Panentheism

Addressing

History's Vector

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God

Rational Thinking

Panentheism

and

History's Vector
(Western Thought)

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Daniel J. Shepard
Channel

Resolving the Paradox Regarding:

- **All Things Being Reduced To Semantics**
- **Having Reached the End of Our Ability To Know**
- **Phenomenology and Existentialism**

- **Nonfiction / Metaphysics / Ontology / Systems Theology**
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A gift

From me to you

From one soul to another

Peace

The Gift

Note to the reader:

- The intent of the more than 20+ books is to provide enough material to prove the validity of panentheism not beyond 'all' doubt but to prove the validity of panentheism beyond 'all reasonable' doubt. The point being to elevate the individual's and our species' perception of themselves in order to elevate human behavior on both an individual level and on a species level before we begin to step into the heavens.

- The series of books, Panentheism, emerged from earlier metaphysical editions and have been edited and retitled to more accurately reflect the true nature of their contents.

- I understand there are numerous stylistic, grammatical and spelling errors within all my work. I hope you as a reader can overlook such issues and focus upon the ideas being presented. I do not like to make excuses but most the material is, after all, free (see panentheism.com) to the public and therefore producing no revenue stream.

  Having spent more than a quarter of a million dollars on the web site: panentheism.com, 20+ books, presentations, videos, attempts to place the material in the hands of academics and the public, … I found my resources insufficient for formal editing. It is perhaps best to consider the products of my work more as a personal log in the rough of what it is I have been entrusted, with the condition that I pass this material on to you.

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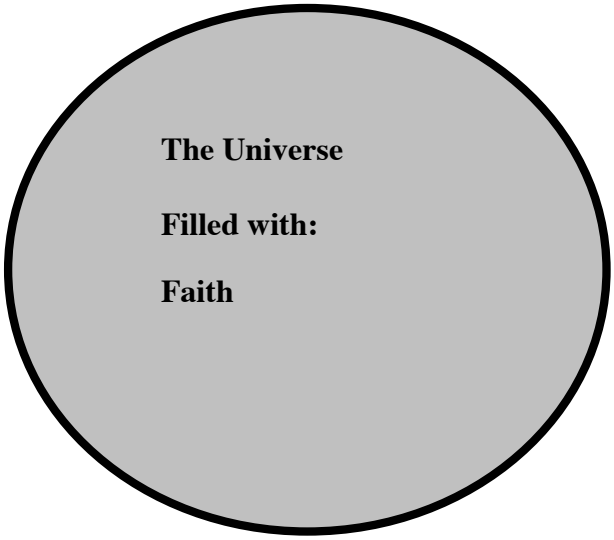
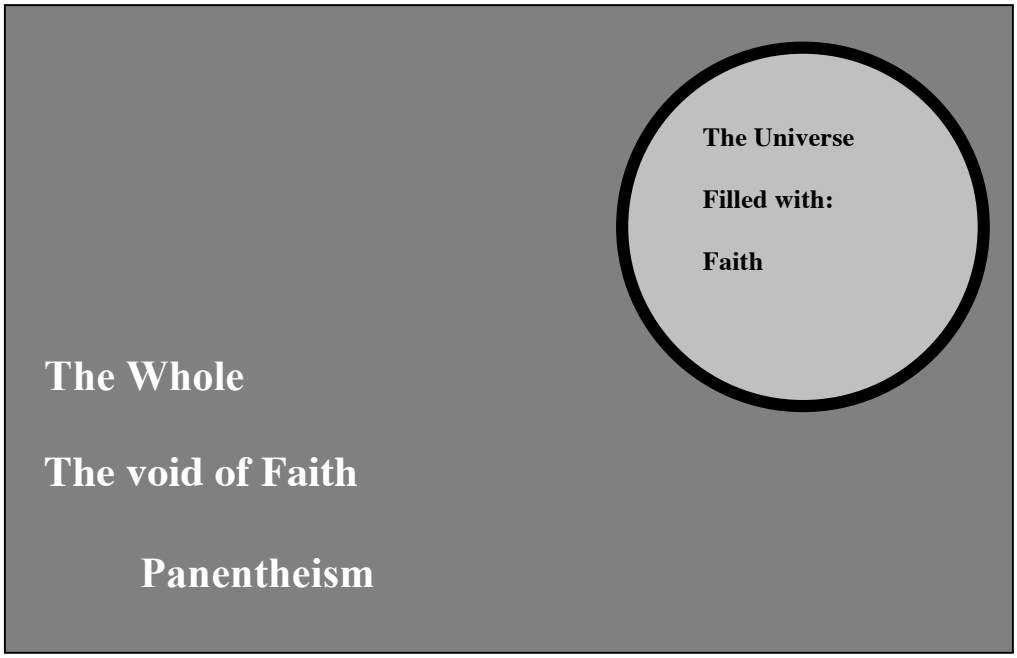
Western Philosophy helps us understand



Panentheism helps us understand how a rational understanding of the whole of Reality can exist without diminishing Faith



Contents

Summation of Western Philosophical positions provided by

Stephen Moore – fellow philosopher

Prologue

Looking at the historical developmental aspect of philosophy as opposed to the historical paradoxical development addressed in Tractates 1 – 11 of this work, we find what appears to be an endless array of questions emerging. In fact it is not the questions which 'emerge' from the philosophical development but the philosophical development, which emerges from the questions. As philosophy develops, it in turn creates its own set of unique questions.

Passive observation elucidated by the Aristotelian Cartesian System of Cause and Effect was examined in some detail within Volume I of this work. The Cartesian system emerged as a means of answering question regarding 'reality' as we perceived it to be.

As to be expected when examining the progress of humanity's philosophical development, the philosophical development emerging from the foray of the initial questions led to the system of reality being elucidated as Cartesianism. Cartesianism, the concept of 1st truth generated by the understanding of a 'cause and effect' reality, in turn initiated its own unique set of questions which remained unanswered in terms of the limitations a Cartesian system presented regarding the whole of reality. Such unanswered questions riddle the description regarding the historical development of Western Philosophy as presented within Stephen Moor's synopsis.

The direct and indirect questions expressed within the synopsis are addressed in the conclusion, The Peer Review, of Volume III. The directly and/or indirectly posed questions elucidated within the synopsis are addressed in the Peer Review following this tractate. The process of answering the questions within a separate tractate, rather than intermittently throughout this particular synopsis, is utilized to prevent interrupting the flow of the synopsis itself. The historical synopsis lays the necessary foundation by which the reader can better understand the historical influence underlying the questions submitted by the philosophers participating in the simulated peer review found within part two of the conclusion of this work.

One must keep in mind that it is not just the Aristotelian Cartesian System of Cause and Effect which we find emerges from questions being asked and which leaves its own unique questions in place.

We also find the Kant/Hegelian non-Cartesian system, a system lacking 'a' first truth, a system lacking 'cause and effect', a foundationless system emerging from the questions being asked. The development of a non-Cartesian system in turn leaves its own unique set of questions. It is the questions left by both the Cartesian and the non-Cartesian systems, which initiate the question: Why now? Why does the new system, Cartesianism existing with non-Cartesianism, Cartesianism, Cartesianism acting as the 'power' source for non-Cartesianism, 'a' first truth found within the lack of 'a' first truth, multiplicity found within singularity, 'being' *being* 'Being, symbiotic panentheism emerge now at this point in time.

The non-Cartesian system emerged as a result of the questions the emergence of the Cartesian system put into play.

The reason the New Metaphysical Perception of the individual acting within God emerges now is that the unique questions left in place through the independent development of both the Cartesian system and non-Cartesian systems describing 'reality' beg to be answered. Neither the Cartesian nor the non-Cartesian systems are capable, on their own, of answering all the unique questions each system generates. It is the development of this new Metaphysical model, it is the development of a third metaphysical system which provides 'a' and perhaps 'the only', means of answering such questions based upon reason/philosophy.

Having presented the need for Tractate 18: The Historical Development of Western Philosophy: we are now ready to examine the historical development of Western Philosophy as presented by Stephen Moore.

1. Introduction

This short introduction to philosophy is included in this volume in order to assist the reader in understanding some of the central issues of philosophy. This introduction isn't intended to be comprehensive. The complexity of the subject, and its long history, would make that impractical in such a limited space. However, it does present some of the central positions and points of dispute in the unfolding story of philosophy: a story that is still being written.

But what is philosophy? Is there a precise description or definition of this vast subject available? The big stumbling block to defining the subject is that it covers a period of over 2000 years. Philosophy is a very individualistic endeavor. Even within the various disciplines that are a part of the philosophical tradition, there are numerous definitions and interpretations. The phrase "the devil is in the details" is very appropriate as applied to philosophy. Also, the unique personalities who practice philosophy play a vital role in shaping its meaning and purpose.

And what are the major themes and questions of philosophy? There are many, but the most persistent of these would include the following:

- What is existence?
- Do we exist, and why?
- What is reality?
- What can we know?
- What is knowledge?
- What is truth?
- What is the purpose and meaning of life?
- Why is the individual important?
- What is our function within society?
- Is there a difference between "appearance" and "reality"?
- Do we possess free will, or are our actions determined?
- What is morality?

Philosophy - loosely defined - is the journey to find answers to these questions. The methodology used to respond is constantly evolving. Analysis, reflection, and interpretation are central, as are critical assessments of various philosophical positions. Above all, philosophy, which comes from the Greek work *philosophia*, means *the love of wisdom*.

The study of philosophy, in the Western tradition, began in Ancient Greece early in the 6th century B.C. Since that time, the range and scope of its journey has expanded into very specialized and distinct branches. Among these branches are:

- **Metaphysics** The Study of **Existence**
- **Epistemology** The Study of **Knowledge**
- **Ethics** The Study of **Action**

- **Politics** The Study of **Force**
- **Esthetics** The Study of **Art**
- **Logic** The Study of **Reason**
- **Language** The Study of **Communication**

These in turn consist of many subcategories, including:

- Empiricism
- Phenomenology
- Positivism
- Pragmatism
- Existentialism
- Materialism
- Nihilism
- Atheism
- Cultural Theory
- Ethics
- Politics
- Ontology
- Teleology
- Rationalism
- Transcendentalism
- Utilitarianism
- Critical Theory
- Deconstruction
- Linguistic Analysis
- Aesthetics
- Humanism
- Eastern Philosophy
- Bio-Ethics
- Logic
- Cosmology
- Idealism

And the methods used to explore these sub-categories also vary. There is a constant tension in the history of philosophy between attaining a completely "objective" understanding of reality, as opposed to a less stringent or "subjective" understanding. Going back to first principles is a reoccurring theme, as is the reassessment of well-established or even forgotten works. It is organic. It changes constantly. Unlike science - which progresses by discarding its present assumptions for newer ones – philosophy continually returns to its past in order to formulate new philosophical perceptions. As we change, so does our appreciation of our philosophical heritage.

This tractate begins just before the Pre-Socratics, and ends with the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein. The philosophy of Wittgenstein, which focused on logical positivism and linguistic analysis, is where this brief overview of philosophy ends. This is on account of the continual influence that Wittgenstein's work has had on modern philosophy, particularly in academia. Metaphysical speculation has been put aside, in favor of a more mechanistic study of the internal workings of the philosophical method.

But what should the future of philosophy look like? Should it continue on its present course, a course that excludes metaphysical speculation, or should it return to a more inclusive and broader understanding of philosophy's function? Philosophy, in its present form, has turned away from the very questions that it was created to answer. As such, it has become less and less relevant to the public, a public that still seeks answers to questions regarding meaning and purpose. Philosophy - like science and religion – is isolated from other disciplines. But wisdom is holistic and inclusive. If philosophy, science and religion could be

reconciled and united, then a new foundation would be established to answer these questions.
One response to the present impasse is Symbiotic Panentheism. It explores a new perception that could integrate the three disciplines of philosophy, science and religion. In so doing, it outlines how the conflicts that have defined our species could be eliminated. As our perception of our significance changes, so do we.

A brief overview of Symbiotic Panentheism is included at the end of this tractate.

