

## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

The main contention of this thesis is to outline the philosophical implications of Quine's Naturalized Epistemology. According to Quine, epistemology must be naturalized. The position that epistemology must be naturalized goes against the First Philosophy or Traditional Epistemology. According to Quine, traditional epistemology is full of dogmas; it functions under the womb of dogmas. Quine while developing his naturalized epistemology rejects a number of traditional or concurrent views, such as, traditional metaphysics, the analytic-synthetic distinction, reductionism, modal logic, essentialism and skepticism. For Quine, each of these doctrines in many diverse ways requires the existence of meanings, propositions, attributes, relations, or numbers. He denies all these views because he does not intend to do philosophy within the womb of dogmas. Instead he introduces an enhanced common sense, naturalism in contrast to mentalism, physicalism in opposition to phenomenalism, holism in opposition to reductionism and atomism, pragmatism, under-determination of theory, indeterminacy of translation, radical translation, inscrutability of reference, and ontological relativity.

Quine further contends that science is a continuation of common sense and his philosophy of naturalized epistemology in the real sense of the term is a continuation or extension of both common sense and science. In this regard, he goes on to say that there are no meanings, propositions, relations, or numbers that would seem to be inconsistent with what either common sense or science would say. Thus, in a sense Quine's position in the realm of analytic tradition seems unusual as he differs on many issues that would honor in analytic tradition. He is more inclined to offer us a piecemeal inquiry. His philosophical position is revolutionary because it appears both as positive and negative. He contradicts with so many classical and traditional epistemologists, such as, Kant, Carnap and all those who designed philosophy on the basis of

presupposition or dogmas. Side by side, he offers us a new concept of philosophy known as naturalized epistemology which impacts a lot in the subsequent philosophical developments. We thus read Quine as a revolutionary critique because each of his philosophical theory appears as a critical exposition of the earlier well established philosophical theory. Quine confessed Carnap as a towering figure in philosophy for his reductionism and they had mutual admiration and affection but still they had profound conceptual philosophical differences. The epistemological outlook of Quine reflects both the attractions of Carnap's methodology and a powerful negative reaction to some of its fundamental tenets. It was reflected in his essay "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" first published in 1951. Here Quine inclines to say that their divergences about ontology ultimately stem from their differences about the analytic-synthetic 'cleavage'. In this regard, Gibson in his excellent work *The Philosophy of W. V. Quine* remarks that their debate is absolutely central to their conceptions of empiricism. They are in agreement that empiricism is the philosophy that best explicates the nature of science, and they concur that science provides the best theory of the world. However, they divide on the perception whether empiricism requires the analytic-synthetic distinction. Thus, the locus of their philosophical debate actually hinges on their very perception of the philosophy that best explains *the nature of reality*. In Quine's phrase, *as to what there is*. The root of this dispute is deep as it goes to the heart of what they think philosophy is all about. Having said this, within the philosophical debate neither of them abandoned his fundamental philosophical position.

We think that both Carnap and Quine believe that all knowledge derives from sense experience. This is the classical statement of empiricism one can trace to Locke and Hume. This position is acceptable to both Quine and Carnap. However, the difference begins when Carnap asserts that sense experience requires a philosophical reconstruction that would be extremely needed towards

explaining the organized and coherence theories one finds in science. Here the term *reconstruction* should be apprehended in terms of *justification*. For Carnap, justification in terms of reconstruction is prerequisite because science cannot be derived merely from observation. Science has a non-observational component that gives it much of its scope and conceptual force that would require justification or reconstruction. That is why Carnap invokes in favour of reconstruction or justification as he thinks that it would be the main function of empirical philosophy what Quine calls 'the reductive thesis'. As it is reductive, it is logical in character and as it is logical in character, it is analytic in nature. Thus, to develop a reconstruction of the coherent body of the theory called 'science', the philosopher must, Carnap opines, presuppose the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic. For Carnap, the framework of a scientific theory derives from analyticity; it is not a function of sense experience but of a priori decision. Thus, for the classical epistemologists, the analytic-synthetic distinction is essential to their defense of empiricism. Quine vehemently rejects Carnap's interpretation of the task of empiricism as unlike Carnap, he thinks that no reconstruction in the form of justification of science by philosophy is either needed or possible. For Quine, to assume that such an *Aufbau* or philosophical reconstruction is required to assume that philosophy has a privilege position from which it can infallibly judge science.

This position of Quine, we do reckon, brings empiricism as a normative philosophy. According to Quine, Carnap by way of illuminating reconstructionism within empiricism actually injected normative stance within epistemology by way of assuming that the existence of first philosophy is self-validating. Quine believes that this is a kind of fantasy advocated and entertained only by the traditional philosophers. Instead of this, he proposes *epistemology naturalized* which denies the normative account of traditional epistemology. It recognizes that science goes its own way in

developing theory and pays no attention to any such normative reconstruction. This is the message of Quine's *Naturalized Epistemology*.

Quine's naturalized epistemology is based on the remark, "Don't theorize, just look at human practice". This reminds me Wittgenstein who once remarked "Don't think, look!" Quine contends that no justification beyond scientific practice is possible. His advocacy of psychology by which he means behaviourism, is an alternative formulation of the same point that eventually entails the repudiation of philosophical reconstruction. Quine settles for behaviourist psychology and the stimulation of sensory receptors as the foundation of naturalized epistemology which offers us a new conception of empiricism that banks on the very nature of scientific activity. We thus evaluate his theory as the philosophy purified of dogmas appeared in the forms of analytic-synthetic cleavage and reductionism. He calls for empiricism without the Dogmas.

In a nutshell, we can say that Quine's naturalized epistemology has a far reaching philosophical implication on the basis of which we can not only revisit the earlier philosophical theories appear under the name **First Philosophy**, it also helps us to enter into a new philosophical regime that we are talking at present. His philosophical reflection not only appears as a revolt of the classical traditions, it equally opens up a new path leads to the contemporary philosophy of language, such as, post modernism, post structuralism etc.

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