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**ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL  
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*By: Taruna Jain*

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# QUESTION PAPER

( June – 2019 )

( Solved )

## ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

Time: 3 Hours ]

[ Maximum Marks: 100

Note: (i) Answer all the five questions.

(ii) All questions carry equal marks.

**Q. 1. Define Philosophy. Explain its scope and importance. Enumerate the different branches of philosophy.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-1, Page No. 1, 'Introduction', Page No. 3, 'Scope of Philosophy' and 'Importance of Philosophy' and Chapter-2, Page No. 14, Q. No. 3.

*Or*

**What is epistemology? Examine the importance of Platonic epistemology with regard to his metaphysics.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-2, Page No. 10, 'Epistemology or Philosophy of Knowledge' and Chapter-10, Page No. 66, 'Philosophy of Plato'.

**Q. 2. Explain the major teachings of Heraclitus and Parmenides. Examine their influences on later western philosophy.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-6, Page No. 39, 'Heraclitus (536-470 B.C)' and Chapter-7, Page No. 44, 'Parmenides: (540-480 B.C)'.

*Or*

**What are the important contributions of St. Thomas Aquinas to the philosophy of God? Explain.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 108, 'Philosophy of God'.

**Q. 3. Answer the following questions:**

**(a) Describe the uniqueness of the philosophy of St. Augustine.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-15, Page No. 103, 'Philosophy of God' and 'Philosophy of the World'.

**(b) Explain the philosophy of the world according to Aristotle.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 73, 'Philosophy of the World'.

**(c) What are the main features of Sophist teachings?**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-8, Page No. 51, 'Sophist Teachings: Main Features' and Page No. 54, Q. No. 1 and 2.

**(d) Evaluate the philosophy of Duns Scotus as a critical interpretation of Thomistic system.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-17, Page No. 115, 'The Rivalry With St. Thomas', 'Philosophy and Theology' and 'The Theory of Being'.

**Q. 4. Answer the following questions:**

**(a) What is the Cartesian method?**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-3, Page No. 17, 'Cartesian Method'.

**(b) Describe the number theory of Pythagoras.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-6, Page No. 39, 'Concept of Number'.

**(c) Elucidate atom theory of the Ancient Greek atomists.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-7, Page No. 47, 'Atom Theory'.

**(d) Bring out the uniqueness of Socratic method.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-9, Page No. 58, 'Socratic Method'.

**(e) Write a short essay on Al-Ghazali.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-18, Page No. 123, 'Al-Ghazali (1058-1111)'.

**(f) Describe Aristotelian ethics.**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 74, 'Ethics'.

**Q. 5. Write short notes on the following:**

**(a) Skepticism**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 82, 'Skepticism'.

**(b) Substance**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 73, 'Substance and Form'.

**(c) The Republic**

**Ans.** The Republic is a Socratic dialogue, written by Plato around 375 BC, concerning justice, the order and character of the just city-state, and the just man. It is Plato's best-known work, and has proven to be one of the world's most influential works of philosophy and political theory, both intellectually and historically. In the dialogue, Socrates talks with various Athenians and foreigners about the meaning of justice and whether the just man is happier than the unjust man. They consider the natures of existing regimes and then propose a series of different, hypothetical cities in comparison, culminating in Kallipolis, a city-state ruled by a philosopher king. They also discuss the theory of forms, the immortality of the soul, and the role of the philosopher and of

poetry in society. The dialogue's setting seems to be during the Peloponnesian War.

**(d) Stoic ethics**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 83, Q. No. 3.

**(e) Epicureanism**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 81, 'Epicureanism'.

**(f) Intelligible Matter**

**Ans.** The oxymoronic phrase 'Intelligible Matter' occurs three times in Aristotle. In two passages it has the same meaning; in the third the meaning seems radically different. This gives the impression that the Aristotelian language of metaphysics is distressingly slack. Here, we argue, against the nearly unanimous voice of two millennia of commentaries, that 'Intelligible Matter' has the same meaning in all three loci. In doing so it develops a capital distinction that tightens up the apparatus of Aristotelian metaphysics. 'Intelligible Matter' – the very phrase is an oxymoron. Surely matter is sensible, not intelligible; intelligible things are, precisely, non-material: forms, ideas, or concepts, or something of that sort. Surely anyone with even the rudiments of philosophy knows that.

