

Describe Parmenides' vision of the nature of reality. What are the implications of that vision for the activity of metaphysical inquiry?

Parmenides came up with a very abstract idea of non-being, becoming and being. I can see it is the big improvement way of thinking from him. His main idea is an argument against Heraclitus' idea of becoming. He thinks becoming is unreal and unthinkable, but only being is real.

The non-being concept is the most important key to understanding him. I think the concept of non-being is a concept of an unintelligible idea. We cannot think about nothing. When I think about my dog, I bring the concept of my dog to the present or it exists in my mind. It has come to being in my mind. So Parmenides thinks that every time we think about something, we bring it from absence to presence. So the concept of nothing or non-being is an unintelligible idea. It is negative, it is a fail and it is an illegal idea. I think that the term 'negative' makes more sense in explaining this idea. I can compare this with a virus or mathematics' negative or minus sign (-). When the virus touches or connects with any living thing, it kills or brings down that living thing. When I negate any number with the minus sign, let us say, the number 5 when I negate it will become -5. It brings the number from positive to negative. I have five apples on the table, but after I use this negate idea, I have lost these five apples and I have to give another five apples away as well. It is a reverse idea. It changes from positive to negative. It is a negative idea.

For Parmenides, being cannot come from non-being because the non-being concept is the concept that we cannot think about. It is unintelligible or it is not real. He believes in an eternity of the being. Non-being cannot come to being. He rejects both non-being and becoming as ideas. Only being is real for him. Being is eternal, undividable and the only one. It is unity, it is absolute. The idea of an eternity of being can be explained by raising this question 'Where is being coming from and where is being going to?' Being is not coming from anything. It is not coming from non-being, as we cannot think about non-being, it is not real. We cannot bring it to the present. So he thinks being is not coming from non-being. Being cannot extend from being, because if being has to go out to something else, it has to be something that is not being or non-being. Since non-being cannot use or cannot think as we mention above, it cannot go out to be non-being. So if being cannot come from anything and cannot go out to anything. It is eternal.

Parmenides believes that being is undividable, it is only one. When we think about our own body, we think as one united body only. Our whole body is one unit of being. When we try to think of some parts of our own body such as an arm, hand or leg being separated or cut out from our body that arm is 'NOT' being anymore. The concept of 'NOT' or negation is the concept that we cannot think about. It is unintelligible, similar to the non-being concept. That separated arm is not being. So it cannot separate from our body because after it separates, it will become non-being. Our whole body or being is undividable, it is only one.

I think Parmenides is anti-empirical, he is a rationalist. The world out there according to Heraclitus is becoming and changing. Heraclitus uses his eyes to look out at the world. The world keeps changing like the river. Parmenides thinks that we should use only our own

rational instead of our sense. The word 'Doxa' or right opinion or value of relativism should be avoided in Parmenides' perspective. He argues against Heraclitus's idea of relativism. Parmenides recommends using only our own rationality. Actually, this issue still continues to be debated today between the two main schools of thought. British philosophers Hume, Locke and Berkeley are Heraclitus followers. They are empirical thinkers. They love to use their sense to philosophise about the world. On the other hand, Hegel, Spinoza and Leibniz are Parmenides followers. They love to think in a rational way.

This is the best example of a reason for why we keep developing our way of thought. We previously believed in one thing, then we critique, argue and destabilise ourselves. From that, we will be able to rethink what we already believe. We have been shaken, then we think, move on and improve.