

[6) The Qualitative Pluralist Tradition [view (15)]

Heraclitus (533-475 BC, Ephesus)

Ultimate reality consists of change. The fundamental characteristic of the universe is its changeableness.

"All things flow, nothing abides." "Into the same river one cannot step twice."

Empedocles (495-435 BC, Agrigentum)

Ultimate reality consists of four irreducible substances: fire, air, water, earth. Changes consists in the mingling and separation of these four elements when moved about by two forces, love and hate. The universe undergoes a cyclic process of evolution and devolution as one or the other force dominates.

Anaxagoras (500-428 BC, Clazomenae, Athens, Lempacus)

Ultimate reality consists of an indefinite number of kinds of substance, composed of particles or "seeds," which are pervaded by life. Originally the seeds were mingled together throughout the universe, but a force, Mind, set them to rotating. The seeds became sorted, like to like, and thus evolved the universe.

Cratylus (5th cen BC, Athens)

Ultimate reality consists of change. The universe is in such flux that one cannot step into the same river once! (Acting somewhat consistently with his view, Cratylus is said to have renounced speech and merely pointed to things.)

Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841, Jena, Konigsberg, Gottingen)

Ultimate reality consists of the reals, which are irreducible units of being. The universe is pluralistic, not monistic. The soul is one of the reals. Mental states are results of the conflict of opposing forces.

William James (1842-1910, Cambridge)

Ultimate reality consists of innumerable kinds of beings. The world is so full of a number of things that there is little for thought to do be to take a census. The world is an unfinished lot of things, some closely related and interdependent, others loosely related and subject to being reshuffled in many novel ways.