2. Before the Pre-Socratics

Before the Ancient Greeks, two great Empires existed in close proximity to the Eastern Mediterranean: the Egyptian and the Babylonian. These two Empires, though they differed outwardly in many respects, had much in common with each other. Both the Egyptian and Babylonian Empires were the first two examples of urban civilization, each of which supported large populations.

Despite their size, there was little or no diversity of outlook or opinion. It was the kings and priests – possessors of magical powers – who ruled their people. These civilizations, with their theocratic and monarchical institutions, had little tolerance for diverse viewpoints. As a consequence, there was little scientific or technological progress or innovation other than that employed to support the prevailing belief systems. This isn't to say that there weren't advances in knowledge. It was that these advances were the sole domain of the kings and priests of the time. These cultures relied exclusively on custom, priestly revelation, and divine authority for their social cohesion. As such, all knowledge was used to maintain the prevailing view. For example, Egyptian geometry was used to build the great pyramids, while Babylonian astronomy and mathematics were used - exclusively by the priests - to make "magical" predictions. In essence, the prevailing outlook of both the Egyptian and Babylonian empires was that the world was explainable in strictly mythical terms. The gods had created the world, and were responsible for all aspects of it. The pre-Socratics dramatically challenged this worldview.

3. The Pre-Socratics

Western philosophy began with the pre-Socratics. These were a group of thinkers who lived and worked in Miletus in the early part of the 6th century BC. These thinkers had moved eastwards to settle on the islands and Aegean coastline of Asia Minor. In the truest sense, these settlers were pioneers. The conditions they confronted in Ionia were quite difficult. The land was essentially arid: only olives and grapes could be harvested from such dry land. And access to more fertile territory was blocked by vast mountain ranges. As a consequence, they turned to the sea for their survival. In so doing, they discovered that they were in close proximity to two great civilizations: the Egyptian and the Babylonian. Because of the limitations imposed by their physical environment, and their need for trade,

the Ionians possessed a very different outlook from that of their neighbors. The pre-Socratics developed a fresh and dynamic way of looking at the world. They turned away from the established theocratic and monarchical structures of their neighbors, and created social structure based upon republican city-states. In these city-states, those who governed did so by the consent of the people.

From the very beginning, the Ionians were willing to embrace new ideas and perceptions. In so doing, they were able to shape those ideas and perceptions to new purposes. For example, both Babylonian astronomy and Egyptian geometry were vital as an aid to maritime navigation. Using these tools, in such a revolutionary new manner, allowed them to trade with diverse cultures scattered all around the Eastern Mediterranean. In so doing, they were exposed to new knowledge and perceptions.

4. The Invention of Philosophy

Thales of Miletus (585 B.C.)
The invention of philosophy is attributed to Thales of Miletus who lived in the 6th century BC. Though little knowledge remains of his life and work, there is evidence that it was he who introduced Egyptian geometry to Ionia. He is also credited with a practical knowledge of Babylonian astronomy. Thales was considered to be one of the Seven Wise Men or *Sophoi*. The *Sophoi* were credited with an outlook that was essentially inventive and practical: They desired to strip away all dogma in order to get to the underlying truth of nature. The study of the origin and nature of the physical world was their highest priority: all else was discarded. Thales of Miletus was the first of these *Sophoi* to formulate a purely natural explanation of the world. Though the views of Thales and his contemporaries may seem primitive by current standards, he began a process of critically examining the natural world around him, free of all mythological components. As with the other pre-Socratics – Anaximander and Anaximenes – very little is known about the reasoning underlying their positions. As such, it would be easy to criticize their assumptions and conclusions about the "natural" world. However, these were the first steps away from a strictly mythical way of thinking about existence. Thales, for example, held that "all comes from water." Given the abundance of water on the earth, and its importance to the preservation of life, it is a reasonable assumption to make. Given the multiple states that water can have – solid, liquid, and gaseous – as well as its sheer abundance, it was reasonable to postulate its significance.

Anaximander (612-545 B.C.)
Thales's student, Anaximander, found this assumption about existence to be far too simplistic. He recognized that the world, and cosmos, was in a constant state of change. He proposed to explain this change by referring to the *Apeiron*. The *Apeiron* was something both infinite and indefinite. Within it, the four states – hot, cold, wet, and dry – arose. Anaximander believed that the conflict and interaction of these states gave rise to the cosmos, the earth, and to life.

Anaximenes (545 B.C.)
The successor to Anaximander, Anaximenes, returned to a position akin to that of Thales. Anaximenes believed that there must be a single form of "stuff" as the primary source of everything. He suggested that vapor or mist was this "stuff."

Heraclitus (500 B.C.)
Heraclitus of Ephesus was dissatisfied with the pre-Socratic way of comprehending the world. Heraclitus rejected, in particular, the ideas of harmony implicit in the pre-Socratic position. He saw the natural world as an environment of struggle and difficulty and concluded, "all was flux" and was ever changing.

5. The Eleatics

The Eleatics rejected the views of Heraclitus, and defended the stability and unity of the natural world. Parmenides, founder of the school of Eleaticism, stated that "what exists" cannot come into being, nor can it pass away, because it would have to either come out of nothing, or to become nothing – whereas nothing, by its very nature – does not exist. It follows that there can be no motion, for how can one object occupy the space of another? Our perception of change is thus an illusion. This idea – for its time – was revolutionary. For the first time, it introduced the idea that there are two forms of truth: the real and the perceived.

Zeno of Elea
Another Eleatic, Zeno of Elea, a friend of Parmenides, attempted to address the criticisms of Parmenides' philosophy. Zeno patiently listened to the arguments against Parmenides' position that plurality and change is an illusion: that there is but one solid "being." Zeno argued that if we did accept the assumption that there is plurality and motion, we would arrive at equally strange conclusions. In creating his famous paradoxes, he attempted to demonstrate the absurdity of the idea that the world is constantly changing.

Zeno's Paradoxes: Paradox #1: The Dichotomy
We cannot travel around a racetrack. Since we must first go halfway, and half of halfway, and half of half of halfway, etc., we have an infinity of smaller distances to travel. As such, we cannot get under way in any finite time-span.

Zeno's Paradoxes: Paradox #2: Achilles and the Tortoise
Given even a small head start, a tortoise could never be overtaken by the faster Achilles in a race. For Achilles to catch up to where the tortoise began, he would have to travel a certain distance. By the time that he had traveled that distance, the tortoise will have already advanced, however slowly, to the next position. Though the distances would get gradually smaller, Achilles could never overtake the tortoise.

Zeno's Paradoxes: Paradox #3: The Arrow
An arrow never moves. If motion occurs in discrete intervals, then at any single moment during its flight, the arrow is not moving. It has to occupy the position it is in. Since the flight of the arrow is made up of a succession of such positions, it cannot be shown that the arrow moves.

Zeno used these paradoxes to demonstrate that by accepting the idea of motion - and change of any kind – we arrive at absurd conclusions. We should therefore reject "change" as a natural part of the world. How can there be unity in a world that appears to be multiple?

6. Empedocles, Plurality, and Greek Atomism

The Atomists – Leucippus (440 B.C.), Epicurus (341-271 B.C.), and Democritus (460-370 B.C.) – attempted to counter the position put forward by Parmenides by introducing plurality back into our worldview. Contrary to Parmenides' argument, the Atomists argued that "nothing" does, in a way, exist. It takes the form of empty space. As such, there are two fundamental principles that govern the physical world: empty space and filled space. The filled space consists of indivisible atoms, which are tiny, indivisible, and unobservable. Within the framework of these "atoms", there is, contrary to Parmenides' position, constant change. Since these "atoms" exist, their motion is not only possible, but also inevitable. The Atomists concluded that everything that happens in the world is caused by these "atoms" colliding with each other. The activity and change we observe in the world is due to the effects of these collisions. This pluralistic view of reality became a dominant trend in philosophy for many later generations. Anticipating much of the deterministic positions taken by modern philosophy, Epicurus ventured to conclude that all our actions, on account of fundamental physical laws, are inevitable.

7. The Sophists

Athens in the 5th century underwent a series of external attacks, and some internal rebellions, which contributed to a renewed interest in practical philosophy. The Athenians, despite all their external and internal threats, were able to maintain a relatively democratic government where many Athenian citizens were able to directly participate in important social decisions. In order to participate fully as a citizen, it was important to attain skills in debate and reasoning. The sophists arose to fill this need. They were skilled teachers who were adept in the art of rhetoric and debate. It was these skills that were most valued in the effective exercise of citizenship. The word "Sophist" is derived from the verb *sophizesthai*, which means, "to make a profession of being inventive and clever." This accurately described the sophists who, unlike the philosophers mentioned so far, wished to be paid for teaching their skills. The Sophists rejected almost all of

the philosophy that preceded them. They were not interested in abstract speculation. In the truest sense, they were phenomenologists: they focused exclusively on the "phenomenal" everyday world as opposed to the abstract "real" world described by earlier philosophers. According to the sophists, what is truly important is to be successful in life and gain influence and power over others. Though the earlier Sophists were more restrained in openly preaching immoralism, the later Sophists showed much less restraint. Thrasymachus of Chalcedon declared openly that "right is what is beneficial for the stronger or better one."

8. Socrates (469-399 B.C.)

The most respected and admired philosopher in the 5th century was Socrates. He employed many of the argumentative techniques of the Sophists, but he did not teach for money, nor were his aims similar to theirs. Socrates was dedicated to truth. His dedication to honest and careful reasoning was to transform the entire field of philosophy. Socrates insisted that he possessed no wisdom, but was striving for it. His goal was purely the attainment of genuine knowledge about existence. He was concerned primarily with questioning all previous assumptions and wouldn't settle for anything less than a rigorous account of the nature of things. In formulating this approach, he was the first great exponent of critical philosophy. Socrates is unique in that he didn't write anything during his lifetime, nor was he interested in directly teaching his philosophy. He was more interested in engaging everyone – old or young, rich or poor – in a debate about the nature of things. In doing so, he felt that the inconsistencies of many opinions and actions could be revealed – thereby revealing the truth of things by eliminating the flawed assumptions. We know of his work through the writings of his most famous student: Plato. Socrates adhered to two fundamental principles in conducting his life:

- Never do wrong, nor participate in wrongdoing
- That a person who understood what was good and right would not act against those principles

On numerous occasions, he demonstrated unshakable adherence to these values, and at the expense of his life. After the Battle of Arginusae, a majority in the Athenian assembly demanded death without trial for the admirals. Socrates – who was the assembly's president – refused to put the proposal to a vote because he felt it was wrong to condemn anyone without a fair trial. Though he was threatened for not doing so, he refused to change his position. Later, after the overthrow of democracy, the so-called Thirty Tyrants ordered him to arrest an innocent citizen. Again, he refused. Though these principled stands won him the admiration of many, it created a great resentment among those in power. Later, when democracy was restored, he was condemned to death. He was accused of impiety and of corrupting the youth of Athens with his ideas. Following Socrates' death, his influence began to grow considerably in Greek and Roman philosophy. Many of his followers, including Xenophon (430-350 B.C.) and

Aeschines (390 B.C.), tried to preserve his philosophical method by writing Socratic dialogues. Schools were also founded to help promote various aspects of his philosophy.

9. Plato (427-347 B.C.)

Plato was the most important follower of Socrates. He is most famous for his book *The Republic* in which he described the creation of an ideal society. *The Republic* was a socio-political book that outlined how an ideal society would function. According to Plato, an ideal society would be ruled by an elite, an elite skilled in the art of reason: the philosophers. There would be two other classes within that society: the warriors, who would protect the society from external threats, and the working population. Neither the philosophers nor the warriors would be allowed to own property. They would be expected to lead an austere and simple life, dedicated to the harmony of the ideal state. Despite the influence and importance of *The Republic*, Plato's most significant contribution to theoretical philosophy was in his Theory of Forms or Ideas. In questioning someone's strongly held opinion, Socrates had often asked what it was that people were referring to when they talked about something being good, or beautiful, or brave. Plato had asked what is the Idea or *Eidos* that a person has in mind when he called something "good." Plato concluded that this Idea or *Eidos* exists in the world beyond that of our senses. Plato called this the world of Ideas. In this world of Ideas, what we perceive with our senses is but a very imperfect representation of an external and eternal Idea. In one of Plato's most famous examples, in the seventh book of his *Politeia*, he created the scenario of the man in the cave. In this example, Plato said that we are like people in a cave who are looking at a wall – and seeing nothing but the shadows of the real things that are behind our backs being projected on the wall. He said the philosopher was the one who had the perceptual tools to leave the cave and see the world – the real world of Ideas. Because the philosophers had the ability to really see the "real" world, then it would follow that they should also be the governing elite who would guide the rest of society.

