

DYNAMICS OF REASON: ITS HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

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This outline of the Dynamics of Reason: Its History and Development is based on the idea that this can be illustrated employing a historical analysis of the conception of reason. Though the term "reason" has been used in different contexts but through this paper, my main aim is to find out the nature of reason by illustrating the conception of reason as the faculty of the human mind and its effects on human life. This article clearly shows the development of the conception of Reason by analyzing the viewpoints of different philosophers (from the ancient Greek period to the enlightenment epoch) regarding this notion. It also spreads light on what kind of key role reason plays to constitute human nature as well as to understand the nature of the world.

Keywords

Reason, rationality, logos, Mind, Soul, Knowledge.

Prelude

In Western Philosophy the concept of reason is one of the most debatable issues since ancient times, and critique of reason has also been a persistent theme in philosophy. The discussion about the reason that began in the ancient period is continuing without a let-up. Rather the discussion centering around it is gaining more attention in the modern period to excavate its various facets. In philosophy, there is a popular debate regarding the recognition of the concept of reason, and from this debate, two popular groups emerge, viz., Empiricists and Rationalists. This distinction has become more accentuated in modern European philosophy when several prominent philosophers began philosophizing under one rubric or the other one. It is a well-known issue that for Rationalist philosophers, reason or intellect helps us to acquire knowledge about substantive truths through some form of intellectual intuition.¹ Whereas, on the other hand, Empiricist philosophers emphasize sense experience or sensuous data to know about the external world around us and renounce the importance of reason, in the case of acquiring knowledge about the external world. But beyond this argumentation about the recognition of reason, there remains a kind of eagerness to know about the origin, application, and nature of reason. The aim of this article is not to give any explanation regarding the debate between empiricism or rationalism, but rather what I intend to show here is the development of the concept of reason or

¹Schafer, K. "A Brief History of Rationality: Reason, Reasonableness, Rationality and Reasons", *Manuscripto*, Vol. 41, 2018, pp. 505.

the dynamics behind this notion from classical philosophy to the enlightenment epoch.

On the Meaning of Reason

To know about the journey of the notion of reason, let us look at its semantical root. The English term “reason” is originally derived from the Greek term “*Logos*” (*Logos*→*Ratio*→*Raison*→*Reason*). It is also well known that the term “Reason” has many meanings. For example, logic, ratio, calculation, account, explanation, argument, reason, reasoning, thinking, reckoning, etc. And all these words are interchangeable with each other.² As it said, according to the meaning of the Greek word “*logos*”, the concept of reason is related to the concept of language in the sense that, reason, rationality, and logic all are associated with the capacity of the human mind to calculate everything about the external world around us in the form of judgment. So, in this way, different philosophers use different words to illuminate the concept of reason. Now a question may arise in our curious mind: what is the definition of reason? To answer this I can say that, there is no particular definition of reason. It has been explained by different philosophers in different ways. Despite this, I can say that reason is something that makes human beings as they are in themselves, that is, it constitutes human nature. Human beings are possessed of the capacity of reason and this special capacity helps them to weigh “our beliefs, motives, desires, values, and goals on the scales of the Balance of Reason”.³ Now as I said before, in this article I shall try to show the development of the notion of reason, and that is why I have to discuss the historical reference of the conception of reason, and hence in the next section, I would like to illustrate the status of reason by following classical Greek philosophy.

History of Reason

As we know human beings are endowed with the power of reason, and this special capacity separates them from other living creatures, though nowadays philosophical as well as scientific experiments claim that other non-human living creatures also possess some sort of lowest degree of reasoning power. Reason is

² Moss, J. “Right Reason in Plato and Aristotle: On the Meaning of Logos”, *Phronesis*, Vol. 59, No. 3, 2014, pp. 181-230.

³ Dascal, M. “The Balance of Reason”, Vanderveken, D. (Edt.), *Logic, Thought and Action*, 2005, Dordrecht: Springer Publisher, pp. 27.

the capacity of the human mind that helps them to survive in this world. The next section will show us how the Heraclitean conception of reason makes a connection between human beings and the cosmos around them.

Heraclitean concept of Reason

In ancient Greek philosophy, most probably Heraclitus (535–475 BC.) was the first philosopher who talked about the rational structure of the cosmos by using the term “*logos*” (English: reason). We can know about his philosophical viewpoints from his subsequent philosophers because the book that he wrote i.e., *On Nature*, is lost. According to his subsequent philosophers, he believed that there remains a rational order in nature that controls the entire universe. He also holds the view that *logos* is a kind of “unifier in nature” that arranges everything of the universe. Though he talks about the cosmological order of the universe, but his main concern is about the human condition, i.e., the condition through which they can comprehend the *logos*.