**(g) Moses Maimonides**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-18, Page No. 123, 'Moses Maimonides'.

**(h) Ockham's Razor**

**Ans. Ref:** See Chapter-17, Page No. 120, Q. No. 4.



# **Sample Preview of The Chapter**

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# ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

## Introduction to Philosophy

### Definition, Scope and Importance of Philosophy



#### INTRODUCTION

##### Definition of Philosophy

The term philosophy has its roots in Greece and western philosophy was also born in Greece. Etymologically, philosophy means 'love of wisdom' (*Philia+Sophia*). But there is a wider range of application of Sophia than the modern English 'wisdom'. The first person to describe himself as a philosopher was Pythagorus who speaks of three classes of people attending the festal games which is: the ones who seek fame by taking part in them and those who seek the gain by plying their trade and those who are content to be spectators. The Philosophers resembles the third class who seek to arrive at the truth by contemplation. Plato gave a few characteristics of the philosophical wisdom which includes the ability to enter into critical discussion and have a direct access to true reality and knowledge of the purpose of life.

The definition of philosophy in Oxford dictionary is given as "that department of knowledge which deals with the ultimate reality or with the most general causes and principles of things." Only philosophy can offer the knowledge of ultimate reality which science cannot do and can tell us only how whereas philosophy can tell us why, things happen as they do. Science also speaks about why and the causes but philosophy deals in more higher and more ultimate causes and principles compared to that of science.

According to Aristotle, philosophy is the first and the last science-the first science because it is logically presup-posed by every other science and the last as it deals with the reality in its ultimate principles and causes. His definition says that 'There is a science which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature. This is not the same as any of the so-called special sciences for none of these treats universally of being as being. They cut off a part of the being and investigate the attribute of this part'. According to Descartes, philosophy can be

thought of as running parallel to physics—the science of man as contrasted with the science of the nature. The other philosophers said that philosophy is 'to coordinate the most important general notions and fundamental principles of the various sciences'.

The activity was considered differently in different periods and places. For example, in the medieval period it was done making the philosophy theo centric in which the God becomes the principle of coordination and in the modern period it was carried out by an anthropo-centric philosophy which is a human activity by which the human spirit comes to an awareness of its personalities. There is no unanimity in the way the task of philosophy is considered but it has a priority and primordially in comparison to other sciences.

#### CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

##### PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHIZING

Another important aspect is philosophizing which is a term not of any recent origin but it is now widespread and is being used in the philosophical circles. But there is a basic difference between the two terms i.e. philosophy and philosophizing in their meaning and content. The term philosophy is nominal in its structure, static and dead in its meaning and refers to the finished product of thought whereas the term philosophizing is verbal in its structure and is dynamic and alive in its meaning and refers to the process of thinking. The term philosophy is a noun and has a very precise meaning. The term philosophy is laden with a traditional meaning and pre-supposes the truth. It is dynamic in nature because every reality is philosophically seen as becoming and is humble because there is no dogmatism of absolute certainty about what is philosophically seen. The term philosophizing is constantly in search, taking serious consideration of the elements of time and space. Thus, there is a difference in the meaning of the terms philosophy and philosophizing.

### PHILOSOPHY AND WISDOM

There is a close relationship between philosophy and wisdom. To understand this, we will try to understand what is meant by wisdom and with that we are clarifying what philosophy is. We do not know the precise way to understand wisdom and hence it is elusive and enigmatic notion and is vague in nature. Because of its vagueness, it is enveloped and blanketed with what is other than wisdom. The philosophy today is lost among the various philosophies and wisdom is lost among the 'knowledges'. Western philosophy is a theory of knowledge and hence philosophy is also considered as theory of knowledge. The west has achieved great progress in the field of philosophy and has man made an intellectual conquest of the various realities who has theorized this conquest and made it an epistemology. The wisdom became a victim and is side stepped and forgotten. Wisdom as the ground is hidden whereas the ground enables to grow i.e., knowledge shows forth and thrives.