10. Pythagoras (570-495 B.C.)

In the 6th century, a Greek colony arose in Italy led by Pythagoras of Samos. Unlike many of the earlier philosophers, the Pythagoreans tried to develop a completely new and unique philosophy or their own. Pythagoras – who had traveled in the East and to Egypt – founded a philosophical society in southern Italy. Because the Pythagoreans were a secretive quasi-religious sect, only fragments of their teaching survive. However, scholars believe that he introduced the concept of the "transmigration of souls" because of what he had learned in the East. But Pythagoras' most influential contribution, both for philosophy and for science, was his doctrine that "all things are numbers," meaning that the "essences" and "structures" of all things can be determined by finding the numerical relations contained in them. Pythagoras is most recognized for his

contribution to mathematics. He discovered that mathematical ratios exist in the real world. For instance, the length of a musical string directly affects the pitch of that string when plucked. Pythagoras also conducted an extensive study of the motion of celestial objects. In both of these previous examples, he recognized that there was a fundamental order to the nature of things. He concluded that the aim of human life was to life in harmony with this natural order.

11. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)

Aristotle, a contemporary of Plato, soon raised objections to the theory of Ideas put forward by Plato. Aristotle declared that it is unnecessary to assume that there is a separate realm of perfect Ideas. He rejected Plato's claim that we are but imperfect copies of perfect Ideas. Aristotle recognized that all living things develop from an imperfect state to a more perfected state. A seed grows into a plant; a baby grows into an adult. The question for Aristotle, then, was what kind of perfection was it possible for a human being to reach. Aristotle was a great Empiricist, and tried to base his arguments solely on empirical observation. In the 1st century, Aristotle's writings were rediscovered. Many great schools of commentary and criticism arose to discuss and explain his philosophy. He work was to have a great influence on medieval philosophy.

12. Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy

Following the death of Aristotle, the Greek city-states began to crumble. The Hellenistic kings who had succeeded Alexander made life more troubled and insecure. It was in this troubled atmosphere that two dogmatic philosophical systems were created: the Stoic and the Epicurean. Each in their own way gave consolation and fortitude in difficult times.

Stoicism

Zeno of Citium (300 B.C.) founded the Stoic system of philosophy. The system comprised many of the elements found in both the philosophies of Socrates and Heraclitus. It stressed the importance of endurance and self-control. The Stoics taught that pleasure and pain were of no importance to a person's happiness. The possession of virtue, and not worldly wealth or power, was of prime importance. The Stoics also believed in divine providence.

Epicureanism

The Epicureans took the opposite approach to that of the Stoics. They held that pleasure was the very essence of a happy life, and that the gods were indifferent to human beings. But Epicurus wasn't an atheist. Lucretius (94-55 B.C.) praised him for liberating mankind from its religious fears. Epicurus felt it was important to look upon the gods as perfect beings, in order that men could also approach perfection.

13. The Skeptics

Pyrrho of Elis (365-270 B.C.) founded the school of Skepticism. The main doctrine of this philosophy was that we could never know anything with certainty. We cannot even trust our own senses. This philosophy had a profound influence on later philosophers such as Hume and Kant.

14. Medieval Philosophy

The period from the 5th century to the 15th century is known as the Middle Ages, or the medieval period. Medieval literally means "the in-between time" which began in the 5th century with the fall of the Roman Empire, and ended in the 15th century with the beginning of the Renaissance. During the medieval period, western thinkers sought to create a synthesis between religion and philosophy. Early medieval philosophy drew heavily upon the neoplatonic philosophy of Plotinus, who seemed to provide the most support for religious belief. Later in the medieval period, the metaphysics of Aristotle gained a wider audience. In every instance, the goal was to create a philosophical foundation for religious thought. The philosophers of the medieval period were usually churchmen. Their goal was to use philosophy as a means of giving a rational interpretation of Christian faith. Any philosophical speculation, other than supporting church dogma, was strictly discouraged. Philosophy during this period was considered to be the "handmaiden" of theology, and philosophical speculation other than supporting the church was frowned upon. Despite these constraints, much creative philosophy did take place during this period. With the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 5th century, and the decline and fall of its civilization, a new Christian culture emerged in Europe. Monasteries now became the new centers of learning and education. During this period, philosophers such as Augustine (354-430), Boethius (480-525), and Anselm (1033-1109) attempted to unite Greek thought with Christian belief.

15. Saint Augustine / Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

Saint Augustine was the first great medieval philosopher. Augustine was a North African rhetorician - and follower of Manichaeanism – who converted to Christianity. He devoted his career towards creating a philosophical system that employed aspects of neoplatonic thinking in support of Christian orthodoxy. Augustine believed that philosophy was only useful or meaningful to those who already had faith. He said, "I believe in order that I may understand." He rejected the epistemological criticisms of earlier philosophers such as the Skeptics. He argued that even if everything around us is an illusion, then one inescapable truth will still remain: that I exist. This view has much in common with Descartes. Augustine, for example, believed that there existed – beyond the world of the senses – a spiritual and eternal realm of truth. This truth is the object of the human mind, and the goal of all our striving. He identified this truth with the God

of the Christian faith. Augustine felt that man was a combination of two substances: the body and the soul. The soul is the most important and the superior of the two. The truth of existence could not lie in a contingent and changing world, but in the truth that could only be found by inner reflection. The mind was the means of finding the "intelligible light" where the real truth could be found. Consequently, the soul's immortality is proved by its possession of this unchanging "truth." Thus, the "intelligible light" is where real truth is found. Augustine's moral philosophy was also to have a profound effect on the development of Christian theology. Augustine argued that evil may exist, but it isn't real. Evil is, by his definition, the absence of good. Augustine believed that we were all sinful by nature, but that a good God had given us the freedom to choose our own actions. But the question then arises: if we are sinful by nature – and have original sin – then how can we make free and moral choices? Augustine argued that the redemptive grace of God alone offers us hope. To prove that God exists, Augustine drew heavily upon the ideas of Plato and Pythagoras. If we are capable of achieving mathematical knowledge - thereby transcending the sensory realm of appearance - we can therefore logically conclude that our souls are immaterial and immortal. Augustine recognized that additional metaphysical support was needed for this argument. Where does the abstract mathematical knowledge come from? What is the eternal source of these abstractions? This, he concluded, must be God.

16. Boethius / Anicius Manlius Severinus (480-525)

Boethius was one of the most important philosophers of the Middle Ages, not just for his creative work, but also for the fact that he translated many Greek works into Latin. He translated the logical writings of Porphyry (232-304) – a Neoplatonist – and also many of the works of Aristotle. In his creative philosophy, his presentation of the Aristotelian doctrine of universals was very influential for later philosophers. Are "universals" real? If so, are they corporeal or incorporeal? If incorporeal, do they exist in the world of our senses, or apart from it? If "universals" are not real, are they then only mental concepts? These questions were to become a dominant focus of medieval philosophy.

17. Saint Anselm / Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109)

In the 11th century, Peter Damian - who was critical of the newly emerging independence of philosophy - revitalized Benedictine monasteries. He felt that philosophy, and secular learning in general, were harmful to faith. Other monks too, such as the Cistercian Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) were similarly critical of the new secular learning. But not everyone accepted these reforms. Anselm, in particular, was a keen student of the dialectic method, and of philosophy in general. Anselm, a passionate logician, used both faith and reason in his pursuit of truth. He believed that faith should come first but also that reason must follow in order to demonstrate reasons for why we believe what we do. One of his most famous works, the *Proslogium*, contains Anselm's most

famous proofs for the existence of God. The reasoning – what is usually referred to as the ontological argument for the existence of God - was as follows:

- From faith, we believe God to be the greatest entity.
- There are two ways to believe something: either it exists in reality, or it exists in our intellect.
- If God is the greatest entity, then it must exist in reality and in the intellect, than simply in the intellect alone.
- It is therefore contradictory to believe that God exists only in the intellect, for the greatest entity must exist both in reality and in the intellect.
- Therefore, God must exist in reality.

In the 12th century, the center of learning moved away from the monasteries and to the towns. Near Paris, Peter Abelard (1079-1144) founded a number of schools in order to explore the relationship between religion and philosophy. New methods of education were emerging during this time. These methods – known as scholasticism – placed far more emphasis on the exploration of dialectic and logic, than on simply adhering to tradition and custom. This new scholasticism created a complete Cultural Revolution. Around this same time, the works of Aristotle were being translated into Latin. Previously, only a few of his minor works were known. Now, with works such as *Analytica Posteriora*, *Topica*, and *Analytica Priora*, Aristotle's methods of discussion and enquiry were reaching a wider audience. Many other texts from both the Greek and Arabic world were also translated. In Europe, this was to create a "knowledge" explosion.

18. **Saint Thomas Aquinas** (1225-74)

The most influential medieval philosopher was Saint Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas, reason and faith cannot contradict each other, for they both come from the same divine source. Aquinas was the first philosopher to show the church that it was possible to incorporate many of the metaphysical and epistemological teachings of Aristotle. This was a great departure from the dominance that Neoplatonism had during the early medieval period. Aquinas believed that theology was a science. Careful application of reason will demonstrate the certainty of theoretical knowledge. For Aquinas, it was always preferable to support one's belief with a rational argument. Aquinas objected to Anselm's ontological proofs for the existence of God. Aquinas argued that since we are ignorant of the divine essence from which it began, we couldn't even begin to demonstrate its necessary existence. Aquinas said that we must first begin with the sensory experiences that we do not understand. Then we should reason upward to locate their origins in something eternal. Aquinas formulated "five ways" to prove the existence of God. The first way is the argument from motion.

- From our sensory experience, we see that something is moving
- To move, something has to be moved, or put into motion, by something else
- The series of movements cannot reach back infinitely

- Therefore, there must be a first mover
- This mover must then be God

There are many objections that could be made regarding the above arguments. If the second statement is absolutely true, then the conclusion must be false. Why must there be a first mover? Couldn't there be countless first movers? If a first mover did exist, why assume that it would resemble the God of Christianity? Even if the above ontological argument succeeded, it wouldn't necessarily support orthodox religion. The 2nd way has the same structure as the 1st, but begins from experience of an instance of efficient causation. The 3rd argument relies heavily upon a distinction between contingent and necessary "being." The 4th way is based upon a moral argument. To make a moral argument, we make a distinction between what we "judge" and the standard to which we hold as an ideal. This argument relies heavily on Platonic Idealism. The 5th way is known as the Teleological Argument. The order and arrangement of the natural world implies the deliberate design and intention of an intelligent creator. Therefore, our existence must have meaning.

19. **William Ockham** (1285-1347)

By the 14th century, the views of Thomas Aquinas – Thomism – were called the "old way" of achieving philosophical knowledge. The "new way" or "modern way" began with William of Ockham, an English Franciscan who represented his Order in numerous controversies over papal authority. In his philosophy, he was primarily concerned that an over-emphasis on "universal" forms would undermine the theological doctrine of free will. Ockham, like his predecessors, wished to defend the Christian doctrine of the omnipotence and freedom of a divine being – God. For him, God's freedom is incompatible with the existence of divine ideas. God doesn't use preconceived "ideas" when he creates, but creates the universe as he wishes. Consequently, human beings have no natures or essences in common. The only reality is "individual" beings or things. These beings or things are unique, and have nothing in common. Only concrete individual substances, and their particular characteristics, are real for Ockham. There are similarities among these "individual" things – and we can categorize them – but they are still unique to each other. Because God is free, he can create the universe – and its rules – as he wishes. Fire could be cold rather than hot. Light might be dark, rather than bright. Ockham distrusted our ability to find the truth of things. Instead, he relied on "probable" arguments to support his position. A vital principle in his philosophical method was that "plurality is not to be posited without necessity." This economy of thought is often referred to as Ockham's Razor. The views of William of Ockham spread widely in the late Middle Ages, despite being censured by a papal commission at Avignon in France.

