CHAPTER V

UNITY IN PUTNAM THROUGH REFERENCE

5.0 Introduction

This thesis has two principle objectives, viz., to show how reference remains central in all the different phases of Putnam's writings, and to show that there does exist a continuity between the allegedly discontinuous phases of Putnam. A little reflection will make explicit that these two objectives are intimately related. The reason is: the centrality of reference throughout the different phases of Putnam speaks for a continuity running through the different stages of his philosophy.

Before embarking on a detailed discussion of the centrality of reference and the resultant continuity, it should be conceded at the outset that there does exist an apparent discontinuity in the different phases of Putnam. Putnam himself has confessed that he has 'changed his mind' on a few occasions, in the course of the development of his entire system. From our point of view the crucial question is, what does Putnam mean when he says that he has changed his mind on a few occasions. Following Putnam, we may suggest some clarification of his talk
of 'changing his mind'. In Putnam's case, 'changing of mind' does not indicate a total conversion from one view to another. Rather, as Putnam maintains, it points to the fact of "...being torn between opposing views of the nature of philosophy itself" (Putnam, 1988, xii). As he explains, "when I was a 'scientific realist', I felt deeply troubled by the difficulties with scientific realism; having given up scientific realism, I am still tremendously aware of what is appealing about the scientific realist conception of philosophy" (Putnam, 1988, xii). This fact of being torn signifies that Putnam was always aware of two contrasting possibilities in philosophy in all the phases of his writings. As evident from his above quoted remark, he became aware of the difficulties of scientific realism (or of metaphysical realism) even in his first phase where he was developing a metaphysical realist picture of the world. This awareness of the difficulties, as already mentioned in our previous chapters, has its germ in his reflection on the epistemological implications of his strong realist position. This awareness prompts him to look into the other contrasting possibility (viz., anti-realism in general) for the solution. As a result, this helps him to arrive at the third way, i.e., the way towards internal or pragmatic realism. His turning to internal realism can, by no means, be taken as an instance of

However, in our next chapter we will discuss whether Putnam can be taken as a hard core metaphysical realist even in this phase of his philosophical writings.
conversion. In conversion, a person moves from one view to a radically new one by repudiating the earlier view in its entirety and thus cannot retain any feature belonging to the earlier view. In this context, a distinction may be drawn between what may be called a radically new view (a view which is independent of the earlier view) and the third view (which is the product of the earlier view as well as the emerging view). In the case of Putnam, the third view is an amalgamation of two contrasting views — realism and anti-realism.

There is a widespread failure among the critics of Putnam to recognize the above point. They often take Putnam's change of mind as a case of conversion — a conceptual shift from realism to anti-realism. As a result, they fail to appreciate the fact that Putnam's internal realism stands for a third view based on the intuitions of both realism and anti-realism.

Against the backdrop of this discussion of 'change of mind', we should search for continuity in Putnam's different phases. As has already been mentioned, the continuity emerges from the centrality of reference throughout the different phases of Putnam. This continuity will be discussed at two levels: at the first level, we will provide justification for considering reference as central in all the phases of Putnam, and at the second level, we will enumerate a few principles that are presupposed throughout Putnam's writings. These presuppositions
imply our justification of Putnam's ascription of centrality to reference. Moreover, they show how the contrasting views of Putnam get enmeshed in his "third view" — the view of internal realism.

5.1 Justification of the Centrality of Reference

To begin with the most impending question: what is meant by centrality of reference? How is centrality defined? Our attempt here is not to define centrality by enumerating its essential features. Any such attempt will defeat the most basic intuition of Putnam that absolutism of any kind (including essentialism) should make way for a 'human' world-view. Centrality, as the name suggests, points to the pivotal role ascribed to a concept around which all other related concepts revolve in a philosophical framework. All other related notions are viewed in the light of this central notion. In all the different phases of Putnam's writings, reference is ascribed the pivotal role; it is around the notion of reference that his total framework revolves. This centrality of reference can be justified at two levels: viz., the level of external justification of the centrality of reference and the level of notional justification of it. External justification consists of a reply to the question of why reference is taken as central in the three philosophical persuasions of Putnam. Notional justification, on the other hand, concerns itself with Putnam's
conception of reference. This justification consists in showing that the notion of reference that Putnam holds has never been drastically changed. A detailed discussion of both these justifications is given below.

