reason as the ultimate structure of reality. Here, too, there has been historical development, most recently the emergence of absolute idealism as a synthesis transcending the dispute between empiricism and rationalism.

The Inexorability of History

As we have already seen, Hegel's view of the world is determinedly historical; he believed that history itself (involving another triad of original/reflective/philosophical history) exhibits the growth of self-consciousness in the Absolute, the process of development by means of which the Spirit of the World (Weltgeist) comes to know itself. But since history inevitably follows the pattern of logical necessity through the dialectical movement from thesis to

antithesis to synthesis, the present age must be the highest stage of development. Certainly Hegel regarded the cultural achievements of his own time – nationalism, romanticism, Protestantism and idealism – as the culmination of all that had gone before, with his own philosophical work as its highest expression. Here is nineteenth-century optimism at its peak, full of self-confidence in the possibilities of rationality and enlightenment. Many thinkers of the nearly two centuries since Hegel's time have raised serious questions about the reliability of this modernist promise.

Three Laws of Dialectics

'Dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought' (Engels).

Hegel assembled inside his idealistic philosophy the three laws of dialectics:

1. The law of the unity and conflict of opposites (Heraclitus).

2. The law of the passage of quantitative changes into qualitative changes (Aristotle).

3. The law of the negation of the negation (Hegel).

Law of Opposites

Hegel started with the observation that everything in existence is a unity of opposites. For example, electricity is characterized by a positive and negative charge and atoms consist of protons and electrons which are unified but are ultimately contradictory forces. Even humans through introspection find that they are a unity of opposite qualities. Masculinity and femininity, selfishness and altruism, humbleness and pride, and so forth. The Hegel's conclusion being that everything 'contains two mutually incompatible and exclusive but nevertheless equally essential and indispensable parts or aspects'. The basic concept being that this unity of opposites in nature is the thing that makes each entity auto-dynamic and provides this constant motivation for movement and change: 'Contradiction in nature is the root of all motion and of all life'.

This dichotomy is often found in nature. A star is held together by gravity trying to push all the molecules to the centre, and heat trying to send them as far from the centre as possible. If either

force is completely successful the star ceases to be, if heat is victorious it explodes into a supernova, if gravity is victorious it implodes into a neutron star or a black hole. Furthermore, living things strive to balance internal and external forces to maintain homeostasis, which is nothing more than a balance of opposing forces such as acidity and alkalinity.

Some opposites are antagonistic, as in the competition between capitalists and labourers. Factory owners offer the lowest wages possible, while workers seek to maximize wages. Sometimes this antagonism sparks strikes or lockouts.

Law of Transformation

This law states that continuous quantitative development results in qualitative 'leaps' in nature whereby a completely new form or entity is produced. This is how 'quantitative development becomes qualitative change'. Transformation allows for the reverse with quality affecting quantity.

This theory draws many parallels to the theory of Evolution. Marxist philosophers concluded that entities, through quantitative accumulations, are also inherently capable of 'leaps' to new forms and levels of reality. The law illustrates that during a long period of time, through a process of small, almost irrelevant accumulations, nature develops noticeable changes in direction.

This can be illustrated by the eruption of a volcano which is caused by years of pressure building up. The volcano may no longer be a mountain but when its lava cools it will become fertile land where previously there was none. A revolution which is caused by years of tensions between opposing factions in society acts as a social illustration. The law occurs in reverse. An example would be, that by introducing better (changing quality) tools to farm, the tools will aid the increase in the amount (change the quantity) of what is produced.

Law of Negation

The law of negation was created to account for the tendency in nature to constantly increase the numerical quantity of all things. Hegel demonstrated that entities tend to negate themselves in order to advance or reproduce a higher quantity. This means that the nature of opposition which produces conflict in each element and gives them

motion also tends to negate the thing itself. This dynamic process of birth and destruction is what causes entities to advance. This law is commonly simplified as the cycle of **thesis, antithesis and synthesis** (the Hegelian dialectical formula: A (thesis) versus B (anti-thesis) equals C (synthesis). This method is to trace the evolution of this dynamic principle through three stages:

1) the stage in which it affirms or posits itself as thesis;

2) the stage of negation, limitation, antithesis, which is a necessary corollary of the previous stage;

3) the stage of synthesis, return to itself, union of opposites, which follows necessarily on (l) and (2).