20. The Collapse of Scholasticism

In the 14th and 15th centuries, the critical philosophy of Ockham began to undermine the scholastic project of synthesizing the traditions of philosophy and religion into a single and comprehensive system of thought. Many argued that the attempt to unite religion with philosophy had failed. Many prominent thinkers of the time – Jean Buridan (1300-1358), Nicholas of Autrecourt (1300-1350) – felt that such a synthesis wasn't possible. Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464), who deliberately embraced contradiction in trying to unite religion with philosophy made one final attempt. Cusa argued that if God's perfect unity can encompass contradictory qualities, then the contradictions evident in the philosophical tradition should also be embraced in a single comprehensive whole. Its logical consistency was, therefore, unimportant.

21. The Renaissance

By the end of the 15th century, the cumulative achievements of scholasticism – the comprehensive body of philosophical work developed by numerous medieval scholars – were gradually being eroded. This work, based mostly upon a neoplatonic and Aristotelian foundation - and which was directed towards supporting traditional Christian theology - began to be undermined. Beginning with the Renaissance, philosophers began to move away from theology as a vital part of their work. The old authority of the Roman Catholic Church was weakening, and Renaissance thinkers felt that their role wasn't simply to explain and complement divine revelation and scripture. Instead, there was a new focus: the individual. Just as many religious reformers had challenged ecclesiastical authority in the late medieval period, so too did Renaissance thinkers move away from institutional authorities in education and science. There was a renewed emphasis on individual freedom and choice. Many humanists of the Renaissance period, such as Giovanni Pico (1463-1494), expressed a profound confidence in the power of human reason to enable us to understand human nature, as well as our place in the "natural order." Philosophers such as Marsillio Ficino (1433-1499) and Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536), rejecting the numerous commentaries written by the scholastics, returned once again to the study of ancient classical texts. Other humanists, such as Francisco Suárez (1548-1617) and Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), attempted to create entirely new metaphysical systems by incorporating these classical texts with modern developments of the period. These philosophers were also very different from their predecessors in that their thinking was directly related to their national origins. The philosophy of Niccoló Machiavelli (1469-1527) was directly related to the political climate in Italy. Likewise, the philosophies of Francis Bacon (1561-11441626 and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) had a direct connection with English life. This was very different from the philosophers of the medieval period. The works of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Albertus Magnus (1200-1280), and St. Bionaventure (1221-1274) were unrelated to the country of their birth, and was more directly connected to their positions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The Renaissance period also placed a greater emphasis on using empirical methods for attaining knowledge. Copernicus (1473-1543) created a theoretical foundation for a heliocentric view of the universe. Kepler (1571-1630) later added the mathematical structure to support the heliocentric view. During the same period, Galileo (1564-1642) documented numerous direct observations of terrestrial and celestial motion. By emphasizing the importance of direct observation, Renaissance thinkers created the foundation for a completely empirical view of the world, a view of the world that was completely new. This "new science" coincided with – and was made possible by – new advances in instrumentation and optics. Without these tools, an accurate empirical study could not have been made. A number of other inventions, taken from the East, were to completely transform Europe in the 15th century: gunpowder, block printing, and the compass. Gunpowder became an agent of the new spirit of nationalism. It was used to destroy the massive fortifications of the old feudal order, thereby threatening the rule of the churchmen. The advent of the printing press also enabled the spread of knowledge throughout Europe, thereby ending the monopoly of the ecclesiastical elite. Classics in philosophy and literature were reaching a wider audience, and with it new questions. Because of the invention of the compass, it was also now possible to navigate safely at huge distances. This facilitated the entry into the Western Hemisphere.

But the "empirical view of reality" did have its critics. In translating and studying the ancient classical texts, the humanist scholars came upon the work of Sextus Empiricus (3rd Century A.D.), who introduced the philosophical concept of skepticism and the limits of human knowledge back into the debate. Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) was one of the most prominent exponents of the skeptical view. Montaigne believed that we were arrogant in believing that we could attain a complete and accurate view of the natural world. Why should it be there for our benefit? Why do we believe that we should understand it at all? Wasn't it arrogant to believe that we were meant to understand it? His argument rested upon a number of assumptions:

- Our senses are unreliable, and therefore prone to error
- Logical reasoning cannot be demonstrated without circularity, therefore logical reasoning is not reliable
- We should, therefore, doubt everything and settle for "mere opinion"
- The "new science" can offer us no hope. Everything new is eventually surpassed

In responding to the challenges put forward by Sextus Empiricus and Montaigne, philosophers defined four distinct areas of philosophical enquiry: metaphilosophy, ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology. It was within these four areas of enquiry that many of the later philosophers addressed themselves.

- **Metaphilosophy**
  What is the purpose of philosophy? Does it have a place, generally, in human life?

- **Ethics**
  How do we judge and evaluate human behavior? What is "the good" and what motivates our moral actions? Without the support of religious belief, is a moral life possible?

- **Metaphysics**
  Does God exist? What is the universe made of? What is the meaning and purpose of the universe? Why are we in the universe, and what is our purpose?

- **Epistemology**
  Is certain knowledge of the world possible? What does it depend upon?

In addition to the above four areas of enquiry, there arose three special categories of philosophical interest: political philosophy, humanism, and the philosophy of nature.

22. Political Philosophy

When secular authority replaced ecclesiastical authority as the dominant focus of interest, there was a shift of attention from religion to politics. Ideas that had lain dormant since pre-Christian times, concerning the nature and moral status of political power, were now renewed. Political philosophy, particularly in England, France, Italy, and Holland, began to flourish. But political philosophy during the Renaissance was essentially dualistic. It recognized a conflict between two opposing points of view: political necessity and general moral responsibility. Many philosophers of the time, including Machiavelli and Hobbes, attempted to resolve the conflict between these two positions. Both struggled with the conflict between institutional power and human freedom. By different means, they both concluded that only with a strong institutional base could morality flourish.

23. Niccoló Machiavelli (1469-1527)

Niccoló Machiavelli, early in the 16th century, wrote one of the most influential books on political philosophy: *The Prince*. Machiavelli, once a state secretary of the Florentine republic, resigned his position in order to write about political philosophy. His work primarily explored ways in which political power could be seized and maintained by the state. On initially reading his work, the impression is given that his main concern is solely with maintaining the power of the state, with little regard for the moral consequences of doing so. The term "Machiavellian" is often used in present times to refer to someone who is politically deceitful and unscrupulous. But this is a mischaracterization of his real attitude towards morality. For Machiavelli, the unification of Italy was of prime importance. In order to make this unification possible, he believed that only a strong state – based upon the ancient Roman virtues – could provide the proper

environment for morality to flourish. *The Prince*, published in 1513, offered practical advice on how to rule. The successful Prince, it maintained, must demonstrate virtú – skill or prowess – in both favorable and unfavorable times. Unlike the ethical philosophers, Machiavelli held that success in the public arena was distinct from private morality. The question, for Machiavelli, is not what make a human being good, but what makes him a good prince. A good prince will use any means necessary in order to create the foundations of a stable state.

24. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)

A century later, Thomas Hobbes – tutor to Charles II - proposed the idea of a "social contract." Hobbes believed that the life of man in the "state of nature" was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." In this brutish world, which preceded civilized social structures, "every man's hand" was "raised against every other." Thus, in order to live in a civilized world, it was necessary to create a "social contract." Within this social contract, we would be expected to surrender our individual rights in order to benefit from the security of a stable society. This "commonwealth" would provide the environment for liberty, freedom, cooperation, and contentment. According to Hobbes, the formation of the commonwealth would create a new entity: the *Leviathan*. It was to the *Leviathan* that complete responsibility for social order and public welfare was entrusted. But who would embody the role of the *Leviathan*? Hobbes proposed that all private rights should be subservient to that of a single authority. In return for this, private citizens would expect to receive general protection, as well as the rule of law. In Hobbes's view, the *Leviathan* could be a legislature, a single human being, or even an assembly of citizens. But Hobbes maintained that the best choice would be a hereditary monarch. By investing power in such a stable institution as the monarchy, we would protect our rights, collectively, as citizens. It was only when the sovereign failed to keep the commonwealth united, and to protect it, that his authority could legitimately be called into question.
In addition to his political philosophy, Hobbes is also credited with the creation of one of the most comprehensive philosophical systems of the time. His philosophy – which is usually labeled as mechanistic materialism – sought to provide a consistent description of man, nature, and society. It had much in common with the views of the early Greek Atomists. Hobbes distinguished between two philosophical approaches: synthetic and analytic. When we reason "forward" from causes to effects, we are reasoning synthetically. And when we reason "backward" from effects to causes, we are reasoning analytically. Hobbes also distinguished between "content" and "method." The philosophical questions we choose to pursue are matters of "content." The reasoning and language we use to address these questions is referred to as the "method." In addition, Hobbes's study of language led him to adopt a nominalistic position. Nominalism denies the reality of universals.

Hobbes's metaphysical foundation was that "reality" is matter in motion. The real world of our senses in located within a universe of constant movement and change. Therefore, the task of philosophy was to trace the causes and effects of

these movements and their "effects" upon our minds. Hobbes classified three main areas of study:

- **Physics**
  The science of actions and motions on natural bodies

- **Moral philosophy**
  The study of "the passions and perturbations of the mind" and how it is "moved" by appetite, desire, envy, or fear

- **Political or civil philosophy**
  How our chaotic behavior is constrained and guided by a force or power in order to create peace and prevent civil disorder

25. **René Descartes** (1596-1650)

The most significant philosopher of the late 17th century was René Descartes. He was a French citizen, but wrote his most productive work in Holland, which was very tolerant of new ideas. Descartes was educated in the scholastic tradition, but his pursuit of both mathematical and scientific truth eventually led him away from that tradition. His primary concern was with the creation of a secure foundation for the development and advancement of human knowledge. Descartes is considered to be the father of what we call Modern Philosophy. His ability to synthesis philosophical influences from the past, with the revolutionary advances now taking place in science, singled him out as one of the most influential and dominant philosophers of his time. In creating his "Cartesian" philosophy, he drew heavily upon earlier philosophers. From Aquinas and Anselm, he incorporated theological questions into his work. From the ancient Skeptics – Sextus Empiricus and Pyrrho – he formulated a new and revitalized skepticism. He was also heavily influenced by both the ancient Stoics, as well as with the work of Augustine.

As well as being a great philosopher, Descartes was an exceptional mathematician, and was the inventor of analytic geometry. Mathematical logic and reasoning played an important role in his philosophical studies. Descartes is considered, along with Francis Bacon (1561-1626), to be a founder of modern Empiricism and Rationalism. Descartes defined philosophy, in his *Principia*, as the "study of wisdom or the perfect knowledge of all one can know." In explaining the relationship between philosophy and our lives, he used the metaphor of the tree. The root of this tree is metaphysics. The trunk is physics, while the branches are morals, mechanics, and medicine. Descartes primary concern was with the trunk of the tree, which represented physics. In fact, unlike Aristotle – who attempted to create a metaphysics upon physics, Descartes did the opposite. He attempted to create a "physics" build upon a "metaphysical" foundation.

Descartes can also be credited with introducing dualism into our philosophical speculations. This dualism took two forms: the first was between God and the material world. The second was between the material world and the mind.