There is widespread doubt regarding the claim of continuity which results from the centrality of reference in the different phases of Putnam. The reasons for this disbelief are twofold. First, to say that reference is central to a framework does not amount to a significant claim. It is only a general claim and by saying it we do not bring out any unique feature of that particular framework. Hence, from the fact that reference is central, nothing very significant can be derived. Now coming to Putnam, the claim that there is a continuity in his philosophy based on the fact that reference is central throughout may not be taken to be a tenable claim. On the same ground, continuity in his philosophy is not achieved just because there is centrality of reference. Second, there is a much more serious problem: it may be argued that a philosophical position can take the notion of reference as central in many different ways and the notion of reference may assume centrality in diverse ways. As a result it is difficult to put forward any claim regarding continuity. In the following, the external justification of the centrality of reference will provide an answer to the first problem and notional justification will provide an answer to the second problem.
5.1.1 External Justification

External justification shows that the question, of why reference is taken as central, is not really a trivial question in the context of Putnam. The triviality of this problem disappears once we take note of the implicit principle that regulates Putnam's acceptance of reference as central in all his different phases. His faith in this principle, namely, PBD has strongly influenced Putnam to take reference as central, irrespective of the changes in his philosophical stand on realism. Note that this implicit principle is not a reason. On the other hand, it may be said to act as a presupposition of Putnam's philosophy. We are thus led to a methodological distinction between presupposition and reason where it may be shown that reasons are guided by this single and central presupposition. In view of this, we will now enumerate the various reasons that prompt Putnam to take reference as central in all the three phases of his writings. Later, in the next section, we will show how these various reasons have their source in this presupposition. As mentioned earlier, this justification is called external, as it does not include any discussion of the nature of reference and also of the notion of centrality.

In his first phase, Putnam's concern is to develop an adequate semantic framework, where centrality has been ascribed
to reference. His reasons for ascribing centrality to reference can be listed as twofold. The first reason is a widely-recognized one—his dissatisfaction with the semantic framework presented by the traditional theory of meaning which places centrality on sense, the other component of a semantic scheme. The second reason can be expressed as his desire to defeat the notion of meaning-incommensurability at any cost. We will now discuss the first of the two above mentioned reasons, namely, his dissatisfaction with the centrality of sense as ascribed in the traditional theory.

Since we have discussed at length the various shortcomings of the centrality as ascribed to sense by the traditional theory in our first chapter, only a brief review of them will be presented here. The traditional theorists (e.g. Frege, to name the most dominant among them) maintain that the meaning of a word/term is totally determined by the sense, i.e., the idea associated with it. To grasp the meaning of a term is to grasp this sense. The concept of sense is thus ascribed a centrality in the framework of the traditional theory. Putnaa, in his reformulation of the traditional theory shows that this sense centrality of the traditional theory implies mentalism and individualism. The failure of the sense centrality of the traditional theory can be attributed to two reasons. First, the aentalistic thesis of this theory, which follows from sense centrality, makes the description of the meaning of a term
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synonymous with the meaning of that term. This is because the sense centrality of the traditional theory renders any statement of meaning analytical in this framework. So the synonymity follows. But the acceptance of this synonymity between the meaning of a term and the associated description invites a host of problems. As a result, the traditional theory fails to accommodate the facts of scientific change and the existence of an abnormal member in a class. This synonymity also makes the traditional theorist's talk about counter factual situations unintelligible. Second, the individualistic thesis of the traditional theory, which is also an offshoot of its sense centrality, ignores the social or collective nature of language. As Putnam's concept of 'division of linguistic labor' argues, a person cannot master a language in the privacy of his own thoughts or mental representations. He has to depend on social cooperation – on others for acquiring the meaning (i.e., on the competent speakers of his language, from whom he can learn the 'use') and also for recognizing the proper extension (i.e., on the scientific experts).

Against these two features of the traditional theory, Putnam maintains that there can only be a contingent relation between the meaning of a term and the associated description and that one essential fact about our language is its social nature. Putnam's account of both these features of languages, which he accepts as facts about our language use, can be shown to depend
on his faith in PBD. We will postpone a detailed discussion of the functioning of PBD until the next section of this chapter. We now move on to the second reason that motivates Putnam to ascribe centrality to reference in his first phase.