To illustrate the importance of *logos* and also to discover the nature of the world Heraclitus gives a metaphor of the unknowability of certain language, for example, I do not know the French language and if someone came and started to talk with me in French then it seems like a kind of noise for me. Similarly, people who fail to know or comprehend the *logos* are ignorant about the external world, and he ridicules this kind of people and compared them with the “barbarian”.⁴ So, it is necessary to understand *logos* to get access to the real objective world. That is why he claimed, we can acquire knowledge of the external world by comprehending *logos*, which is the universal principle through which all the events come to pass. He also noted that everything has its opposites (e.g., day and night, good and evil, etc.), and “*logos*” is the principle that helps us to comprehend the basic connection between opposites. So, by understanding *logos*, we can know about the rational structure of the world, and to acquire knowledge about the real objective world we have to understand how the particular things or opposites of the external world are related to each other through the thread of *logos*. But for him, it is not very easy to understand *logos* or acquire knowledge about the nature of the world because every sensible object in this world is in constant flux, and he depicts it through his famous contention that “you could not

⁴ Kahn, C. H., *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: An Edition of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary*, 1979, pp. 21-22, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

step twice into the same river” (Plato, *Cratylus*, 402a=A6), which denotes nothing but the fact that in this world everything is subject to change, and that is why it is difficult for people to attain certain and true knowledge. He maintains the view that knowledge and understanding both are different and understanding plays a very important role in the case of knowing something, because he believes that most people obtain knowledge about the world by sense perception without understanding it, and from this view, it is clear that he believes sense perception is necessary but not sufficient for knowledge, and the people who want to understand the world must have the capacity to arrange the information from the manifold of complex sense data and to make them understandable. So according to Heraclitus, it is very clear that only through sense perception the proper knowledge (i.e., knowledge with understanding) is not possible, and the capacity to make things understandable that he talks about, to my mind, is nothing but the capacity of reason which helps people to know everything in its true sense, though he did not mention clearly that the capacity to make things understandable is the capacity of reason.

Moreover, for Heraclitus, *logos* is a “*single divine law*” through which the world is ordered, guided, and unified by a rational structure. He also talks about two kinds of *logos*, viz., “*private logos*” (i.e., human mind), and “*divine logos*” (i.e., the mind of God). For him, we can access the *divine logos* through the *private logos* and it opens up the possibility of human knowledge. Here he actually attempts to bridge the gap between divine and human knowledge through the thread of *logos*.⁵ Hence, Heraclitus intends to show us that, in nature, there always remains a rational order by *divine logos* which makes a connection between every opposite and particular thing in this world, and enables *private logos* i.e., the capacity of reason in human beings to acquire proper knowledge about the real objective world.

Platonic Reason

The famous Greek philosopher Plato (most probably 424-348 BC) and Heraclitus both were contemporary to each other, and that is why we find out famous contentions of Heraclitus in Plato’s writings and it also seems that Plato

⁵Curd, P., McKirahan, Richard D. *A Presocratic Reader: Selected Fragments and Testimonia*, 2011, pp. 39-54, Indianapolis/ Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

was very much influenced by Heraclitus. The view of Heraclitus that everything in this world is in constant flux might have compelled Plato to think about the certainty of knowledge. Plato thought that if everything is subject to change then how can we attain true and certain knowledge? In this regard, Plato introduces his famous conception of “*ideas*” or “*forms*” which paves the way to the subsequent philosophers who give their reasonable statements regarding this notion. However, according to Plato, reality comprises two worlds, viz., the physical world, which we can access through our sense experience, and just because this world is always in a state of change, we cannot have true knowledge about this world. So, for Plato, it is clear that what we know through our sense experience is not true knowledge. And another one is a non-physical, changeless, and eternal world which we can access through our power or capacity of reason, which helps us to acquire true knowledge.⁶ This non-physical, eternal world is called by Plato the world of *Ideas* or *Forms*.