Descartes employed three distinct methods to build his philosophy. These were as follows:

- **Skepticism**
  To systematically question and doubt every belief that does not pass the test of indubitability

- **Subjectivism**
  To base all knowledge upon a foundation of certainty. For Descartes, consciousness, and in particular self-consciousness was that foundation. As such, "I think, therefore I am" emerges as the only innate belief that is unshakable by doubt. In fact, we can never to absolutely sure of the existence of the world as we can of our own existence. Therefore, the task of the philosopher is to study the mind, for only the mind can get to the truth underlying the everyday appearance of things. This had much in common with Platonic idealism

- **Mathematicism**
  To reject any idea that is not concise, clear, and free of contradiction

These can be alternatively stated as:

- Only those things which are indubitable are true
- Every question should be divided into manageable parts
- Start with the simple, and build towards the complex
- Frequently review the entire argument for consistency

Though the above stated principles lay a very firm foundation for philosophical enquiry and progress, it must be remembered that Descartes was also a good Catholic. As such, he did not apply his own principle of radical doubt to his own religious beliefs. This led to numerous self-contradictory positions in his philosophical work. Though he profoundly respected Galileo's writings, he chose to withdraw his own cosmological treatise, *Le Monde* (The World), from publication when the Inquisition condemned Galileo, in 1633. Descartes understood that his methods were radical, and hence a threat to the church. These concerns aside, he was strongly influenced by his religious faith.

The duality that existed between his religious beliefs and his scientific empiricism were evident from the very beginning. For example, Descartes stated that animals were complicated machines, but they had no soul. They are "clockwork" creatures. But how do we know, as human beings, that we are not also "clockwork" creatures? Descartes replied that "I know I have a soul"

because "I think, therefore I am." From this assumption, he concluded that a perfect god must exist. His argument was as follows:

- I know that I exist
- Since I am not perfect, I could not be the cause of my own existence
- Something must have caused my existence because I exist
- Whatever caused me must have also have a cause
- The chain of causes must eventually end with a first cause
- This first cause must be a perfect entity, a self-caused being
- This entity must be God
- God, being a perfect entity, would have no reason to deceive me
- I can therefore conclude that my search for truth is a noble and attainable one, since a perfect entity created me

The problems with the above chain-of-reasoning are numerous. The first is that it uses a circular argument to prove the existence of God. Descartes first uses the existence of God to say that it is rational to assume the reliability of clear and distinct ideas. He then uses these very same "reliable" ideas to prove the existence of God. Descartes responded to this criticism by stating that his argument wasn't circular because "intuitive" reasoning, in the proof of God's existence, requires no additional support in the moment of its conception. The problem with this reply is very significant. The attempt to prove the existence of God is Descartes first challenge after he has first stated that "I think, therefore I am." If this first effort should be flawed in its approach, then it follows that every other conclusion should become questionable.

Though Descartes may not have adhered entirely to the principles of radical doubt he had previously outlined, his influence was great in the 17th century. Even though Scholasticism was still being taught in the universities, it was Cartesianism that dominated intellectual life in Europe. Despite Descartes efforts to respect his theological convictions, it was inevitable, because of his popularity, that his work should come under scrutiny by church authorities. The Roman Catholic Church, in 1663, placed many of his writings on the Index of Forbidden Books. Academia consequently banned the teaching of his philosophy. But there was one exception: the Dutch universities. In Utrecht and Groningen, Cartesianism thrived in the free and tolerant atmosphere. It was in this setting that Cartesian principles were further developed, principles which were to have a radical effect on philosophy to this day.

26. Rationalism

If Descartes original intention was to create a comprehensive outline of scientific certainty, it was his successors – Leibniz and Spinoza – who formulated that intent into a coherent framework. Leibniz and Spinoza had much in common with Descartes. They both accepted a mechanistic and deterministic view of reality. And both shared, with Descartes, an extensive knowledge of mathematics. Leibniz, accurately reflecting the spirit of the times, said, "True

reasoning depends upon necessary or eternal truths, such as those of logic, numbers, geometry, which establish an indubitable connection of ideas and unfailing consequences." But if it was Descartes who regarded mathematical reasoning and logic as the paradigm for achieving progress in human knowledge, it was Spinoza and Leibniz who extended these principles even further.

27. Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677)

Spinoza, in particular, introduced completely new methods of philosophizing to 17th century Europe. For him, philosophy provided the means by which humankind could attain perfection. This perfection would be achieved when humankind could perceive the universe in all its "wholeness." Spinoza was a pantheist in that he perceived the universe to be a single and infinite "substance."

It was in his book *Ethica Ordine Geometrico Demonstrata* or *Ethics* posthumously published in 1677, that he outlined the primary elements of his philosophy. By synthesizing ideas found both within Cartesianism and Scholasticism, Spinoza attempted to create a comprehensive picture of the universe, a universe governed by unchanging laws of "logical necessity." From doing so, Spinoza concluded that there could be only one "substance" or "God" in the universe. This "substance" or "God" has infinite attributes. These attributes are themselves infinite. To quote Spinoza:

"Deus sive natura"

("Whatever is, is in God or nature.")

It follows then that this "substance" or "God" must be indivisible and completely unified, as well as eternal.

For Spinoza, the appearance of separateness that we see around us is not an accurate representation of the underlying reality. These separate phenomena are all aspects of a single "substance" or "God." The two dominant attributes of this "substance" or "God" are "extension" and "thought." The universe that we perceive around us, with its diverse physical phenomena, is a part of God's essence. This is what Spinoza is referring to when he speaks of "God's" or "nature's" "extension." In the mental realm, the existence of thought – modified by "infinite intellect" – produces the "truth." This "truth" includes all of the mental events which are the modes of "thought."

Spinoza went on to argue that the realm of "extension" and the realm of "thought" were causally independent of each other. Each of these realms were closed and self-contained systems. Despite the impossibility of any causal interaction between them, Spinoza speculated that the inevitable unfolding of their independent attributes must proceed in parallel with each other. According to Spinoza, "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things." As such, every physical event in the world of "extension"

must have a corresponding mental event in the world of "thought." This is so because everything flows from the same infinite being.

What does this mean for us as human beings? According to Spinoza, we are not substances, for only Nature or God is truly substance. But then what are we? Because our existence is reliant upon the reality of the one real "substance", we must conclude that we are then but a small part of that substance. According to Spinoza, we exist as "modes." As "modes", what kind of knowledge can human beings attain? Spinoza outlined three distinct forms of knowledge:

- **Opinion**
  The first type of knowledge is "opinion." This is the most unreliable source of knowledge, for it depends either on our sensory experiences, or else upon our memory and imagination. Therefore, we should disregard the misleading information provided by our senses, as well as the customs and habits into which we have been indoctrinated.

- **Reason**
  The second type of knowledge is "reason." By analyzing the effects of particular phenomena, we can reason back to original causes. This will lead us back, eventually, to the ultimate cause: the final truth.

- **Intuition**
  The third type of knowledge is "intuition." By using our "reason" to recognize the original cause, we then use this knowledge of the "divine essence" to intuit everything about reality: what was, what is, and what it will be.

Spinoza used the above argument as a foundation for morality. But how can we live a good and "moral" life if we are unaware of how our actions affect the essence of reality? What we define as "good" may in fact, over the long term, be "evil." Therefore, the greatest good that humans can do is to understand their place within the structure of the universe, this universe being a natural expression of the essence of "God" or "Nature."

But if everything is determined, as Spinoza maintained, how can we then speak of good or evil? If our actions are predetermined strictly by cause and effect, how then can we speak of human freedom and choice? By acquiring an adequate knowledge of the desires and emotions that are the "causes" of my "effects", I become free. This freedom is my reward, because it allows me to see that I am a significant "mode" in the greater reality.

28. **Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz** (1646-1716)

Leibniz was a mathematician, as well as a philosopher. His mathematical achievements were extensive: He invented infinitesimal calculus. But it was for his contribution to philosophy that Leibniz is most recognized. Leibniz published

only three books on philosophy during his lifetime. These were *Discours de metaphysique* (Discourse on Metaphysics) in 1686, *Théodicée* (Theodicy) published in 1710, and *La Monadologie* (Monadology) published in 1714. These books were not overtly technical, and were written for the general reading public. The more technical aspects of his work were discovered, centuries after his death, in notebooks and letters.

In the field of philosophy, he was the first to distinguish between "truths of fact" and "truths of reason." In so doing, he sought to draw a distinction between the "contingent" world of observation, with that of the logical or empirical world of reason. By applying rigorous and formal reasoning, Leibniz believed that we could attain knowledge of the ultimate structure of reality. The technique that Leibniz used was logical analysis. For Leibniz, every proposition can be expressed in the form of a subject-predicate. Additionally, every correct proposition is a statement of identity: that is that the predicate is wholly contained in its subject. For example:

$$2 + 3 = 5$$

According to Leibniz, everything that we know or believe can be expressed in one of two forms: "truths of fact" and "truths of reason." One of the most significant aspects of his philosophy was that all existential propositions are "truths of fact" and not "truths of reason."
For Leibniz, the "subject" of any proposition signifies a single, self-contained, and indivisible "object" or "monad", while the "predicate" expresses a variable such as "quality" or "property." Unlike Descartes, whose system was dualistic, and Spinoza, whose system was monistic, Leibniz proposed a system based upon plurality. Within this plurality, there existed an infinite number of "monads." These "monads" were unique unto themselves, and each experienced the universe from a unique perspective. This view was in stark contrast to Spinoza, who viewed the universe as a single substance.

29. Isaac Newton (1642-1727)

The true founders of the period known as the Enlightenment were John Locke and Isaac Newton. It was Newton - the successor to Copernicus and Galileo - who wrote one of the most significant and influential books of the time. This was the *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* or The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy, which he completed in 1687. This publication sought to create, by applying the principles of logic and mathematics, the first great synthesis of mathematics with nature. By utilizing many of the ideas found within the work of Spinoza, Leibniz, and Descartes, Newton attempted to apply these new principles to the natural world. Newton's own work had a revolutionary impact in the 18th century. Because of him, there was a renewed interest in applying the tools of logic and mathematics to the natural world. In these, the 17th and 18th centuries, natural science gained prominence over purely abstract mathematical reasoning as a means of understanding reality. Along with

Newton's insights into the laws of motion and gravitation, there were other breakthroughs among his contemporaries in chemistry, physics, and biology.

30. John Locke (1632-1704)

John Locke was greatly impressed with the achievements that were being made in the natural sciences, and wished to extend these achievements by creating a complete theory of knowledge. This theory of knowledge would be based on a careful and rigorous study of nature. His goal was to establish a comprehensive epistemological foundation for knowledge - one that was devoid of superstitions or uncritical assumptions.

Locke's first question was "How to we acquire knowledge?" In his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), he began by studying what our knowledge consists of. It is made up of ideas. These ideas can take many forms. They encompass perceptions, emotions and reflections. Locke's primary assumption about ideas was that they were not innate. They were derived solely from our experience. Locke proposed the principle of empiricism, which states that all our knowledge is derived from experience. This "experience" is obtained either by sensation (from the external world) or by reflection (from the inner world of the mind). Anticipating the eventual emergence of linguistic philosophy, Locke showed the relationship of words to ideas. For Locke, words signify ideas. Disputes arise when words are used carelessly, without clear "signification." Therefore, the "word" and the "idea" can only be meaningful if both co-exist. To use a "word" without reference to a particular "idea" is meaningless. There was also on additional problem: The Extent of Knowledge. Locke understood that our knowledge is quite limited. If we can only achieve knowledge when we have a genuine understanding of the "essence" of things, then it follows that our knowledge will always be limited. Locke had to finally conclude that achieving a completely epistemological foundation for knowledge was beyond our reach. We must content ourselves with relative or probable knowledge. But this, according to Locke, was sufficient for our purposes. We have, within our grasp, access to knowledge which will secure our "great concernments." These "great concernments" relate to our survival in everyday life. We do not need a great understanding of the "essence" of food, for example, in order to survive. We can exist and prosper, even with partial knowledge. Regarding morality and our relation to a creator, Locke held that our partial knowledge of things was sufficient for our needs.

31. George Berkeley (1685-1753)

A major critic of Locke's work was George Berkeley. Berkeley believed that Locke had not carried the principles of empiricism to their logical conclusion. He proposed an entirely radical alternative to the moderated empiricism of both Locke and Descartes.

Berkeley held that these earlier philosophers had failed to draw the correct conclusion from their studies. They had tried to avoid the problem of attaining knowledge by the act of separating "material" objects from our ability to perceive their "essences" correctly. In fact, this "representationalist" model of knowledge acquisition, according to Berkeley, was inherently flawed.