This draws our attention to Putnam's desire to counter the meaning-incommensurability thesis of Kuhn and Feyeraband. Incommensurability, as we have already seen in our previous chapter, says that successive and competing theories, within the same domain 'speak different languages'. Thus, rival theories can neither be compared with one another nor be translated. Putnam, due to his adherence to scientific realism, tries to attack this incommensurability thesis. This desire of Putnam again can be attributed to his strong adherence to PBD. Meaning-incommensurability can be taken as a result of the sense centrality that these philosophers (especially Feyeraband) accept. In his "How not to Talk About Meaning?", Putnam (1975d) attributes this incommensurability of Kuhn and Feyeraband to their failure to appreciate the distinction between the customary (linguistic) meaning of a term and the scientific theory attached to that term. The incommensurability thesis can be taken as a special case of the synonymity between the meaning of a tent and the associated description as accepted by the traditional theory. To avoid this synonymity and the ensuing incommensurability, Putnam places centrality on reference at this phase of his writing.
The second phase of Putnam witnesses, as already mentioned, a change in Putnam’s focus. His approach to reference here can be termed as an indirect one, i.e., through its contribution to the realist explanation of the success of science. Success of science, Putnam observes, implies a convergence in our scientific knowledge. As Putnam writes,

That scientists try to do this — e.g., preserve conservation of energy, if they can, rather than postulate violations — is a fact, and that this strategy has led to important discoveries (from the discovery of Neptune to the discovery of the positron) is also a fact. (Putnam, 1978, 20)

We have seen in our second chapter that Putnam, following Boyd, enumerates the two following principles as providing an explanation of these facts of convergence as well as the success of science.

"(1) Terms in a mature science typically refer,
(2) The laws of a theory belonging to a mature science are typically approximately true." (Putnam, 1978, 20)

Reference is thus taken here as forming a pillar of the realist hypothesis which is called the empirical realist hypothesis for its explanatory nature. Reference is considered central here in this phase due to the fact that it provides the explanatory power to the realist hypothesis. Putnam then goes on to qualify this nature of the centrality of reference as interest-relative. This is the most crucial feature of this phase as it explicitly demonstrates Putnam’s rejection of the
physicalistic view of explanatory reference and also as it paves the way for his internal realism of the next phase. His acceptance of interest-relativity can be shown to be motivated by his faith in PBD or the principle of charity. We will postpone a detailed discussion of this till our next section.

The third phase of Putnam consists of his proposal of the 'third way' — the way towards internal or pragmatic realism. Here Putnam's principal concern is to provide a philosophical standpoint that lends transcendental defense to different 'phenomena' or facts. Among other things, different aspects of his theory of reference, namely, 'the division of linguistic labor', 'the contribution of the environment', and 'meaning holism' are enumerated as such 'phenomena' (Putnam, 1988, 109). Internal realism is called in for providing the transcendental defense for these phenomena. But it should be accepted that the centrality that is ascribed to reference in the first two phases is considerably weakened here. Putnam's wider focus may be cited as a reason for it. However, centrality of reference is not denied. The reason for this centrality can be derived from Putnam's observation regarding the indispensability of interpretation and translation to rational exercise. Any rational discourse — philosophical or scientific — involves our attempts at interpreting others. Putnam therefore accepts interpretation and translation as basic 'phenomena'. Interpretation and translation are nothing but our attempts to
ascribe reference to others' utterances. Convergence is also accepted as one of the 'phenomena' to be explained. Convergence loses much of its significance if interpretation is not allowed. The centrality of reference therefore lies here in its being indispensable for the phenomena of interpretation and translation. In this connection, we should note that all these phenomena that Putnam mentions have their origin in the principle of charity. In our later discussion, we will show the connection between these phenomena and the principle of charity.

5.1.2 Notional Justification

External justification gives the reasons why Putnam accepts reference as central to all of his different phases. However, the external justification of the centrality of reference does not by itself ensure a continuity of the same conception of reference. It is, for example, possible that one may regard reference as central but hold very different conceptions of reference (e.g. physicalists). Moreover, in the context of Putnam it is allegedly said that he has changed his conception of reference. In fact, the charge of discontinuity levelled against Putnam's philosophy has come due to the alleged change in Putnam's conception of reference. However, Z do not agree to this charge. It is true that there is a change in his conception of reference. In the following discussion, I will try to show that there is a continuity amidst all these changes in
Putnam's notion of reference.

