This dissertation attempts to specify the meaning of the term "experience" as employed by John Dewey. Incidentally, as a consequence of great importance, this specification brings to light the fact that Dewey's thought contains highly tenable answers to a number of problems which happen to occupy a central place in contemporary philosophical discussions. These problems are like the following:

1. What constitutes a paradigm instance of knowledge? Locus and the criterion of validity of such an instance.
2. The nature of language and meaning in general.
3. Is value-judgment an instance of knowledge?
4. What is an art object?
6. Scope of metaphysics — its relation with knowledge, value and art.

The answers to these problems, of course, are not sufficiently explicitly worked out in his philosophical works. Moreover, an answer to none of
these problems is wholly confined to any one single work or even to a couple of volumes. Nothing, therefore, is too readily traceable. In fact a perpetual cross-reference among his theory of knowledge, theory of meaning, ethics, esthetics, theory of education and his naturalistic metaphysics is indispensable to get him in any one of these areas. Although it is not possible to have a thorough grasp of his thinking in any one aspect of philosophy independently of other aspects, yet considerations in various domains supplement each other which can profitably be utilized for better understanding.

The contention that Dewey's philosophic thinking forms itself into a coherent system does not deny the fact that he is frequently quite vague. Because of the extreme difficulties inherent in non-linear kind of argument — for it does not allow selection of one single theme to be discussed in isolation to its conclusions — Dewey's comprehensive and non-linear style of thinking does lack the analytical rigor of a micro-thinker both with respect to his language and the development of his ideas. Many contemporary analytical philosophers, who are primarily micro and linear thinkers find it difficult to get at his
non-linear and systematic thought. This difficulty is enhanced due to his un-examined use of philosophical language.

Dewey is an original thinker. He has something new to say. But he uses old philosophical terminology to convey new meanings. His use of the term experience (the term under consideration) too, has departed from its usual application by other philosophers. Since it is a term central to his philosophic thinking, its imprecision has led great minds like Russell, Reichenbach or Santayana and many others to misinterpret him. Leaving aside the difficulties which are bound to creep in any criticism, Dewey’s style allows a free play to pre-conceptions and prejudices of any kind. It is, of course, not easy to be a fair critic, yet misinterpretations in his case certainly reflect his own failure to develop his ideas to a degree of clarity, sufficient to meet the challenge of the preconceptions and prejudices of his critics.

Work in hand chooses to specify clearly the meaning of a key concept in John Dewey. "Experience," it is the author’s contention, is one single term, the accurate specification of which within Dewey’s systematic thought, provides a very definite grasp
of his thinking in general and of the answers to the
above mentioned contemporary issues in particular.

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