He uses the term “*ideas*” or “*forms*” in two senses. In one sense, the *forms* are perfect conceptual models of every existing thing of the physical world, and these *forms* are existing solely in the eternal world, accessed by reason alone. For example, through our capacity of reason, we can access the *form* of the pen, and thus we can know the ideal template of that pen as well as we can understand the essence of the pen, and after that, we can use this understanding to make judgments about all physical pen.⁷ For Plato, the *ideas* or *forms* which we accessed through reason are more real than the knowledge of the objects which

we acquire through our sense experience. In another sense, he treats *forms* as universals. For example, each human being is a particular instance of universal manhood. Here manhood is the *idea* or *form*. So, for him, all particular things exist in the non-eternal physical world, whereas universals reside in the perfect eternal world, and we can discover these universals or *ideas* or *forms* (these terms are interchangeable with each other) of each physical thing through the capacity of reason.

He also talks about another kind of activity of reason. Plato believes in “*innate ideas*” and for him, all the innate ideas about universals, etc., are already present in our mind at birth, and it points toward his belief about the immortality

⁶ Vaughn, L. *Living Philosophy: A Historical Introduction to Philosophical Ideas*, 2017, pp.76 – 103, New York:Oxford University Press.

⁷ Ibid.

of the soul. For him, the knowledge of the *ideas* is inscribed in our mind in a previous existence, and by using our capacity of reason we can recall all these *ideas*.⁸ So from his conception of immortality of the soul, we can say that Plato was a dualist because he believes that human beings are made of two substances: material body and immaterial soul or mind.

Moreover, in his famous books *Republic* and *Phaedrus*, Plato talks about his conception of the “*tripartite soul*”, and according to him, our soul is divided into three parts, viz., *reason* or “*logos*”, *Spirit* or “*thymos*”, and *Appetite* or “*eros*”, and Plato shows us that *reason* or mind is the highest thinking part of the soul (located in the head), it fulfills our thirst for knowledge and truth. This rational part of the soul also regulates the other two parts of the soul. After that, he talks about the *Spirited* part of the soul (located near the chest), and it causes our emotion, passion, etc., and he also called this part “*high spirit*”. And finally, the *Appetitive* part of the soul (located in the stomach), which is the rootcause of all kinds of desires that we have. In this regard, he intends to show us that, due to different parts of the soul, there always remains an ‘*inner conflict*’ within us just because our desires, emotions, passions all are governed by the rules of reason, and our reason and passions both are by their nature contrary to each other.⁹ Plato through this conception of the “*tripartite soul*”(mentioned in the book *Republic*) and also with the “*chariot allegory*”(mentioned in the book *Phaedrus*), intends to show a connection between the three parts of the soul and the three classes of a society where *reason* denotes the rulers (i.e., guardians), *spirit* denotes the military (i.e., auxiliaries or soldiers), and *appetite* denotes the ordinary citizens or working class (i.e., producers like craftsmen, farmers, etc.). Simply for Plato, we can define the just society with the characteristics of the just individual because, in a just individual the rational part of the soul rules the other parts, the spirited part of the soul supports the rules given by the rational part, and the appetitive part of the soul follows the rules under the governance of reason, i.e., the entire soul of the just individual obeys the rules of reason, similarly, in the just society, the entire community obeys the rules of the ruler.¹⁰ So by this analogy, Plato intends to show us the importance of reason in making a just individual as well as a just society.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Klosko, G. “The ‘Rule’ of Reason in Plato’s Psychology”, *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1988, pp. 342, University of Illinois Press.

¹⁰Plato, Jowett, B., *The Republic of Plato*, 1991, pp. 335-364, Vintage Classics Publication.

Thus, from Plato's conception of reason, it becomes clear that through the capacity of reason we can discover the *Innate Ideas* and also acquire knowledge about the essence of physical objects as well as we get access to the eternal world. Moreover, by considering reason as the highest part of the soul he also shows us that it has another role to play, i.e., we can use our capacity of reason to discover truth and knowledge. Besides this, it also can rule over other parts of the soul to make the just individuals, and by being just individual human beings can live a virtuous life and can deal with the external world rationally. In this way, we can consider him as a rationalist philosopher because he gives more emphasis on reason than sense experience and holds the view that we can acquire true knowledge and also understand reality through the capacity of reason. But despite all these, there is some confusion about his conception of reason. For example, if through the capacity of reason, we can get access to the changeless eternal world that exists beyond our sense experience then why don't we use this capacity in case of obtaining true knowledge about the physical world? This confusion paved the way for the subsequent philosophers (like his pupil Aristotle) to shed more light on this issue.