For example: If (A) my idea of freedom conflicts with (B) your idea of freedom then (C) neither of us can be free until everyone agrees to be a slave.

Other example (a core of Hegel's teaching): Absolute being in the first stage is the idea simply (the subject-matter of logic); in the second stage (of otherness) it becomes nature (philosophy of nature); in the third stage (of return or synthesis) it is spirit (philosophy of spirit – ethics, politics, art, religion, etc.).

In nature, Hegel often cited the case of the barley seed which, in its natural state, germinates and out of its own death or negation produces a plant; the plant in turn grows to maturity, and is itself negated after bearing many barley seeds. Thus, all nature is constantly expanding through cycles.

In society, we have the case of class. For example, the aristocracy was negated by the bourgeoisie; and the bourgeoisie then created the proletariat that will one day negate them. This illustrates that the cycle of negation is eternal, as each class creates its 'grave-digger', its successor, as soon as it finishes burying its creator.

Other famous German philosopher, political economist, historian, political theorist, sociologist **Karl Heinrich Marx (1818–1883)** was born and educated in Prussia, where he fell under the influence of Ludwig Feuerbach and other radical Hegelians. Although he shared Hegel's belief in dialectical structure and historical inevitability, Marx held that the foundations of reality lay

in the material base of economics rather than in the abstract thought of idealistic philosophy.

Marxism is a political philosophy, as well as an economic and sociological worldview, which is based upon a materialist interpretation of history, a Marxist analysis and critique of capitalism, a theory of social change and a view of human liberation derived from the work of German philosophers **Karl Marx (1818–1883)** and **Friedrich Engels (1820–1895)**. **The three primary aspects of Marxism** are:

1. The dialectical and materialist concept of history. Humankind's history fundamentally is a struggle between social classes. The productive capacity of society is the foundation of society, and as this capacity increases over time the social relations of production, class relations, evolve through this struggle of the classes and pass through definite stages (primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism). The legal, political, ideological and other aspects (e.g. art) of society are derived from these production relations as is the consciousness of the individuals of which the society is composed.

2. The critique of capitalism. Marx argues that in capitalist society, an economic minority (the bourgeoisie) dominate and exploit an economic majority (the proletariat). Marx argues that capitalism is exploitative, specifically the way in which unpaid labour (surplus value) is extracted from the working class (the labour theory of value), extending and critiquing the work of earlier political economists on value. Such commodification of human labour according to Marx, creates an arrangement of transitory serfdom. He argued that while the production process is socialized, ownership remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie. This forms the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society. Without the elimination of the fetter of the private ownership of the means of production, human society is unable to achieve further development.

3. Advocacy of proletarian revolution. In order to overcome the fetters of private property the working class must seize political power internationally through a social revolution and expropriate the capitalist classes around the world and place the productive capacities

of society into collective ownership. Upon this, material foundation classes would be abolished and the material basis for all forms of inequality between humankind would dissolve.

Alienation

The core of Marx's economic analysis found early expression in the 'Economic and Political Manuscripts of 1844'. There, Marx argued that the conditions of modern industrial societies invariably result in the estrangement (or alienation) of workers from their own labour. In his creative work Marx identifies four types of alienation in labour under capitalism. These include:

1. Alienation of the worker from the work he produces, from the product of his labour. The product's design and the manner in which it is produced are determined not by its actual producers but rather by the Capitalist class. Aside from the lack of workers' control over the design and production protocol, this form of alienation also refers to the conversion of the use value of a product into an exchange value. In other words, the Capitalist gains control of the worker and the beneficial effects of his work by setting up a system that converts the worker's efforts not only into a useful thing capable of benefiting consumers, but also into an illusory thing itself – something called 'work' – which is compensated in the form of wages at a rate as low as possible to maintain a maximum rate of return on the industrialist's investment capital (an aspect of Exploitation). Furthermore, the exchange value that could be generated by the sale of products and returned to workers in the form of profits is absconded with by the managerial and capitalist classes.