#### Wisdom vs. Knowledge

We will now understand the relation between the wisdom and the knowledge. Wisdom has an ontological priority over knowledge in so far as the former enables the latter to emerge. The basis condition of possibility for knowledge is wisdom. Wisdom is not the unactualized knowledge but it is the ground that enables and the source that engenders the knowledge. Wisdom is not only the source of knowledge but is the goal as well. Knowledge is linked and limited to what is known and the main concern is on the truth of the knowledge achieved. When something is known to someone, it is added to the fund of one's knowledge. On the other hand, wisdom is beyond the boundary of knowledge. The knowledge of the knowledgeable person is stuck up to 'I know that I know' whereas that of a wise person goes to 'I know that I do not know' and the concern is about what he does not know. Wisdom is, thus, the knowledge of the non-knowledge and is a genuine knowledge. The end of all the knowledge is to reach this realm of wisdom which consists in one's ability to go beyond the boundary of knowledge.

Wisdom is not only at the beyond of one's knowledge but is also at the ordinary reality which evokes thought. It also evokes wonder in a thinker. The wonder here not necessarily means 'to be startled' by something unusual, sudden and strange but the usual and ordinary engenders philosophical wonder. The wisdom enables the man to see the wonder of reality. A wise man is thus seer who stands open to reality in its dynamic process.

Raimon Panikkar defined philosophically as 'ecosophy' which is different from philosophy and ecology. Eco-sophy means 'house of wisdom' or 'wisdom as the house'. Here house does not refer to a building but in the phenomenologico-intentional meaning of 'enabling to dwell'. The house becomes a

house only through dwelling. Wisdom as the house is the process of dwelling which makes the whole universe as one house and a wise person is one who by dwelling in the sense of 'being at peace', is able to widen the house and to embrace the whole cosmos and makes a cosmic house and becomes a cosmic person. This person is different from the fragmented person of narrow perspectives of various types and is a person who is able to go beyond the boundaries of region and religion and culture and language and class and caste.

#### Wisdom as the Horizon

To give a philosophical depth of our reflections, The term horizon have been used in various contexts both philosophical and non-philosophical. In the contemporary Western philosophy of Husserl and Heidegger, it carries a deeper meaning. The term horizon according to Heidegger is used in the context of his development of hermeneutical phenomenology and according to hermeneutics, it is 'to interpret' is to expose the 'as-structure' (*Als-Struktur*), which is grounded in the 'fore-structure' (*Vor-Struktur*). For Heidegger, horizon is the implicit (pre) understanding which enables all interpretation and is the wisdom that enables man to embrace the pre-supposed horizon and also be in the constant process of moving to the deeper and wider. The horizon is used by Husserl in the context of his theory of intentionality and experience of consciousness. Husserl added that we are able to arrive at the essence of something only when we can move from the determinacy of the actual apprehension to the indeterminacy of the possible apprehension or horizon. A person who is knowledgeable is stuck up with the actually known and tries to know more and increases the knowledge about the thing known by making the possible knowledge into the actual knowledge. A wise person is able to link his actual knowledge about something to the indefinite possible ways in which it can be known and he can know. In all, according to Husserlian, the phenomenological intuition is a call to wisdom—a call to the indefinitely wide horizon of wisdom by transcending the limitation of knowledge.

Husserl said that horizon is the world of possibilities, but its size is in proportion to one's wisdom. He added that the less wise a person is, the less extensive is one's world of possibilities. A genuinely wise person will have an indefinitely extensive world of possibilities and an un-wise person limits their possibility to their actuality. Wisdom helps in one letting one go beyond one's actual experience or knowledge. A wise person is the one who is characterized by intellectual humility and sees the limit of his knowledge and accepts the possibility of his inability of knowledge and does not exclude the possibility of his own ignorance from his world of possibilities. This person is gifted with intellectual honesty which is a clear pointer to his wisdom.

DEFINITION, SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHY / 3

Husserl and Heidegger said that the reflection of wisdom can be explained as a phenomenon of time. According to Husserl, the phenomenological constitution of time is a streaming present surrounded by a horizon of immediate 'protention' of the future'. Whereas according to Heidegger, the time as an objective phenomenon and takes time in the earlier phase of his thought as human beings process of temporalizing. According to both Husserl and Heidegger, the man extends himself to the future and to the past by way of protention and retention or by the way of coming towards and coming back. It is not the wisdom that enables a man to extend himself to the future and to the past and bring them to the present? Wisdom is considered as the vision that embraces the already i.e. the past and the ahead i.e. the future. The wisdom is more profound when the ambit of this thinking or vision is more wide but when a person goes hardly beyond the boundary of the present or when he hardly carries anything of the past and cannot see anything of the future then there is present in him hardly any wisdom.