The strategy to be adopted will be to show that Putnam's notion of reference has a common core which remains throughout the different phases. This common core can be identified as invariance of reference. While discussing external justification, we have given external reasons for Putnam's ascription of centrality to reference in all the phases. These reasons explain why the conceptual framework of Putnam, in all these phases, is taken to revolve around the notion of reference. From the point of view of notional justification — the invariance of reference — this centrality can be given an internal defense. This will consist in showing that the three most important concepts of the three different phases, viz., conditions of semantic applicability of a term, causal-explanation pertaining to the success of science and interpretation as rational exercise, are all understood and assume significance in relation to the common core that the notion of reference assumes — the invariance of reference. In the following, I shall discuss the invariance of reference in relation to these three phases.

The first phase, Putnam explains the notion of reference as applied in a semantic framework, with the help of the concept of the criterion or condition of semantic applicability of a term/word. A semantic framework, as has
already been discussed at length in the first chapter, tries to explain the criterion of applicability of a name/term to an object or a class of objects. The traditional theory of Meaning, due to its sense invariance takes sense as the supplier of these conditions of applicability. But the failure of sense centrality to provide adequate conditions of applicability of a term in all situations, forces Putnam to take reference as supplying these conditions of applicability. Reference functions as the ultimate arbiter in the case of any dispute regarding applicability. A body of liquid is called 'water' on our Earth, only if it shares the chemical composition of H\textsubscript{2}O of Earth water, which constitutes the referent of the term 'water'. For two terms to have the same meaning (as understood in the wider sense), it is not enough that they have identical associated senses (mental representations) as claimed by the traditional theory. In addition, the associated referents should also be the same. Centrality of reference is thus defined here in terms of its invariance, that provides stability to a semantic framework. Put in a nutshell, centrality of the notion of reference in this phase of Putnam, is explained in terms of semantic invariance.

In the second phase, reference is presented in the wider perspective of its relation to realism. From our discussion of the external justification of the centrality of reference in this phase, we can say that Putnam's notion of reference here is intimately related to the concept, of
causal-explanation. The reason is: reference is taken, here, to provide the causal-explanatory force to the empirical realist hypothesis. The notion of reference, thus, assumes a causal-explanatory nature. It also retains its nature of invariance. This is made possible by the fact that any explanatory notion, by its very nature, is invariant in the framework where it operates. This invariance of reference at this phase can be called explanatory invariance. Mere explanatory invariance, however, fails to capture the full implication of Putnam's notion of reference in this phase. The uniqueness of Putnam's notion of reference here lies in the fact that he explains it as interest-relative in nature. The explanatory invariance of reference is thus qualified as interest-relative in nature.

The notion of reference in the final phase of Putnam is explicated with the help of a negative and a positive argument. The negative argument shows what cannot be taken as an intelligible notion of reference. It consists of Putnam's model-theoretic arguments against the metaphysical realist

Here one clarification is needed. In our second chapter we have seen that Putnam, in addition to reference, also accepts truth as providing the causal-explanatory force to the empirical realist hypothesis. In view of this, one may object to the above made claim that the invariance of reference follows here from its explanatory force. As truth is also given an explanatory role, it should also be considered as invariant. My reply here is that the realist correspondence theory of truth presupposes the existence of reference relation. So reference ultimately assumes centrality.
conception of reference. Putnam's entire critique of metaphysical realism centres around its notion of reference relation which he takes as the basis of the total metaphysical realist picture. The metaphysical realist conception of truth, as we have already seen in our third chapter, depends on the existence of a 'unique' reference relation between the words and the suitable objects outside. This relation is taken as eternally determined – determined from the God's-Eye view. The metaphysical realist conception of reference, thus, assumes an absolute nature. Putnam's model-theoretic arguments are his crusade against this absolutist notion of reference of metaphysical realism. These arguments also imply Putnam's criticism of the absolute invariance that a metaphysical realist (in the fashion of a physicalist) attaches to his notion of reference. It reiterates his conclusion of the second phase, that the invariance attached to reference, in a philosophical framework, is interest-relative.