2. Alienation of the worker from working, from the act of producing itself. This kind of alienation refers to the patterning of work in the Capitalist Mode of Production into an endless sequence of discrete, repetitive, trivial and meaningless motions, offering little, if any, intrinsic satisfaction. The worker's labour power is commodified into exchange value itself in the form of wages. A worker is thus estranged from the unmediated relation to his activity via such wages. Aside from the limitation of the inherent plurality of one's species being that the Capitalist division of labour imposes upon workers, Marx was also identifying another feature of

exploitation with this kind of alienation. According to Marx, one's species being is fulfilled when it maintains control over the subject of its labour by the ability to determine how it shall be used directly or exchanged for something else. Capitalism removes the right of the worker to exercise control over the value or effects of his labour, robbing him of the ability to either consume the product he makes directly or receive the full value of the product when it is sold: this is the first alienation of worker from product. However, the first alienation contributes to the second alienation of worker from the very act of working, as it removes the worker's feeling of control over the use and exchange of his labour power. This loss of control disrupts the ability of the worker to specialize, focus, direct or apply the inherently plural potency of his species being, thus separating or alienating any activity that he does engage in from the intentional core of that being.

3. Alienation of the worker from himself as a producer, from his or her 'species being' or 'essence as a species'. To Marx, this human essence was is separate from activity or work, nor static, but includes the innate potential to develop as a human organism. Species being is a concept that Marx deploys to refer to what he sees as the original or intrinsic essence of the species, which is characterized both by plurality and dynamism: all beings possess the tendency and desire to engage in multiple activities to promote their mutual survival, comfort and sense of interconnection. A man's value consists in his ability to conceive of the ends of his action as purposeful ideas distinct from any given step of realizing them: man is able to objectify his intentional efforts in an idea of himself (the subject) and an idea of the thing which he produces (the object). Animals, according to Marx, do not objectify themselves or their products as ideas because they engage in self-sustaining actions directly, without sustained future projection or conscious intention. While human nature or essence does not exist apart from specific, historically conditioned activity, it becomes actualized as man's species being when man – within his historical circumstances – is free to subordinate his will to the demands imposed by his own

imagination and not those mandated solely for the purpose of allowing others to do so.

Notwithstanding, the character of an individual's consciousness (his will and imagination) is conditioned by his relationship to that which facilitates survival; since any individual's survival and betterment is fundamentally dependent upon cooperation with others, a given person's personal consciousness is determined intersubjectively or collectively rather than merely subjectively or individually. As far as has been heretofore observed, all societies have, according to Marx, organized groups with differing basic relationships to the means of material survival available to them – i.e., the means of production. One group has owned and controlled the means while another has operated them, the goal of the former being to benefit as much as possible through the latter's efforts. Every time there is a shift in the organization of the means of production – as with say, the displacement of agrarian feudalism and pre-industrial mercantilism with the technologies that gave rise to Industrial Capitalism – there is a rearrangement and rupture of the social class structure that relates to those means – a class structure Marx termed the relations of production. That is to say, a new class relationship emerges, subordinating one group and the species beings of its members to the activities and corresponding values that enable it to operate the means of production for the profit of the dominant group, whose consciousness and values are also conditioned to maintain this dominance.