Aristotle on Reason

In this section, I want to illustrate the concept of reason following Aristotle (384-322 BC). From Aristotle's philosophical conceptions, it is clear that he differs from Plato's in many ways. In the previous section, we see that Plato's *ideas* or *forms* are residing in the non-physical eternal world and we can acquire knowledge about particular things of the physical world just because, through our capacity of reason we can get access to the eternal world of *forms*, and can know the essence or *form* of each particular thing. For example, we can know the colour blue just because we have knowledge about its essence i.e., the blueness by our capacity of reason. Whereas by rejecting this view of Plato, Aristotle argues that, all the *ideas* or *forms* are residing only in the particulars, and they do not reside in any non-physical eternal world. He claimed that we can acquire knowledge about the *ideas* such as blueness, through particular instances (i.e., by observing each blue thing). So, Aristotle emphasized the importance of observing the external world or particulars around us, and that is why he introduces his conception of the "*formed matter*", i.e., everything in this world is a composition of form and matter. For him, just like matter without *form* is impossible, similarly, *form* without matter is also impossible (except the *unmoved mover*). So, he rejects Plato's belief about independently existing *forms* and shows us that we can

discover the essence or *form* of particulars from the physical things through our capacity of reason, and for this, we do not have to go beyond the physical realm.

Moreover, Aristotle in his book *De Anima (On the Soul)* undermines Plato's dualist view about the human soul that it is an immaterial substance and can exist apart from the body (i.e., material substance) after death. Because he has a different kind of opinion about the soul or mind and for him, the soul (*psyche*) is not something like substance but rather it is a "principle or form of life".¹¹ In this context, Aristotle by applying his conception of *formed matter* opined that the soul is nothing but a *form* of a living thing, though it is not the same as Platonic *form*.¹² He also holds the view that the soul is something that makes difference between living and non-living things. According to him, like human beings, non-humans as well as plants, also have souls. He talks about three kinds of souls. Firstly, the "*nutritive soul*" or "*vegetative soul*", which is possessed by all living things and causes bodily health and growth. Secondly, "*sensitive soul*", which is possessed by humans and non-humans and they differ from plants by having this kind of soul, and it causes the capacity to perceive through senses and also causes the movements, emotions, passions, pleasure, and pain, etc.¹³ And the third one is the "*rational soul*" through which human beings differ from other non-humans. This kind of soul, as Aristotle shows us, has the capacity for cognition and governs our ability to think and make judgments about everything in this world and also makes human beings unique. So, for Aristotle, we should understand the human soul not as a substance but as a "cluster of faculties" labelled as reason.¹⁴ For him, rationality is the special kind of capacity possessed by human beings and reason is the characteristic of human nature that constitutes a good life. But there is one thing that creates very much confusion that Aristotle in the book *De Anima* holds the view that the soul is mortal but a part called the "active intellect" or the "active mind" is immortal and eternal.¹⁵ This interpretation given by him makes us confused and that is why some questions crop up in my mind: What did he mean by "active mind" or "active intellect" (since, he uses the words "soul", "mind", "psyche" interchangeably in his writings)? Does he mean by the "active

¹¹ Stevenson, L. Haberman, D. L. Wright, P.M. Witt, C. *Thirteen Theories of Human Nature*. 2017, pp. 103, New York: Oxford University Press.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Stainton, T. "Reason and Value: The Thought of Plato and Aristotle and the Construction of Intellectual Disability", *Mental Retardation*, Vol. 39, No. 6, 2001, pp. 452–460.

¹⁴ Stevenson, L. Haberman, D. L. Wright, P.M. Witt, C. *Thirteen Theories of Human Nature*. 2017, pp. 104, New York: Oxford University Press.

¹⁵ Aristotle, *De Anima*, 2008, Hicks, R. D. (Trans.), pp. 88, Cosimo, Inc. Publisher.

mind” or “active intellect” as the mind or intellect of the *unmoved mover*? If so, then did he consider the human mind as passive? And if it is then also a problem arises, that is, if the human mind is passive then how can it help human beings to obtain knowledge, and also how can it govern their ability to think? On the other hand, if the human mind is active then it points toward the immortality of the soul because he claimed that the “active mind” is immortal just because he uses the term “*mind*” and “*soul*” as synonymous. So, the status of mind or soul in his viewpoints is very much obscure just because he did not illustrate it clearly in his book *De Anima*, and all these questions compelled us to think again and again about the nature of the human mind or soul that he intends to show us.