Putnam's positive argument for reference shows how the invariance of reference should be interpreted in a philosophical framework. This positive argument accepts the fact that reference has an 'open texture' which cannot be captured by any absolutist theory. We have seen in our discussion of the external justification of reference, that interpretation, translation etc., the most important 'phenomena' of rational exercise, depend on the possibility of ascribing the same
reference. The sameness of reference, however, does not function as an absolute concept operating in a vacuum. The 'open texture' of reference leaves much to the context, that is to say to our 'referential intentions', our theory of the world and our purposes, our environment etc. Thus, this positive argument for reference consists of providing a theory of empirical reference. Here, the invariance of reference along with its interest-relativity is placed within the scope of a particular conceptual scheme. This empirical notion of reference presents a fallible explication of it. This explication accepts reference as having an 'open texture' which cannot be captured by any unique absolute eternal relation. This, by no means, rejects the possibility of a conception of reference that explains it as a relation between a word and an object outside, that is not created by any mind. Putnam in his internal realism has this sort of conception of reference. It is taken to be specified by the causal chain that connects our use of a word/term to the initial dubbing ceremony. This does make room for a kind of correspondence. Putnam also accepts that the best semantic theory is the causal theory of reference. This empirical explication, thus, does ascribe an invariance to reference. The only difference from the invariance ascribed to reference in a

This availability of reference, within the scope of internal realism, outlines the major difference between Putnam, on the one hand, and Davidson and Quine on the other. The reason is, both the latter philosophers reject the concept of reference as inscrutable.
metaphysical realist picture lies in the fact that there is no absolutism involved here. The significance of this empirical explication of reference is reflected in the fact that this phenomenon of reference gets related to another most important but often overlooked phenomenon — that of conceptual relativity. The invariance of reference, when coupled with this conceptual relativity, places itself within the framework of a conceptual scheme.

One common rejoinder to Putnam’s inclusion of conceptual relativity and his acceptance of nonabsolute invariance of reference can be expressed in the fora of the following question: Does reference really remain invariant in such a relative framework? A little reflection makes explicit that this question presents the old worry regarding the relation between internal realism and relativism in a different manner. In our fourth chapter, while discussing the relation between relativism and internal realism, we have seen that the standard interpretation of internal realism takes it as a fora of relativism. We attributed this standard ‘mis’interpretation of Putnam to the critics’ failure to take nota of the other important aspect of internal realism — its notion of objectivity. As we have mentioned, for Putnam, conceptual relativity comes at the methodological level. So it does not imply an all out conventionalism. Putnaa accepts that there is some "fact to be discovered'. For him, there exists *
factual-conventional-continuum. This continuum makes room for objectivity and in turn for invariance. Moreover, the model-theoretic arguments of Putnam show in explicit terms the unintelligibility of absolute invariance. In the absence of any such absolutism, it is this empirical invariance, as implied by internal realism, that can serve the realist purpose. Putnam's invariance of reference has never been as absolute as that of a physicalist, not even in his first phase of strong realism. This point will be made elaborate in our discussion of the second presupposition of Putnam, namely, the human perspective. We will now turn our attention to the two presuppositions of Putnam's philosophy, namely, the PBD or the principle of charity and the presupposition of human perspective.

5.2 Presuppositions

What binds all the three different phases of Putnam is the common core of the invariance of reference that runs through all of them. This common core explains the centrality of reference in all the phases. This invariance of reference in the different phases is regulated by a few principles which govern the entire framework of Putnam in varying degrees. An explicit formulation of two such principles, which can be termed as presuppositions due to their regulative nature, will help us see the continuity between the different phases of Putnam in a clear fashion.
5.2.1 PBD or the Principle of Charity

The first presupposition is the PBD or what is commonly known as the principle of charity. This principle, as already pointed out in our first chapter, is first explicated in Putnam's article "Language and Reality" (1975a), where it is taken as the regulative principle of any viable philosophy of language. PBD maintains that we should grant the introducer of a term or the scientist who determines the nature of the referent of a term, the possibility of "reasonable modification of his description" (Putnam, 1975a, 275). An explication is given below of how a strong faith in this principle makes possible Putnam's ascription of centrality to reference, in his first phase.