While industrialization holds the promise of the masses' eventual liberation from an imagination conditioned chiefly by brute necessity, the division of labour within Industrial Capitalism blunts the worker's 'species being' and renders him as a replaceable cog in an abstract machine instead of a human being capable of defining his own value through direct, purposeful activity. And yet, industrialization, in Marx's view, would eventually progress to a state of near-total mechanization and automation of productive processes. During this progression, the newly dominant Bourgeoisie Capitalist class would exploit the Industrial working class or Proletariat to the degree that the value they excised from their labour would begin to

infringe upon the ability of the Proletariat to materially survive. When this begins to occur and when the productive forces are sufficiently developed, there will be a final revolution whose end result will be the reorientation of the relations of production to the means of production in a Communist mode of production. In the Communist mode of production, because all members of the society will relate to the means of production on a fundamentally equal and non-conflictual manner, there will be no fundamental differentiation between groups or classes as previously, and the species being of every individual will assume a full actualization of its tendencies, as the application of the his efforts will return to him in direct, unmediated proportion to what he is able to conceive. This is partly due to the fact that a Communist society would distribute the benefits and duties of production evenly, in accordance with the capacities its members, such that each member could direct his action more directly towards his interests and preferences rather than a narrowly designated function designed to generate maximal return of value to an owner.

In this classless, collectively managed society, the dialectical exchange of value between one worker's objectified labour power (via production) and another's benefit from that objectification (via consumption) will not be directed by the narrow interest of one group over the needs of another, and will thus directly enrich the consciousness and material state of all of producers and consumers to the maximal possible degree. Though production will still be differentiated to some degree, it will be directed by the collective demand and not the narrow demand of one class at the expense of those of another. Since ownership will be shared, the relation of individuals' consciousness to the mode of production will be identical and will assume the character that corresponds, as in previous times, to the interest of its group: the universal, Communist class. The direct, un-siphoned return of the fruit of each worker's labour to that group's interest – and thus as directly as possible to his own interest, which assumes the character of his group's – will constitute an un-alienated state of labour, restoring the worker to the fullest exercise and determination of his species being as is possible

at any given moment in the future development of Communist society.

4. Alienation of the worker from other workers or producers. Capitalism reduces labour to a commercial commodity to be traded on the market, rather than a social relationship between people involved in a common effort for survival or betterment. The competitive labour market is set up in Industrial Capitalist economies to extract as much value as possible in the form of capital from those who work to those who own enterprises and other assets that control the means of production. This causes the relations of production to become conflictual... i.e., it pits worker against worker, alienating members of the same class from their mutual interest, an effect Marx called False Consciousness.

Historical materialism

'Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand' (Karl Marx).

The historical materialist theory of history, also synonymous to 'the economic interpretation of history', looks for the causes of societal development and change in the collective ways humans use to make the means for living. The social features of a society (social classes, political structures, ideologies) derive from economic activity.

Marx's analysis of history focuses on the organization of labour and depends on his distinction between:

1) the **means / forces of production**, literally those things (like land, natural resources and technology) necessary for the production of material goods;

2) the **relations of production**, in other words, the social relationships people enter into as they acquire and use the means of production.

Together these compose the **mode of production**, and Marx distinguished historical eras in terms of distinct modes of production. For example, he observed that European societies had progressed from a feudal mode of production to a capitalist mode of production. Marx believed that under capitalism, the means of production change

more rapidly than the relations of production. Marx regarded this mismatch between (economic) base and (social) superstructure as a major source of social disruption and conflict.

Base and Superstructure

The base and superstructure metaphor explains that the totality of social relations regarding 'the social production of their existence' i.e. civil society forms a society's economic base, from which rises a superstructure of political and legal institutions i.e. political society. The base corresponds to the social consciousness (politics, religion, philosophy, etc.) and it conditions the superstructure and the social consciousness. A conflict between the development of material productive forces and the relations of production provokes social revolutions, thus, the resultant changes to the economic base will lead to the transformation of the superstructure. This relationship is reflexive; the base determines the superstructure, in the first instance, and remains the foundation of a form of social organization which then can act again upon both parts of the base and superstructure, whose relationship is dialectical, not literal.