Berkeley countered that there was a viable alternative. Our common sense clearly shows that perception consists of two distinct elements: the "perceiver" and the "perceived." The "perceived" can only be ideas, since these are the only things that are real. We must discard the notion that material objects are real since we cannot confirm their existence - in a truly empirical sense – simply by the act of observation. We continually encounter the problem of "relative perception" or "relative essences."

In fact, the model put forward by Locke changes from:

Perceiver *Ideas* *Material Objects*

To Berkeley's model of…

Perceiver *Ideas*

For Berkeley, only the "ideas" are real. The "representationalist" position is flawed in two major respects. The first is that it cannot provide a purely empiricistic account of the connection between "ideas" and the "objects" they are meant to represent. Secondly, this flawed empiricism has serious consequences. It creates a relativistic perception of reality. This relativism inevitably leads to skepticism, and hence to atheism. To avoid this relativism, we must embrace immaterialism.

For Berkeley, there are no "abstract" ideas. In his *Principles of Human Knowledge*, Berkeley argued strongly against Locke's assumption that "general terms" (or words) can signify "abstract" ideas. There are no abstract ideas. Everything exists within the mind.

If we accept Berkeley's claim that materialism leads to atheism, then the converse is also true: that immaterialism can restore our religious faith. Since our knowledge and "perception" of reality is "mind-dependent", then it follows that there must be a primary perceiver, God, in whose mind all ideas are contained.

32. David Hume (1711-1776)

The Scottish philosopher, David Hume, attempted to counter Berkeley's immaterialist philosophy by extending and developing many of Locke's philosophical assumptions. By the late 18th century, science had made incredible progress. Mere metaphysical speculation, according to Hume, had become outdated. Hume rejected the notion that there should be a positive outcome for

our philosophical investigations. Instead, he felt that an extreme philosophical skepticism was necessary in order to find the truth of reality. Hume's starting position was, however, value independent. It wished neither to arrive at a purely materialist conclusion, nor an immaterialistic one. Hume believed that the correct goal of philosophy should be to explain why we believe what we do. He explored this goal extensively in both his *Treatise of Human Nature* and in *An Enquiry into Human Understanding*.

Hume began his exploration of human belief by distinguishing between "impressions" and "ideas." "Impressions" are our "immediate" experiences. We "see" or "taste" or "touch" in an immediate sense. Our "ideas" are different. They are but flawed copies of our original experiences. They are our memories of these sensations. Hume thus declared that our primary aim should be to find the origins of these "ideas." In doing so, he distinguished between two particular concepts: "Relation of Ideas" and "Matters of Fact." "Relation of Ideas" refers to beliefs or opinions that are partially or entirely created within the mind. These ideas are contingent on speculation and theorizing. "Matters of Fact", however, are beliefs that we hold about the outside world that clearly refer to an external object or phenomena. These latter perceptions of reality are *a priori* beliefs. They "precede" experience, and would exist independently of our knowledge of them.

Hume gradually eroded away many of the assumptions we take for granted. Many of our beliefs are based on habit. We are conditioned to believe and accept assumptions that have no basis in reality. These habits or customs are self-reinforcing and create a "subjective reality" that we mistake for an "objective reality." Even our assumptions regarding cause and effect are an illusion. These causes and effects are distinct and separate. That they occur in "constant conjunction" is no empirically reliable guide to the validity of their existence. Even the existence and autonomy of a "self" comes under attack. Hume asks, "From what antecedent impression does the idea of the self arise?" But where, according to Hume, is the "I" that I refer to when I say, "I believe…"? No matter how hard I try to observe the events "in my mind", where is the "I" that I speak of? When I look inward, all I see are a numerous succession of individual ideas or sensations, each of which are linked by the habit of association and familiarity. Thus, our belief that there is an "I" within our minds is an illusion that we accept as a matter of habit, but not by empirical observation and verification. The idea of the "self" or the "soul" is thus an illusion. We are but a mixture of distinct and separate sensations and perceptions. Yet another illusion we possess, according to Hume, is our faith in the existence of the external world. We believe in it, not because it can be shown to exist empirically, but because of the habit of familiarity. It is natural to believe in its existence, but its provability is in question. What then can we know? It would seem that Hume's empiricism, unlike that of even Locke or Berkeley, leads to total and absolute skepticism. Hume suggested that we adopt a "mitigated skepticism", one that accepts the limits of human knowledge. Pure mathematics because it rests entirely upon the relations of ideas – and that presumes nothing about the external world – is our only safe guide to truth.

But how do we address the question of God, of morality, or the foundation for ethical behavior? Though it is impossible to account for our feelings in a purely empirical way, our feelings can nevertheless provide a reasonable guide for our behavior. When we help someone, we tend to feel good about ourselves. When we do wrong, we have feelings of regret or guilt. Initially, this foundation for moral behavior seems extremely flawed. The subjective nature of its premises can lead just as easily to negative behavior. Hume responds by saying that our subjective approach to morality is at least equal to our faith in the existence of "facts" concerning the natural world. Both rely on an absence of rational evidence. Hume concluded that he had provided humankind with a moral principle that was consistent and no less significant than the "certainties" of the natural sciences.

33. George Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831)

Of all the German Idealists, Hegel was the most prominent. His aim was to construct an entirely comprehensive system of knowledge about reality. Hegel held that reality must be rational. The multiplicity of things is an illusion, for they are all part of a singularity or unity. This "absolute consciousness" contains everything that is knowable, or that can be experienced. Hegel focused on the study of logic in order to frame his study of reality. By utilizing logic, Hegel proposed the concept of the dialectic. For Hegel, a concept (thesis) can be countered with an objection (antithesis), thus leading to an accommodation between the two (synthesis). This synthesis wasn't static. It becomes the new thesis. As such, it anticipates the emergence of yet another antithesis – leading to a new synthesis. For Hegel, all of our ideas are part of a totality which he called "The Absolute" or "Absolute Spirit." In his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel described "Absolute Spirit" as the evolution of Spirit from Subjective Spirit to Objective Spirit, and finally then to Absolute Spirit. This final stage in our understanding - Absolute Spirit – finally transcends the old dichotomy between empiricism and rationalism. For Hegel, all history is moving towards Absolute Spirit.

34. Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

One of the most outspoken critics of Hegel's extreme rationalism was Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher. Kierkegaard was unique in the history of philosophy in that he published much of his work under different names, or even posthumously. Kierkegaard did so because he was deeply concerned with the problem of attachment. We become too easily attached – out of habit – to systems of thought or beliefs. This attachment undermines our ability to think freely: without habit or conditioning. Kierkegaard rejected absolutely the central premise of Hegel's work, the striving towards Absolute Spirit, focusing instead on the importance of every individual as being unique and separate. But how should the individual live? What should he follow, and what should he reject? Kierkegaard distinguished between two types of truth: objective and subjective.

Given the limits on our ability to discern what are, in absolute terms, objective truths, we should instead embrace subjective truths. It is more important, according to Kierkegaard, how we believe something, rather than what we believe. Most importantly, are we acting in an authentic or inauthentic manner?

35. The American & British Idealists

In the 19th century, the study of idealism continued to prosper. Its desire to unify all knowledge into a single comprehensive system attracted some of the best American and British philosophers. These included T.H. Green, Edward Caird, F.H. Bradley, Andrew Seth, and Josiah Royce.

36. Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) & John Stuart Mill (1806-1873): Utilitarianism

Another major philosophical movement of the 19th century was that of Utilitarianism. This movement originated in Great Britain. Its key figures were Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. Bentham and Mill founded their principles upon a foundation of utility. Both Bentham and Mill used the "utility" of an idea as a guide to its intrinsic merit. For instance, Bentham based his "moral theory" upon a simple calculus. What are the consequences of certain types of behavior? What are the positives, and what are the negatives? Those actions that extend human happiness - as opposed to those which prevent human unhappiness - are deemed the most utilitarian. Because a society consists of individuals, those actions which increase the happiness of the greatest number is considered to be the most beneficial. However, this did not mean that there should exist a "tyranny of the majority." Every individual has the right to choose their own lifestyle, as well as possessing freedom of thought and action. The state could only legitimately intervene in curtailing this freedom if the freedom of other individuals was threatened.

John Stuart Mill was born fifty eight years after Bentham. Mill focused much of his work upon creating a completely moral foundation for utilitarianism. As a starting point, Mill stated that "…everyone can agree that the consequences of human actions contribute importantly to their moral value" and that "…actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure." But how do we know what the consequences of our actions will be? How can we be expected to be mindful of all the possible effects of our choices? Mill understood that "pure" or "idealistic" utilitarianism was unrealistic. Hence, he proposed a secondary form of utilitarianism. A set of moral rules, decided upon collectively, would provide a reasonable (but always revisable) guide to our moral decisions. However, Mill was mindful of the abuses of state power. In his book *On Liberty*, he clearly states that "The only purpose for which power can be rightfully

exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others."

37. Fredrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Like Kierkegaard, Nietzsche was also deeply concerned with the plight of the individual within a social setting. How are we to act? Are we to be part of the herd, or can we live independently? How can we act in an authentic manner? Civilization - according to Nietzsche - was guilty of indoctrination. Habits and customs are substituted for true individualistic independence. We surrender our autonomy for the comforts of slogans and propaganda. Nietzsche rejected traditional values - both social and religious – and was committed to restoring the deep and passionate instincts of our nature. We can be heroic, but only if we unburden ourselves of tradition and habit. We attach ourselves to organized religions, according to Nietzsche, because we have become cowards. Values, codes of behavior, morality: these are illusions. We have no certainties, and the belief that we do or could acquire them is a cage we choose to live inside. Because of his austere and nihilistic outlook, many consider Nietzsche to be outside the realm of proper philosophy. Also, unlike many of his contemporaries and predecessors, Nietzsche didn't follow a strict methodology. In many ways, he was a poetic philosopher.

38. Logic and Mathematical Foundations: Logical Positivism

Early in the 20th century, logic and mathematics began to gain prominence within the field of philosophy. Unlike before, logic and mathematics now took a central - rather than a peripheral - position within the study of philosophical questions. The work of Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) in these areas was instrumental in laying the foundation for the current direction in philosophy.

In the early 1920's, soon after World War I, a number of philosophers and mathematicians began focusing on the study of logic to resolve philosophical problems. The purity of their approach had enormous repercussions. Because their methodology depended on purely logical tautologies (an extension of Russell's "formal system"), they rejected metaphysical speculation. What the "formal system" couldn't synthesize, it rejected. This rejection characterizes philosophy in the 20th century. But logical positivism, because it depended on empirical data, was very seductive. Like science, it offered philosophy a chance to move beyond the never-ending debates that dominated its history, and to make "progress" in our knowledge. Logical positivism was powerful because it seemed to offer an objective response to the then prevalent subjectivity. At the heart of this "objective response" was the concept of "verifiability." This "verifiability" followed the logical structure of:

- A statement is based upon a proposition.
- A proposition can be verified or rejected.
- If the statement can be verified, it is meaningful.

- If the statement cannot be verified, it is meaningless.

This strict methodology was a complete rejection of the existing methodology of metaphysics. Metaphysics draws some of its inspiration from abstract speculation. We make educated guesses. We make observations. We formulate a hypothesis to demonstrate a "truth." The principle of "verifiability" is almost entirely absent from metaphysics. But why should this absence be seen as a negative? Why should only empirically provable propositions – which only occupy a small portion of our perceptions – be seen as the only propositions that possess value? Within the system of logical positivism, religion is considered meaningless: it cannot be verified empirically, as are most epistemology propositions and moral values. The only thing that is left is mathematics and natural science.

39. Karl Popper (1902-1994)

An interesting rejection of the purity of logical positivism was put forward by Karl Popper. Unlike the greatest proponents of logical positivism, Popper believed that even verificationism – the foundation of logical positivism - was itself an illusion. According to Popper, even a scientific fact isn't absolute. It is a hypothesis only. A scientific hypothesis is true only until it can be proved false. By continually applying the principle of "falsifiabilty", we gradually attain a more accurate picture of reality.

40. Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)

Analytic philosophy took many forms. The logical positivism of philosophers such as Bertrand Russell and A.J. Ayer (1910-1989) was quickly succeeded by another variation: the analysis of language. This movement began with Ludwig Wittgenstein. Unlike the logical positivists, Wittgenstein felt that most philosophical problems were not genuine problems at all. They resulted from a confusion of language. Like Russell and Ayer, Wittgenstein held that mathematical logic was the surest means of understanding reality. But Wittgenstein applied this form of logic to the use of language. Only true statements (empirically provable observations of reality) are valid. When we've attained a completely comprehensive list of these "true statements", we will then have a complete understanding of reality. Much of the confusion we have about truth and reality, according to Wittgenstein, is due to our poor understanding of language. The absence of precision in how we formulate statements is the problem, for these distort our perceptions of reality. But are subjective statements – statements that cannot be verified empirically – worthless? Initially, Wittgenstein said that they were, but he later changed his opinion. After abandoning philosophy for more than a decade, Wittgenstein began to doubt the validity of his earlier position. In fact, Wittgenstein declared that the very value of language is its innate subjectivity. Rather than setting an unrealistic goal for the empirical certainty of individual statements or propositions, we should regard

language as a flexible tool of communication and meaning. We use "language games" to communicate with each other. The terminology and methods we employ – when speaking with someone who shares a particular interest – are appropriate for that context. They may seem meaningless or trivial to someone who doesn't share that interest, but they are still valuable within a narrow context.

41. A Brief Overview of Symbiotic Panentheism

(Extract from Tractate 12 – Volume II: The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception – by Daniel J. Shepard)

Simply put, "symbiotic panentheism" follows the basic, most widely accepted concepts of present-day science, religion, and philosophy. The following is the general flow symbiotic panentheism takes when integrated with the most generally accepted concepts held by today's sciences, religions or philosophies. Some items are embraced as basic components by only one of the three fields, some by two, some by all. The bold face concepts are what symbiotic panentheism adds to the general logic flow to cause a perceptual shift for the future of our species, society, and the individual.

God and Panentheism

1. Reality exists
2. The initiating force - causative factor - of reality is "God."
3. God is omnipresent; as such, **all things are in God, including our known reality**.
4. God is bigger than reality.
5. God is omnipotent; **It has the power to create new, original knowledge**.
6. God is omniscient; **It knows how to create more knowledge. It cannot create new, creative, untainted knowledge within Itself**.
7. God is omnipresent; **It cannot create outside Itself**.

Symbiotic panentheism fully addresses the paradox of numbers five, six, and seven. Panentheism accepts the concepts of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience while at the same time acknowledging the full significance of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience by recognizing God's ability to become even more so.

The Soul and Symbiosis

1. Humankind exists.
2. Humankind exists in the universe, in "reality."
3. The essence of the individual is not the body nor the brain.
4. The essence of the individual is the soul.

5. **The soul, being within reality, which in turn is within God, is a part of God**.
6. **The** individual is not God.
7. **The individual is a part of God**.
8. Reality separates the individual from God and lies between the individual and God.
9. Humankind, souls, are creative and can experience.
10. Soul separated from direct contact with God can create and experience untainted by God's knowledge.
11. Souls can learn and grow.
12. God **can learn through the journey of souls**.

Under the "symbiotic" portion of symbiotic panentheism, the significance of the human species, the significance of the individual, is placed at the level of God and given an importance to God. Thus emerges the rationality for respect due to the individual. Symbiotic panentheism places the soul in a symbiotic relationship - a mutually beneficial, close association - with God.

Human Significance

1. Humanity's perceptions of itself as a species and as individuals determine its behavior.
2. The higher the level of significance we have of ourselves, the higher the level of our behavior.
3. Predestination relieves us of responsibility.
4. Free will raises our level of responsibility.
5. **The level of perception we can assign to ourselves is to be able to have the free will to assist God in the one thing God cannot do as God - grow**.
6. **The soul being God but separated from God (being non-omnipresent, non-omniscient, non-omnipotent) has the ability to learn, experience, and create isolated from God**.
7. **The highest level of significance we can assign to ourselves is to help God, ourselves, become even more omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent**.

Human significance now becomes something it has never before been. Human significance now becomes defined. Not only does it become defined, it now becomes defined as significant for it becomes significant beyond human needs. Human significance now becomes significant to God Itself.

Social Ramifications

1. **The** essence of all individuals is the soul.
2. **The essence of all individuals is a part of God, a piece of God**.
3. **All** individuals are important to God and deserve to be treated as such.

4. **The soul, a piece of God, is important to and needed by God**.
5. The individual, a piece of God, deserves to be treated with the respect due to God.
6. **All** individuals are equally important.
7. **The individual, God, is not in a hierarchical relationship to itself**.

Symbiotic panentheism provides the logic needed to dismantle all hierarchical systems and perceptions of relative worth. Symbiotic panentheism eliminates the most fundamental hierarchical system created by humankind for humankind - the hierarchy system created between God and humans. It eliminates the status levels between beings. Symbiotic panentheism does not destroy what humanity has; it adds to what humanity has. Symbiotic panentheism accepts the significance of God to the individual and to the species. It also adds the significance of the individual and of the species to this one way concept of God.

Through the fusion of panentheism and symbiosis, we form symbiotic panentheism, a philosophical, perceptual shift for the new millennium that actually defines a purpose for humanity, for the individual, for the environment, and for our relationship to God. Under symbiotic panentheism, it is our job to see that God grows. We have the free will to determine the direction God grows. This is truly an awesome responsibility, an awesome task for humankind and for the individual.

However, just as children rise to the level of expectations we place upon them, humanity will rise to the level of expectations it places upon itself. There is little doubt that society, families, and individuals could use more human, humane, godly compassion in their journeys. To begin to understand this logic, one must examine the four forms of theism and their treatment of the three most universally accepted characteristics of God: omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence.

Omniscience

Atheism assigns the least knowledgeable form to God. According to atheism, God does not exist and God as an entity has no knowledge. Pantheism enlarges God's knowledge base over atheism. Under pantheism, God and reality are one and the same size. God has size and God has knowledge. However, the knowledge has limits. God is limited to the knowledge found within the universe, whatever that size may be. Classical or traditional theism enlarges God's knowledge base over pantheism. Classical and traditional theism, however, hold that God knows everything that has been known, is known or could be known. This places limits on God. Since God knows everything, it closes the door on the possibility of knowing what could be, but isn't, for all things.

Panentheism is in sync with classical or traditional theism in terms of what God knows. But whereas classical and traditional theism puts an end to the concept of omniscience and leaves God in a state of permanent equilibrium, panentheism goes on to expand God's possible knowledge base through accepting the

scientific principle that permanent equilibrium is an unnatural state - even for God. Panentheism applies the concept of the growth of knowledge to God. Of the four theisms, only panentheism assigns the complete characteristic of omniscience to God, for it is the only theism to assign the knowledge of how God gains more knowledge to grow.

Omnipotence

Atheism basically purports the concept that there is no God. Since God has no size, It has no power. God is powerless. Pantheism magnifies God's power over the perception of atheism. Within pantheism, God and reality are one. God has all the power of our universe and no more, for that is all there is. With the concept that God is greater in size than reality, it follows that God's power is greater than in the case of pantheism. Classical or traditional theism again increases God's power by stating that God is all-powerful; however, it limits God's power to that of Its total power. Under classical and traditional theism, God is all-powerful but is limited, for It is not powerful enough to become more so.

Panentheism magnifies God's power above all theistic perceptions through incorporating the concept that if God is truly all powerful, then God has the power to use Its knowledge to become even more so. This is not a factor tied to a location in time, for time most probably is a factor of universes and realities - not God. Time is the factor allowing the existence of the beginning-end concepts built into universes. On the other hand, God, by definition, has no characteristic concept of beginning-end. Of the four theisms, only panentheism assigns the complete characteristic of omnipotence to God, for it assigns the ability and power of God to gain more knowledge.

Omnipresence

Again, atheism basically purports the concepts that there is no God, God is omnipresent, God is infinitely small, and its nothingness can be found everywhere. God's absence is everywhere. This is clearly the smallest form of God. Pantheism enlarges God over atheism by believing there is one God and that God and reality are one and the same size. God has size and is limited to the size of reality, whatever that size may turn out to be. Classical or traditional theism enlarges God over pantheism by stating that there is one God and God is greater in size than reality. Classical and traditional theism imply, however, that God and reality are separate items from each other. God transcends reality. God is everything except reality.

Panentheism enlarges God over classical or traditional theism. Panentheism purports that God is omnipresent. God incorporates everything; therefore, God is everything and thus, there is no place for reality to be other than within God Itself. Of the four theisms, only panentheism assigns the complete characteristic of omnipresence to God, for it assigns not only an omnipresence incorporating all of our universe, our reality, but all realities that may exist and what lies beyond and between them.

Even more significantly, only symbiotic panentheism proceeds to allow for the expansion of the very characteristics of omnipotence and omniscience of God that, in turn, through increased awareness, expands omnipresence itself by definition.

Omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience are three characteristics humanity, in general, wants or appears to want to affix to God. Of the four theisms, only panentheism manages to do so in total. Panentheism is the foundation for symbiotic panentheism, for without the "panentheism" the "symbiosis" becomes illogical. Symbiotic panentheism establishes a metaphysical model that accepts, while at the same time dismantles, the paradoxes of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence. In addition, it is a model that circumvents the state of permanent equilibrium we have assigned to God, a state we often refer to as stagnation.

Panentheism, defined as the location of reality in terms of God's location, is seemingly insignificant, but the subtlety leads to the initiation of enormous perceptual and behavioral shifts for our species, society, the environment, and the individual. Understanding the differences between the four basic perceptions of a causative force (atheism, pantheism, classical or traditional theism, and panentheism) allows us to move forward and begin the examination of symbiotic panentheism in particular.

God

Whatever one professes, humans have always oriented their philosophical discussions around God or god. Whatever one's belief, the fact remains that humans have, to our knowledge, always conceptualized God or a form of God in some sense and, therefore, perhaps this small seed, this nugget of the universality of humans, is true. Is God the originator of reality? The original force? The source of the beginning? Whatever one's belief, there are only two premises with which to identify: either there is a God, an originator, an original force, a source of a beginning, or there is not. In all of our observations within reality, there is only one observation a this point in time that we cannot directly tie to having a beginning, an origination, and that is reality.

There are two options to consider. The first option is the premise that if all things, except reality, appear to have an identifiable beginning, then reality must also have an identifiable beginning and thus, an originator, Creator, God. Another way of saying this is that all things in reality appear to be affected by time and thus, it is most probable that reality itself is affected by time or, in essence, most probably has a beginning and an end.

The other option is to reject the logic of option one and embrace option two. The second option is the premise that reality itself is different from everything within it and has no origination; in other words, it has no beginning. Thus, one would accept the concept that God, an originator, is illogical. This thought process

would allow one to reject the inference to which all of our observations point. It would allow one to conclude and embrace the direct opposite inference that there is no God or originator of reality. Reality has always existed.

The premise that reality had a beginning, that there is a creative originating force, that there is a God to reality is supported by an almost infinite amount of direct observations and logic. The premise that reality had no beginning, that there is no creative originating force, that there is no God, is supported by nothing we have observed before - no observations and no logic. Is the concept of reality having no beginning possible? Certainly anything we conjure up in our minds is "possible" but not probable.

Assuming we accept the premise of the existence of an originator of reality, an original force, a source of the beginning, we can then move on to examine the concept of reality, where reality fits into consciousness, and where humanity, as well as other forms of consciously aware beings, fit into all of this. In other words, where you and where I fit into the grand scheme of "it all." The picture we have of God is still out of focus. As time passes and our knowledge expands, we will gain greater resolution regarding our observations. In the meantime, keep in mind that the Creator of reality is the Creator of reality and will remain so regardless of what we do or wish to believe.