Moreover, in his book *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book I) he shows us that happiness or “*Eudaimonia*” is the highest end of human life. For him, human beings are rational by their nature and besides this, by being happy we can live a good life, so for our happiness, it is required that we have to live according to our nature, i.e., a good life or happy life requires living according to reason.¹⁶ Hence, for Aristotle, everything has some purpose. So, human life also has the purpose to develop our rational soul by practicing our capacity of reason, and the practice of the capacity of reason leads human beings toward a virtuous life, just like a dancer can be a good dancer by practicing his or her skill again and again. So, we have to live our life completely under the governance of reason to achieve the highest human well-being.

The Age of Reason

After Aristotle, in the 4th century, the rise of Christianity and in the 5th century the decline of the Roman Empire denoted the turning point of the history of the world as well as the history of philosophy. Philosophers of that time were mostly churchmen and they started to bind up their philosophical ideas with doctrines of Christianity (although the jurisdiction of philosophy and theology both are distinct from one another, as philosophy deals with truths of reason and theology deals with truths of faith).¹⁷ And as a result of this intermingling of philosophy and theology in the medieval epoch, philosophers of that time considered reason and faith as complementary to each other. They hold that

¹⁶ Stainton, T. “Reason and Value: The Thought of Plato and Aristotle and the Construction of Intellectual Disability”, *Mental Retardation*, Vol. 39, No. 6, 2001, pp. 452–460.

¹⁷ Joaquin, J.J. “An Introduction to Medieval Christian Philosophy”. Leni Garcia, ed., *Exploring the Philosophical Terrain*, 2013, Manila: C&E Publishing.

reason and faith both are genuine sources of wisdom and knowledge. They tried to make a connection between faith and reason so that faith would not seem unreasonable or arbitrary.¹⁸ However, in this period it seems that they gave very much emphasis on faith rather than reason, and I think the capacity of reason is somehow dominated by the capacity of faith at that time, though they never claimed that reason could be reduced to faith or vice-versa.

Nevertheless, after the classical period, it is more than a thousand years later, that is the rise of the enlightenment period also known as the “age of reason” (mainly 17th to 18th centuries), was an intellectual and philosophical movement that had an immense impact on different ideologies and brought the notion of reason and its role in our knowledge at the center-point of discussion. Under the umbrella of rationalism, the so-called Rationalist philosophers like Rene Descartes (1596-1650), Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) gave special importance to the notion of reason and laid the foundation of their philosophy. And as we know that Descartes through his method-based philosophy laid the foundation for rational thinking, and in his famous book *Discourse on the Method* (1637), he intends to show us that the information that we receive through our sense intuitions are not necessarily accurate, and that is why he throws out everything that is subject to doubt. To illustrate the unreliability of sense perception he gave an example that a straight stick protruding from the water always looks bent, even we cannot find out the actual size of a distant object (e.g., the sun) through our sense perception.¹⁹ So, in this way, he holds the view that we cannot obtain true knowledge through sense perception and it is our capacity of reason that corrects our sensuous data and makes true knowledge possible in terms of clearness and distinctness.

Similarly, the notion of reason shaped the philosophical ideas of Spinoza and also shaped his place in the history of philosophy as well as in the enlightenment period. Spinoza through his famous works such as *Theological Political Treatise* (1670) and *Ethics* (1677) intends to show us different kinds of roles that reason plays to constitute human nature as well as the nature of the world. To set his metaphysical viewpoint he illustrates reason as the cause and contends that there is a reason behind the existence of everything in this world.

¹⁸Koterski, J.W. “Faith and Reason”, *An Introduction to Medieval Philosophy: Basic Concepts*, 2011, pp. 09-36, John Wiley & Sons Publisher.

¹⁹Loeb, L.E. “The Priority of Reason in Descartes”, *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. XCIX, No.1, 1990, pp. 3-43, Duke University Press.