Historical Periodization

Marx considered that these socio-economic conflicts have historically manifested themselves as distinct stages (one transitional) of development in Western Europe:

1. Primitive communism: as in co-operative tribal societies.

2. Slave society: development of tribal progression to city-state; Aristocracy is born.

3. Feudalism: aristocrats are the ruling class; merchants evolve into capitalists.

4. Capitalism: capitalists are the ruling class, who create and employ the proletariat.

5. Socialism: workers gain class consciousness, and via proletarian revolution depose the capitalist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, replacing it in turn with dictatorship of the proletariat through which the socialization of the means of production can be realized.

6. Communism: a classless and stateless society.

Communism

Communism is system of social organization in which all property is owned by the community and each person contributes and receives according to their ability and needs. The distinctive features of communist society are:

1. Common ownership is a principle according to which the assets of an enterprise or other organization are held indivisibly rather than in the names of the individual members or by a public institution such as a governmental body.

2. Egalitarianism (derived from the French word égal, meaning 'equal') is the belief that all people are equal and should have the same rights and opportunities.

3. Classless society refers to a society in which no one is born into a social class. Such distinctions of wealth, income, education, culture or social network as might arise, in such a society would only be determined by individual experience and achievement.

Social Classes

Class is the system of ordering a society in which people are divided into sets based on perceived economic and cultural status. For Marx: 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles' ('The Communist Manifesto', Chapter 1). The identity of a social class derives from its relationship to the means of production; Marx describes the social classes in capitalist societies:

1. Proletariat: 'those individuals who sell their labour power, and who, in the capitalist mode of production, do not own the means of production'. The capitalist mode of production establishes the conditions enabling the bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat because the workers' labour generates a surplus value greater than the workers' wages.

2. Bourgeoisie: those who 'own the means of production' and buy labour power from the proletariat, thus exploiting the proletariat; they subdivide as bourgeoisie and the petit bourgeoisie.

3. Petit bourgeoisie are those who employ labourers, but who also work, i.e. small business owners, peasant landlords, trade workers et al. Marxism predicts that the continual reinvention of the

means of production eventually would destroy the petit bourgeoisie, degrading them from the middle class to the proletariat.

4. Lumpenproletariat: criminals, vagabonds, beggars, et al., who have no stake in the economy, and so sell their labour to the highest bidder.

5. Landlords: an historically important social class who retain some wealth and power.

6. Peasantry and farmers: a disorganized class incapable of effecting socio-economic change, most of whom would enter the proletariat, and some become landlords.

Class Consciousness

Class consciousness denotes the awareness – of itself and the social world – that a social class possesses, and its capacity to rationally act in their best interests; hence, class consciousness is required before they can effect a successful revolution.

World Revolution

World revolution is the Marxist concept of overthrowing capitalism in all countries through the conscious revolutionary action of the organized working class. These revolutions would not necessarily occur simultaneously, but where local conditions allowed a revolutionary party to successfully replace bourgeois ownership and rule, and install a workers' state based on social ownership of the means of production. The end goal is to achieve world socialism, and later, stateless communism.

Checklist

1. What is the specificity of Classical German philosophy?
2. Highlight the basic principles of Immanuel Kant's epistemology and his ethical views.
3. Characterize the main specifics of Georg Hegel's dialectics and its impact on modern science development.
4. What are the basic theoretical principles of Karl Marx's philosophy of history? What is the essence of his doctrine about socioeconomic structures and theory of alienation?

5. What are the positive and negative aspects of the communist social order?
6. What is the difference between socialism and communism?

Conceptual dictionary

A posteriori judgments – those are grounded upon experience and require empirical justification. They are consequently limited and uncertain in their application to specific cases.

A priori judgments – those are based upon reason alone, independently of all sensory experience, and therefore apply with strict universality.

Alienation – (in Marxist theory) a condition of workers in a capitalist economy, resulting from a lack of identity with the products of their labour and a sense of being controlled or exploited.

Analytic judgments – those whose predicates are wholly contained in their subjects; since they add nothing to our concept of the subject, such judgments are purely explicative and can be deduced from the principle of non-contradiction.

