

## **Discuss major doctrines of departures in Humanism.**

Scientific approaches like positivism, empiricism, and quantification tend to minimize the role of human awareness and knowledge. Humanistic geography, by contrast, especially tries to understand how geographical activities and phenomena reveal the quality of human awareness. Humanistic geography does not consider human being as an 'economic man'.

The propounder of humanistic geography (Tuan) explored five themes of general interest to geographers, namely:

- geographical knowledge (personal geographies),
- territory and place,
- crowding and privacy,
- livelihood and economics, and
- religion.

**Geographical Knowledge (Personal Geographies):** Man is the superior form of life and has special capacity for thought and reflection. The primary task of humanistic geographers, therefore, is the study of articulated ideas (geographical knowledge). In general, broadly conceived knowledge of geography is necessary to biological survival. All animals must have it, and even the migratory birds have a mental map.

**Territory and Place:** Territory and place is also an important animal instinct. Some species of animals, like honeybee, tiger, lion, etc., defend their living space against intruders. They behave as they regard certain areas as their own; they appear to have a sense of territory. Human attitudes and attachment to territory and to place bear a clear resemblance to those of other animals. All animals, including human beings, occupy and use space.

**Crowding and privacy :** Crowding of a place leads to physical and psychological stress. It has been observed that the behaviour of animals at a crowded place becomes abnormal. Same is the case with man. Culture, social institutions and infrastructures, however, help in reducing these stresses. For example, people in crowded Hong Kong are no more prone to crime than people living in relatively spacious American, European and Australian cities. Contrary to this, in the Kalahari Desert, the Bushmen are crowded by choice, and biological indicators of stress are absent despite the high density at places where water is available.

**Livelihood and Economics :** Man sustains himself by doing some economic and social activities. All human activities appear to be economic and functional in the sense that they support the social system outside of which people cannot live. Whether it is worship of the sacred cow or ritual human sacrifice, they may be shown to have important economic consequences, and hence they are not beyond the economic rationale.

**Religion :** Religion is present at varying degree in all cultures. It appears to be a universal trait. In religion human beings are clearly distinguished from other animals.

### **The philosophical departures of Humanistic tradition includes:**

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach that studies human consciousness and experience. Geographers began to adopt aspects of phenomenology in the 1960s and 1970s, partly to challenge the abstraction and generalization of prevailing spatial scientific approaches and partly to provide a more invigorated sense of human agency within geographical theory. Phenomenological approaches emphasize the significance of human

subjectivity, the complexity of geographical knowledge production, and, in some quarters, the search for shared categories through which the world may be apprehended. In recent years phenomenological approaches have been critiqued for an overemphasis on human subjectivity, while some have questioned the extent to which phenomenological philosophy challenges the positivism of spatial science.

**Existentialism** is a philosophy that emphasizes individual existence, freedom and choice. It is the view that humans define their own meaning in life, and try to make rational decisions despite existing in an irrational universe. It focuses on the question of human existence, and the feeling that there is no purpose or explanation at the core of existence. It holds that, as there is no God or any other transcendent force, the only way to counter this nothingness (and hence to find meaning in life) is by embracing existence.

**Idealism** is the metaphysical and epistemological doctrine that ideas or thoughts make up fundamental reality. Essentially, it is any philosophy which argues that the only thing actually knowable is consciousness (or the contents of consciousness), whereas we never can be sure that matter or anything in the outside world really exists. Thus, the only real things are mental entities, not physical things (which exist only in the sense that they are perceived).

Idealism is a label which covers a number of philosophical positions with quite different tendencies and implications, including Subjective Idealism, Objective Idealism, Transcendental Idealism and Absolute Idealism, as well as several more minor variants or related concepts (see the section on Other Types of Idealism below). Other labels which are essentially equivalent to Idealism include Mentalist and Immaterialism.

### **Types of Idealism:**

Epistemological Idealism asserts that minds are aware of, or perceive, only their own ideas (representations or mental images), and not external objects, and therefore we cannot directly know things in themselves, or things as they really are. All we can ever have knowledge about is the world of phenomenal human experience, and there is no reason to suspect that reality actually mirrors our perceptions and thoughts. This is very similar to the doctrine of Phenomenalism.

Actual Idealism is a form of Idealism developed by the Italian philosopher Giovanni Gentile (1875 - 1944) that contrasted the Transcendental Idealism of Kant and the Absolute Idealism of Hegel. His system saw thought as all-embracing, and claimed that no-one could actually leave their sphere of thinking, or exceed their own thought. His ideas were key to helping the Fascist party consolidate power in Italy, and gave Fascism much of its philosophical base.

Practical Idealism is a political philosophy which holds it to be an ethical imperative to implement ideals of virtue or good (it is therefore unrelated to Idealism in its other senses). Its earliest recorded use was by Mahatma Gandhi, although it is now often used in foreign policy and international relations, where it purports to be a pragmatic compromise between political realism (which stresses the promotion of a state's narrow and amoral self-interest), and political idealism (which aims to use the state's influence and power to promote higher liberal ideals like peace, justice and co-operation between nations).