In our discussion of the external justification for centrality of reference in the first phase, we enumerated two principal reasons that motivated Putnam to ascribe centrality to reference. The first reason points to his dissatisfaction with the traditional theory of meaning. This dissatisfaction is caused by the failure of the sense invariance of traditional theory to account for the contingent relation between the meaning of a term and its associated description and also the social nature of language. Putnam, as we have already mentioned, takes these two features as facts about our language use. Developing his positive theory of language, he accounts for these two facts with the help of his concepts of division of
linguistic labor', and the causal theory of reference. 'Division of linguistic labor' draws our attention to the aspect of social cooperation in a semantic framework. Causal theory, on the other hand, points to the fact that meaning depends on social as well as external factors and not purely on linguistic factors. So the meaning of a term is never synonymous with any description. The relation between the meaning of a term and a description (set of beliefs, or theory) associated with that term is only a contingent one. What makes these two notions available to Putnam is his faith in PBD. The definition of PBD suggests that the description that a user of a term uses in order to identify the referent of that term or to talk about the referent of that term is never synonymous with the meaning of the term. It thus leaves room for 'reasonable modification' of the description which say result from the availability of better scientific information about the term. Secondly, this PBD, by allowing a user of a term to attach a wrong description to that term, refutes the individualistic conception of language. PBD, in this manner, helps Putnam to accommodate the social and external determinants of reference and thus ascribes the centrality of a viable semantic framework to reference.

The second reason for his ascription of centrality to reference, as we have already seen, is his desire to defeat the incommensurability thesis. Invariance of reference as understood in a semantic framework points to the fact that the sameness in
that framework is explained in terms of the sameness of reference. PBD, on the other hand, shows how we can take different theorists as talking about the same thing (referent), inspite of the slight differences in their associated theories. Putnam's faith in PBD thus helps him to extend this invariance of reference to the intertheoretic framework. Such an extension makes trans-theoretic reference possible. It gives Putnam, the ammunition needed to defeat the incommensurability thesis which fails to account for trans-theoretic reference. The notion of trans-theoretic reference maintains that a term can have the same reference in different theories. It, thus, defeats the incommensurability thesis of Kuhn and Feyeraband. This concept of trans-theoretic reference gets a transcendental defense in the final phase of Putnam where it is accepted as a fact. It is argued that without it the whole of our rational practice will be in jeopardy.

The principle of charity plays a crucial role even in Putnam’s second phase, where he develops the causal-explanatory notion of reference. The causal-explanatory notion of reference, as already noted, can easily lead to a physicalistic notion of reference, where the notion of reference is ultimately reduced to some physical relation. In fact, this was precisely the proposal of Field and Devitt who explained causal-explanatory reference with the help of physical properties. Putnam, however, does not accept physicalism of any sort. His argument against
physicalism, as presented in the second chapter, can be reconstructed in the following form: any theory that ascribes the role of causal-explanation to reference should also accept the invariance or centrality of reference. Otherwise, reference will fail to play the crucial role of explaining other factors of that framework. Again, as our above discussion of the first phase of Putnam shows, the invariance or centrality of reference is intimately related to PBD. A physicalist cannot avail this principle of charity or PBD. This principle calls for a 'reasonable reformulation' (Putnam, 1978, 57-8) of the description given by the forerunner scientists (viz., Bohr of 1900). This notion of reasonableness assumes utmost importance as it differentiates this charity from "unreasonable charity". This factor explains why we do not extend the charity to 'phlogiston' theorists, while extending it to Bohr's 'electron' theory of 1900. The notion of 'reasonableness', however, due to its inherent human component, denies any precise analysis of itself in terms of a list of criteria. A consistent physicalist, thus cannot avail himself of the concept of 'reasonableness' as he tries to do away with any possible human component. This aspect of 'reasonable reformulation' of PBO points to the interest-relativity of all our explanation. It thus, helps Putnam in drawing his conclusion of this phase that the invariance of explanatory reference is interest-relative in nature.
This principle of charity forms an important part of Putnam's transcendental defense of internal realism in his final phase. The objective of Putnam's transcendental argument is, as he writes, "... to find a picture that enables us to make sense of the phenomena from within our world and our practice, rather than to seek a God's-Eye View" (Putnam, 1988, 109). By phenomena, Putnam, here, refers to our success in our interaction with our environment. Such explanation involves our ability to interpret or translate sets of beliefs of people, scientists or non-scientists, of a different time and place. Such concepts of interpretation or translation, as we have already seen, form an integral part of our basic rational practice. This interpretation is essentially related to the principle of charity. As Putnam writes, "[A]ll interpretation depends on charity, because we always have to discount at least some differences in belief when we interpret" (Putnam, 1988, 13). The 'reasonableness' of reformulation which is pointed out in the second phase is here rephrased as "having a nose for the 'right' trade-off" (Putnam, 1988, 11). Putnam borrows Fodor's concept of 'general intelligence' in explaining the use of charity. This phase thus witnesses the widest use of PBO in Putnam.