Antinomy (antinomies) – a contradiction between two beliefs, statements or conclusions, both apparently obtained by correct reasoning; a paradox.

Antithesis – (in Hegelian philosophy) the negation of the thesis as the second stage in the process of dialectical reasoning.

Apperception – the mental process by which a person makes sense of an idea by assimilating it to the body of ideas he or she already possesses.

Axiology (also called **value theory**) – the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of value and with what kinds of things have value.

Essence – (in Spinozism) the ideal realm, eternal and outside of time.

Existence – (in Spinozism) the material realm, mortal and being in time.

Deduction – the inference of particular instances by reference to a general law or principle.

Deism – the belief in the existence of a supreme being, specifically of a creator who does not intervene in the universe. The term is used chiefly of an intellectual movement of the XVII–XVIII centuries that accepted the existence of a creator on the basis of

reason but rejected belief in a supernatural deity who interacts with humankind.

Determinism (**necessitarianism**) – the doctrine that all events, including human choices and decisions, have sufficient causes.

Dialectic – 1) the art of investigating or discussing the truth of opinions; 2) inquiry into metaphysical contradictions and their solutions; 3) the branch of methodology, which represent development as the spiral motion. Each new coil of history repeats previous, but introduces new products and changes.

Dualism – a philosophical theory that regards a domain of reality in terms of two independent principles, especially mind and matter (Cartesian dualism).

Empiricism – the theory that all knowledge is based on experience derived from the senses. Stimulated by the rise of experimental science, it developed in the XVII–XVIII centuries, expounded in particular by John Locke, George Berkeley and David Hume.

Induction – a method of reasoning in which you use individual ideas or facts to give you a general rule or conclusion.

Monad – (in the philosophy of Leibniz) an unextended, indivisible and indestructible entity that is the basic or ultimate constituent of the universe and a microcosm of it.

Noumenon – 1) the object, itself inaccessible to experience, to which a phenomenon is referred for the basis or cause of its sense content; 2) a thing in itself, as distinguished from a phenomenon or thing as it appears; 3) (in Kantian philosophy) something that can be the object only of a purely intellectual, nonsensuous intuition.

Pantheism – the doctrine that God is the transcendent reality of which the material universe and human beings are only manifestations: it involves a denial of God’s personality and expresses a tendency to identify God and nature.

Parallelism – Spinoza's teaching, which holds that the mind is constituted by its idea of the body and that mental and physical (thought and extension) phenomena occur in parallel, but without causal interaction between them.

Phenomenology – a philosophical movement, founded in the early years of the XX century by German thinker Edmund Husserl, which deals with consciousness, thought and experience.

Phenomenon – 1) an appearance or immediate object of awareness in experience; 2) (in Kantianism) a thing as it appears to and is constructed by the mind, as distinguished from a noumenon or thing-in-itself.

Rationalism – the theory that reason rather than experience is the foundation of certainty in knowledge.

Sensualism – the belief that cognition should be based on senses and emotions, rather than reason and logic.

Substance – 1) something that exists by itself and in which accidents or attributes inhere; that which receives modifications and is not itself a mode; something that is causally active; something that is more than an event; 2) the essential part of a thing; essence; 3) a thing considered as a continuing whole.

Synthesis – (in Hegelian philosophy) the final stage in the process of dialectical reasoning, in which a new idea resolves the conflict between thesis and antithesis.

Synthetic judgments – are those whose predicates are wholly distinct from their subjects, to which they must be shown to relate because of some real connection external to the concepts themselves. Hence, synthetic judgments are genuinely informative but require justification by reference to some outside principle.

Thesis – (in Hegelian philosophy) a proposition forming the first stage in the process of dialectical reasoning.

Transcendentalism – any system of philosophy, esp. that of Kant, holding that the key to knowledge of the nature of reality lies in the critical examination of the processes of reason on which depends the nature of experience.

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