We cannot create a creator. We cannot insist that a creator is whom we have, through time and custom, drawn it to be, but rather, we must understand that whom we have drawn the Creator to be, through time and custom, was what we needed It to be in order to define our niche in reality. The Creator is what the Creator is to ourselves because we needed It to be such in order to find comfort in our lack of knowledge and to assuage our fears of what we perceive to be mortality.

Religion and science orient around one universe. Science and religion still have not fully accepted the concept of other life forms and have not done so because they do not know how to fuse them into their doctrines of classical or traditional theism. Symbiotic panentheism can help them with that very problem without destroying their essence, identity or uniqueness. It is only under classical or traditional theism that we could assign a greater significance to ourselves, to our home, and to our planet over other entities and their homes or planets.

With increased knowledge (omniscience) comes increased power (omnipotence) and as knowledge grows, so grows awareness (omnipresence). Growth, equilibrium, decline - three choices we can comprehend for the state of God. Scientifically speaking, permanent equilibrium appears to be an unnatural state of being. Religiously speaking, an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God appears to be a contradiction unless it is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent enough to become even more so. Therefore, permanent equilibrium is not an option. Being tied to a God that exists in a state of decline is not a preferable or advantageous choice to bestow upon our Creator. The only state of being we can comprehend for God is that of a growing God.

Thus develops the symbiotic relationship aspect - a mutually beneficial relationship between us and our Creator. We hope it is mutually beneficial, for it could just as well be a mutually destructive relationship depending upon the actions we take under free will. This is precisely where our responsibility lies. We, along with others, have the responsibility to develop the type of God that exists.

In a symbiotic relationship, beneficial or detrimental contributions are two possibilities that could exist between two identities. Understanding our significance in reality and to its Creator would definitely help us understand what actions we, humans with freewill, should take while functioning within reality. Our actions affect not only God but, in essence, ourselves. Under the model of symbiotic panentheism, nothing, not even the annihilation of our reality's physical mechanism, can diminish our purpose for existence. Nothing, not even total annihilation of our reality itself, can destroy our accomplishments as souls, for they transcend reality and embrace - fuse - with the very essence of God.

Three Ultimate Paradoxes

1. Being omnipotent - all-powerful - but not having the power to become more so
2. Being omnipresent - everywhere - but limited within the confines that already exist
3. Being omniscient - knowing everything - but not knowing how to learn more

The Creator of reality did not create these paradoxes. We, humanity, defined these paradoxes ourselves.

We, humanity, give them a life of their own. And then, we, humanity, perpetuate our irrationality into absolutisms. Eliminating the paradoxes of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience does not alter or call for the elimination of our rich history of traditions or beliefs. Eliminating these three paradoxes expands our view of our p1 ace in the universe, our purpose in the scheme of things, and our tolerance for uniqueness. Expansion of our pre sent concepts of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience into a concept that can become even more so does not bring down the foundations of our society; rather, it provides a foundation to our foundation. Omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience are paradoxes only because we have made them so and continue to perpetuate these concepts.

Panentheism, the picture grows:

A-theism

Our universe, reality, is alone.

Pan-theism
Our universe, reality, is not alone; something else exists within it.

Pan-en-theism
Our universe, reality, is part of a greater Reality.

Are classical and traditional theisms complete theisms? No, they are just theisms waiting for a prefix.

"Symbiotic" is the portion that provides the significance. It provides the other half to, "God is significant to humanity." The other half is, "Intelligence's within realities, humanity, the individual, is significant to God."

We have the free will to recognize our power - our significance - and dismantle the hierarchical and, therefore, oppressive systems we have created. We are all a part of God and continually contribute to God's knowledge and awareness. We create what we choose to create. Indeed, we all have an awesome responsibility.

My thanks to Stephen Moore for this contribution of this tractate and the editing and layout involved in the three volume set comprising the work: The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception.

Note to the reader:

- The intent of the more than 20+ books is to provide enough material to prove the validity of panentheism not beyond 'all' doubt but to prove the validity of panentheism beyond 'all reasonable' doubt. The point being to elevate individual's and our species' perception of themselves in order to elevate human behavior on both an individual level and on a species level before we begin to step into the heavens.

- The series of books, Panentheism, emerged from earlier metaphysical editions and have been edited and retitled to more accurately reflect the true nature of their contents.

- I understand there are numerous stylistic, grammatical and spelling errors within all my work. I hope you as a reader can overlook such issues and focus upon the ideas being presented. I do not like to make excuses but all the material is, after all, free to the public and therefore producing no revenue stream.

  Having spent more than a quarter of a million dollars on the web site: panentheism.com, 20+ books, presentations, videos, attempts to place the material in the hands of academics and the public, … I found my resources insufficient for formal editing. It is perhaps best to consider the

products of my work more as a personal log in the rough of what it is I have been entrusted, with the condition that I pass this material on to you.

Daniel J Shepard
Medium
Panentheism.com

Other Books by Daniel J. Shepard
Other Books by Daniel J. Shepard

Panentheism

Panentheism	**Volume 1**	**You and I Together Have a Purpose in Reality**
Panentheism	**Volume 2**	**Man Made In the Image of God**
Panentheism	**Volume 3**	**Science, Religion, Philosophy and Prophecy**
Panentheism	**Volume 4**	**Cross Reference and Guide to Volumes 1 – 3**
Panentheism	**Volume 5**	**Addressing the Concept of The Existence of An After Life**
Panentheism	**Volume 6**	**Addressing the Concept of The Individual / Humanity Being Confined to 'a' Physical Universe**
Panentheism	**Volume 7**	**Addressing the Concept of Free Will and Determinism**
Panentheism	**Volume 8**	**Addressing the Concept of Punishment From God**
Panentheism	**Volume 9**	**Addressing the Concept of Establishing a Universal Ethic**
Panentheism	**Volume 10**	**Addressing the Concept of The 'Lack' of a First Cause**
Panentheism	**Volume 11**	**Shedding Light On: $E = mc^2$**
Panentheism	**Volume 12**	**Shedding Light On The Paradox: Mathematics and Non-Members**
Panentheism	**Volume 13**	**Shedding Light On Creation From a Void**
Panentheism	**Volume 14**	**Shedding Light On Monism & Dualism**
Panentheism	**Volume 15**	**Examining The Responsibility of Metaphysics**
Panentheism	**Volume 16**	**Examining Western Philosophy's Validation of Panentheism**
Panentheism	**Volume 17**	**Examining the Rebirth of Metaphysics Through Panentheism**
Panentheism	**Volume 18**	**Examining the Concepts of Chaos vs. Complexity**
Panentheism	**Volume 19**	**Examining Small packages of Thought Regarding Panentheism**
Panentheism	**Volume 20**	**Understanding the Whole of Reality via**

		Panentheism
Panentheism	**Volume 21**	**Personal Experiences Regarding The Soul via Panentheism**
Panentheism	**Volume 22**	**A New Meaning for the Words 'God'/'Brahma' via Panentheism**

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More information can be found at my web site

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www.panentheism.com

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The point being to elevate individual's and our species' perception of themselves in order to elevate human behavior on both an individual level and on a species level before we begin to step into the heavens.

Panentheism, a small seed planted into the social fabric of our species. An idea which only takes one Greek word to express, 'panentheism' and three English words to explain, 'pan' all, 'en' in, 'theism' God. 'All in God' and with that simple phrase our species has the potential to change forever.

Author

Project Overview

1995 - 1996 Final draft of "You and I Together: Have a purpose in reality" completed. This was a process of coalescing forty years of thoughts regarding a Universal Holistic System. From these notes, a model was constructed. The impact was then examined regarding this particular model and the effect it would have upon humanity in terms of the most cherished concepts embraced by the individual as well as those embraced by our speciess.

1996 - 1997 Final draft of "In the Image of God" completed. This step involved testing the practicality of a Universal Holistic System. The work examines the ability of the System to resolve twenty futuristic socially-divisive issues and ten current socially-divisive issues.

1997 - 1998 Final draft of "Stepping up to the Creator" completed. Once the system had been developed, the impact examined, and the practicality tested, the Universal System needed to be formalized, expanded, and validated against what it is we believe - religion, what it is we observe - science, what is we reason - philosophy, and what it is we've been told about change - prophecy. The work takes on a three-dimensional matrix format. The matrix format was used to help the reader move in and out of the 900 various topics and levels of difficulty.

1998 - 1999 Final draft of the Cross Reference Guide and Index" completed. Because of the expansiveness of the project, the need arose to find a means of cross-referencing the intricacies of the project. This was accomplished through the development of a cross-reference sectioned into five categories: Questions Addressed, Flowcharts, Thematic Index, Index, and Glossary.

1999 First draft of CD completed: The project was converted into Adobe Acrobat format. This was done to make the project user-friendly. The CD assists the exploration of the project through the power of the search engine called Adobe Acrobat. The CD will be updated as the project progresses.

1999 First draft presently unfolding on site of "On 'being' being 'Being'" This is a technical work intended for deep thinkers. Its intent is, through constructive criticism, to examine the error of humanity's perceptual journey generated by philosophers over the last twenty-five hundred years. The Universal Holistic System of Symbiotic Panentheism acts as the foundation of the constructive criticism.

1999 First draft of CD completed: Multimedia presentation of the www.wehope.com project as well as other misc. lectures. This series of lectures/presentations is made in person. Even philosophers must strive to apply practical applications to their work. The W.E. Hope Foundation is a nonprofit organization established by this philosopher in an attempt to apply the fundamental principles he espouses.

1999 CD - Part I. Audio readings of articles. The CD's are custom made. Please link to www.wehope.com for additional information.

1999 CD - Part II. Audio readings of articles. The CD's are custom made. Please link to www.wehope.com for additional information.

2000 Multimedia Presentation - A Universal Philosophy. This is a 981-slide presentation, in Adobe Acrobat format, that explores the means by which we could attain a universal philosophy. This presentation will be available for online viewing later this year.

2000 In the articles section of the Library page, a number of articles are available for viewing. These are works-in-progress and are intended to be incorporated into a new trilogy to be completed later this year.

2000 A new page "Reflections" has been added to the site. These are an account of my thoughts and reflections on a variety of philosophical issues and questions.

2000 A new page "Aphorisms" has been added to the site.

2000 A new page "Definitions" has been added to the site.

2000 - 2003 The final tractate of the third volume of a new trilogy was placed online. The complete trilogy - The War & Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception - introduces a new perceptual model of reality. The work is intent upon establishing the understanding of a new metaphysical system, which combines the Aristotelian metaphysical system of Cartesianism and the Hegelian metaphysical system of non-Cartesianism into one system. The three volumes of the new trilogy are as follows:

- 2001: Volume I - On 'being'

- 2001: Volume II - On 'being' being
- 2001: Volume III - On 'being' being 'Being'

2003 – 2005 Existence: In and of Itself - Introductory Work to Trilogy II: The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception.

2004 Convert and place on line: The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception to an Ontological Version.

2004 – 2005 Convert complete site from HTML to CSS / DHTML to stabilize site for the long term and to facilitate removing and reinstalling site if it becomes corrupted through use or hacking.

2005 New Site Appearance, Complete All Sections of the site except 'Latest Additions', Add additional sections to the site, and Complete Final Appearance of Site.

2005 - 2008 Move the project to the more advanced interactive www tool of blogging: Adding reason to faith URL: http://panentheism.blogharbor.com/

2009 Development of a new series: Understanding …

2010 Understanding Reality: The four absolute truths secularists are intent upon eradicating are: 1. A Creator of the physical universe exists. 2.The true essence of the individual is made in the image of this Creator and is thus, by definition, divine in nature 3. The individual and our species exist temporarily in the physical for a reason. We have a purpose. 4.The void, ex-nihilo, creation from non-existence did occur. These four fundamental, absolute truths will be addressed in great detail within this book and will, beyond all reasonable doubt, be shown to exist as absolute truths. The theists need more than faith to establish their positions in this day and age and this work gives them what they need to rationalize their positions.

2011 Converting the work into a format compatible to createspace.com and kindle.com. Placement of work onto createspace.com and kindle.com.

2012 Understanding Reality

2013 Understanding the Soul

2015 Understanding God/Brahma