

Philosophy branch.

Read the text and answer the following questions :

THE Greeks were not addicted to moderation, either in their theories or in their practice. Heraclitus maintained that everything changes; Parmenides retorted that nothing changes. Parmenides was a native of Elea, in the south of Italy, and flourished in the first half of the fifth century B.C. According to Plato, Socrates in his youth (say about the year 450 B.C.) had an interview with Parmenides, then an old man, and learnt much from him. Whether or not this interview is historical, we may at least infer, what is otherwise evident, that Plato himself was influenced by the doctrines of Parmenides. The south Italian and Sicilian philosophers were more inclined to mysticism and religion than those of Ionia, who were on the whole scientific and sceptical in their tendencies. But mathematics, under the influence of Pythagoras, flourished more in Magna Grecia than in Ionia; mathematics at that time, however, was entangled with mysticism. Parmenides was influenced by Pythagoras, but the extent of this influence is conjectural. What makes Parmenides historically important is that he invented a form of metaphysical argument that, in one form or another, is to be found in most subsequent metaphysicians down to and including Hegel. He is often said to have invented logic, but what he really invented was metaphysics based on logic.

Bertrand Russell – A HISTORY OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY – page 66

Questions :

- 1- What is the main problem in the text ?
- 2- What is the position of the author here in the text ?
- 3- What do you think about his point of view ?
- 4- What is the conclusion deduced from the text ?