In this respect, we may note one criticism advanced against the PBO. This criticism goes as follows: it is only applicable in hindsight" (Geurts et al, 1988, 37). Authors observe that while the reference of 'electron' remains the same
through different theory changes, that of terms like 'fish', 'star', etc., have undergone considerable change. But "only in hindsight (it) can be seen whether the principle of charity is applicable to a particular situation" (Geurts et al, 1988, 40). We can never predict whether PBD will be applicable to further situations or not.

This criticism can be attributed to the authors' failure to appreciate two points about Putnam's idea of PBD. Firstly, the authors do not seem to have paid serious attention to the 'reasonable' aspect of the definition of PBD. If a description can be reasonably reconstructed in the light of our present theory, then PBD expects us to apply the same term to that description in spite of the slight differences in the two descriptions. This concept of 'reasonable' also shows as we have already pointed out, that PBD does not function in a vacuum. Rather, it operates with the whole system of our referential intentions, our interests and purpose etc. Thus, even for Putnam, "...charity is... not merely an intersubjectively accepted guide for research and reasoning, demanding that the notions someone uses be understood as conforming to the meaning and reference they commonly have" (Geurts et al, 1988, 43). Secondly, the nature of PBD should be understood carefully. It is a methodological principle with an explanatory function. It is applied to explain certain facts. So, it is not surprising that it should be applicable sore appropriately in 'hindsight'. 209
The success of its application in 'hindsight' explains the convergence of our knowledge. Thus, it plays its role in helping Putnam to explain the fact of convergence. From this, its success in future applications can be transcendentally derived.

The major usefulness of PBD lies in the fact that it makes available the notion of convergence to Putnam's framework throughout these three phases. Putnam accepts the convergence of scientific knowledge as a fact. What makes convergence possible for Putnam, as we have already noted, is this principle of charity. Charity makes room for trans-theoretic reference and thus for convergence. It underscores the strongest realist tenet of Putnam's philosophy. The principle of charity points to a unity in Putnam's writing, as it spreads itself throughout the different phases of Putnam, as their regulative principle. In the first place, it regulates the invariance that is attached to reference in the different phases of Putnam. In the second place, it makes available the realist tenet of convergence in all the phases of Putnam. Moreover, PBO is realist in nature. Thus the existence of PBD in all the phases of Putnam speaks for a continuity of realist intuition in all these phases.

5.2.2 Human Perspective

The second presupposition of the entire framework of Putnam can be expressed as the presupposition of human
perspective. This presupposition, though related to Putnam's principle of charity, warrants separate discussion for the crucial role that it plays in all the different phases of Putnam. This feature assumes significance in view of the criticism that the absolute invariance of the first phase of Putnam cannot be continuous with the nonabsolute invariance of the later phases. The humanistic perspective confronts this question at two points. On the one hand, it shows that the invariance that is ascribed to reference, in the first phase, is not absolute in the physicalist sense. On the other hand, it is argued that the invariance of the later phases, inspite of their humanistic nature, does sake room for objectivity and thus for proper reference centrality. Finally, it will be argued that this humanistic invariance is the only reference that can serve the purpose of explanatory realism. In the following, we give a brief exposition of how this feature of human perspective is presupposed in all the different phases of Putnam.

In the first phase this humanistic perspective represents itself in Putnam's acceptance of the social nature of meaning and language. This social nature is also implied by his faith in PBD. This collective nature of language does represent a humanistic perspective. A speaker cannot learn a language in the privacy of his own mental representations. Meaning has external as well as social factors. This external factor or the contribution of the environment, again reflects another feature...
of the humanistic perspective. It points to the fact that the ultimate arbiter is 'our environment'. As in the case of the Twin Earth argument, our term 'water' will be applied to the samples that bear the sameness relation with liquids that are found on our earth and are called 'water'.