Through his epistemological viewpoints, he describes reason as the powerful capacity and the only source of our knowledge of objects through experience. For him, everything has its respective properties and knowledge is possible only when the knower and the knowable share their respective properties with each other. For instance, I can know about a pen just because the pen and I share the property of being extended to each other. He by his ethical theories introduces another kind of role that reason plays that is the dictator of rules. He believes that reason prescribes some rules that how we ought to live, how we ought to treat other fellow beings or other creatures, what ends we ought to pursue etc., and when we consider that these rules are dictated by reason then it inspires us to follow the rules. So, by prescribing rules reason guides our actions.²⁰ So, in this way, he spread light on different kinds of roles that reason plays in human life. Later, Leibniz also considered that “nothing is without a reason (*Nihil sine ratione*)”. In his book *Monadology* (1714) he contends that our reasoning is based on two great principles: the “Law of Non-Contradiction” (i.e., whatever involves contradiction must be false), and the “Law of Sufficient Reason” (i.e., nothing happens without a reason), and he considered these principles as the “Principle of Reason”, through which we can evaluate or judge every state of affairs of every possible world. Hence, in the enlightenment period, all the rationalist philosophers intended to highlight the importance of reason which dimmed in the medieval epoch.

Without whom the discussion of the notion of reason would remain incomplete is the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), who by defining enlightenment holds that the enlightenment is nothing but man's emergence from their immaturity or their inability to use one's understanding without any guidance of others.²¹ Through this definition, he intends to show us that enlightenment is possible only when human beings use their capacity of reason without any influence and keep practicing to use this power for better improvement, and this opinion of him points to the fact that he laid the foundation of his entire philosophy based on the notion of reason. The notion of reason is the central theme in his philosophy. Before Kant, all the empiricists hold the view that experience is the only means to acquire knowledge. Even rationalist philosophers hold the opinion that theoretical knowledge is the only means for

²⁰LeBuffe, M. (2017), *Spinoza on Reason*. Oxford University Press.

²¹Kant, Immanuel. (1784). “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?”, Ted Humphrey (Trans.). (1983). *Immanuel Kant Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Hackett Publication, (pp. 41-48).

possible knowledge, but Kant added something new to the history of reason. Kant emphasized both experience and reason in the case of obtaining knowledge. He contends that human beings possessed the capacity of reason to synthesize different concepts of understanding given by sense intuition through *a priori* principles. For him, the theoretical reason is the condition for our understanding, as well as it points to the limitation of our knowledge, that is, through theoretical reason, we cannot go beyond the physical realm.²² That is why he introduces the practical part of reason through which we can get access to those kinds of knowledge which we cannot obtain through theoretical reason.

Conclusion:

From the scrutiny of the status of reason in different epochs, it is clear that the notion of reason is the most important issue in philosophy as well as in human life. In this article, I wanted to illuminate the explanation of the concept of reason by following classical Greek philosophy and the Enlightenment period. Through these explanations, it is clear that there remains a kind of dynamic or transformation behind the notion of reason, i.e., we can see the development of the notion of reason from the rational structure of nature to the rational faculty of the human mind. Here the development of the conception of reason through the Heraclitean *logos* to the age of reason paves the way to the subsequent philosophers for their active participation in the discussion and the discussion about the status of reason is still alive.

Moreover, it seems that there always remains a contradiction between reason and passion, and in philosophy, there are different viewpoints regarding the relationship between reason and passion by philosophers of different hues. For example, according to David Hume, “Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions”.²³ That is, for him, in human beings reason only plays a purely instrumental function, and it helps us to satisfy our passions and nothing else. But some contrary views denote that all emotions, passions are the elements of the soul that are possessed by human beings and whenever we lead our life under the guidance of our passions there always remains a chance of error, but it does not indicate that our emotions, passions are meaningless. In this regard, I can say that

²²O’Neill, Onora., “Kant on Reason and Religion”, Grethe B. Peterson (Edited). *The Tanner Lecture on Human Values*, 1997,(Volume: XVIII), (PP. 267-308). Utah: University of Utah Press.

²³Hume, D. Selby – Bigge, L.A. (edited). *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book II, 3.3, 1888, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 415.

we have to exercise or practice our capacity of reason so that we can control our emotions, passions and do not fall into any trap of error.

Thus, in this way, different philosophers illustrate the conception of reason in different ways. It also opens up the possibility for different illustrations by subsequent philosophers in this field. Since behind this notion of reason, there always remains a kind of transformation that develops this notion and also illuminates the key role that reason plays in our day-to-day life. The main aim of this paper is to find out the nature of reason by analysing the history of the conception of reason. The scrutiny of the available history of the notion of reason makes it clear that the nature of reason is nothing but an ability possessed by human beings that has a mechanism to calculate, to judge, to evaluate, to weigh every aspect of life for survival as well as every state of affair of the possible world.