In the second phase, this humanistic perspective of Putnam is expressed in Putnam's observation that all explanation, by its very nature, is interest-relative. This feature shows that any explanation on any rational practice, cannot take place within a vacuum. This reflects Putnam's realization of the problems that arise from the epistemological implications of metaphysical realism. He becomes aware of the fact that the humanistic perspective should be added to the explanatory realist world-view. As Putnam comments in the second of his John Locke Lectures, "I think that in actual translation we start out with assumptions as to what the speaker wants or intends, at least in many situations" (Putnam, 1978, 40). This is because all attempts at a physicalistic world picture with the help of the physicalist notion of reference become unintelligible. Putnam clarifies the realist project as explaining the success of our behaviour and that of science. In so doing we keep our interest, our purposes, in our mind. An explanation will be accepted as reasonable only if it is in accordance with our purpose. In *like* way, the invariance of reference also becomes interest-relative. We use the same terms for a substance, if it
bears the sameness relation to our local paradigm and also if it is in conformity with our purpose. As has already been pointed out in the discussion of our first chapter, the assignment of reference (both in terms of introduction and also in terms of identification) is regulated by individual and social interest. In our second chapter, we have further noted that interests which promote a better understanding of success in our interaction with the world are given importance. Acceptance of this interest-relativity, however, does not mean that our term fails to 'get any grip on reality'. It only means that human beings with their different interests and purposes are allowed to play their roles in the explanatory world picture. The success to be explained is that of the human race and the story should also be told from the human perspective and not from some God's-Eye View. This acceptance of interest-relativity, as we have seen in our second chapter, helps Putnam in finding a middle way between the hopelessness of Quine, which proposes to eliminate interpretation of any kind, and the unintelligibility of the physicalist absoluteness. This ultimately results in Putnam's internal realism which finds a path "between the swamps of metaphysics [absolutist view] and the quick sands of cultural relativism and historicism" (Putnam, 1983e, 226).

The most pronounced formulation of this humanistic perspective can be found in Putnam's internal realism. Internal realism is proposed as a reaction to metaphysical realism which
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presents an alienated world picture as it tries to portray the world from a God's-Eye View which ultimately becomes a 'View from nowhere'. The internality of internal realism refers to the speakers. The problem of the unique reference of metaphysical realism, as implied by Putnam's model-theoretic arguments can be avoided if we take reference as an empirical concept in relation to the speakers' 'referential intentions'. Given our 'referential intentions' "... that a liquid should count as 'water' only if it has the same composition as the paradigm examples of water (or as the majority of them)" (Putnam, 1983e, 221), we can accept its essential properties. But this essentialism (if there is any such thing) is the product of our use of the word. "... [T]his sort of essence is not 'built into the world' in the way required by an essentialist theory of reference itself to get off the ground" (Putnam, 1983e, 221). This is reflected in Putnam's observation, in this phase, that 'meanings have an identity through tise but no essence' (Putnaa, 1988, 11).

These two presuppositions, viz., the PBO and the humanistic perspective, together point to the fallibility nature of Putnam's attitude throughout his phases of philosophizing. This is reflected in the fact that realism has always been an empirical (and therefore fallible) enterprise for Putnaa. The explicit insertion of the humanistic perspective in the two later phases of Putnaa clearly shows how fallibilism is accommodated.
But as Putnam observes in "Why is a Philosopher?" (1990a), the two major factors of his theory of reference of the early days, viz., 'the division of linguistic labor' and the contribution of the environment' clearly signify "a (more) fallibilistic spirit in philosophy" (Putnam, 1990a, 110). This is because by Baking the meanings of a term dependent "on other people and on the way the entire society is embedded in its environment" (Putnam, 1990a, 110), Putnam, even in his phase of strong realism, leaves room for incorporating further scientific discoveries. This fallibilistic spirit in the later phase makes room for the empirical hypothesis of realism and finally for internal realism. So there is no conversion involved here. But a gradual 'change of mind' showing a continuity among the different phases.