The notion of imagination also occupies an important place in philosophy. We will here refer only to the artistic imagination which is a power to visualize scenes or events that have not occurred yet. It is thus the capacity to see the presence in the absence. The peak of artistic creativity and power of imagination is very important. A plan is based on seeing but for the wisdom it enables a man to creatively see the presence in the absence. When wisdom is a part of the creative thinking, then the world has grown and the culture has developed and the mankind has progressed because the wisdom has been present in the form of creative thinking at least in some persons. We can say that wisdom thus refers to one's vision of the future or it implies and involves the power of imagination and creativity.

A philosopher is a knowledgeable and wise person and is not a person with the quantitative unlimited knowledge but a person with qualitatively open horizon that enables one to open out to various realms of knowledge. To sum up, we can say that philosophy is a wisdom that enables a person to open out to the knowledge, going beyond the limiting knowledge of fragmentation. A philosopher is a wise person who is in constant search and is always a seeker and always on the way.

**SCOPE OF PHILOSOPHY**

The scope of philosophy cannot be limited to the specific boundary but has a wider horizon of wisdom. It embraces the whole of reality. However, there are few areas which are considered as generally philosophical.

The most fundamental realm of philosophy is metaphysics which is the inquiry into the first whence and the last whither and an inquiry beyond of physics that seeks to ask and answer the most ultimate and

fundamental questions about the reality—the Divine, the Human and the Cosmos. The metaphysical questions are the most fundamental and the ultimate questions. The concern of metaphysical is totally different from that of his counterpart and thus we can say that metaphysics occupies the foundational realm in philosophy.

Philosophy is also connected with another set of problems which is connected with our thinking. First is the logic which is the study of the valid thinking or argument. Another related area is the latent structure of our actual thinking called as epistemology or theory of knowledge. The study of good and evil is also important and is the realm of morality and does not enumerate the good and the bad actions but makes a fundamental analysis as to what is right or wrong. It is a fundamental search which enables a human mind to distinguish between what is good and what is bad.

Philosophy has also focused on cosmos and looks at it in its radicality. Reality includes not only cosmos but the realms of the human and of the Divine as well which are philosophically considered in philosophical anthropology. In all the philosophy looks at almost all the questions in their ultimate causes and principles.

**IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHY**

Philosophy cannot be confined within the precise boundary and also its importance. There is a philosophy in every human beings life which gives shape to his or her life. The philosophy of one's life moulds one's attitude and convictions which has to be developed and which is possible only by coming into contact with way in which philosophers have thought. The study of philosophy is important and helps a person to develop a philosophy of life. The philosophy helps in making the human mind sharp and disciplined. What one learns in philosophy is different from that learnt in other fields. Its study gives an in depth thinking and acting in one's being. The study of philosophy also helps a person to discipline the mind in such a way that it is able to understand every other discipline of knowledge. It helps a person to have the clarity of concepts and precision of expressions. This precision is then seen in thinking and speaking and acting. The philosophy thus enters the practical life as well.

According to Marcel, "Philosophy has no weight and no interest whatever unless it sounds an echo in our life. Philosophy vibrates as a constant echo in our life". It does not put people to slumber and disturbs and awakens them from their life of mediocrity and stagnation and spurs them to dynamic action and moral living. To sum up, philosophy enables the people to live a life of existential depth, moral integrity and religious conviction.

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q. 1. What is your general understanding of philosophy?**

**Ans.** Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems concerning matters such as existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. It can also be defined as the academic discipline concerned with making explicit the nature and significance of ordinary and scientific beliefs and investigating the intelligibility of concepts by means of rational argument concerning their presuppositions, implications, and interrelationships; in particular, the rational investigation of the nature and structure of reality (meta-physics), the resources and limits of knowledge (epistemology), the principles and import of moral judgement (ethics), and the relationship between language and reality (semantics). It is born out of the natural curiosity of humans and is manifested in the form of human search. In Oxford dictionary, the term is defined as “That department of knowledge which deals with ultimate reality or with the most general causes and principles of things”. The presumption is that science, inheriting the cosmological tradition, does not offer us the knowledge of ultimate reality and only philosophy and do this. Philosophy gives us the answer of ‘why’, things happen as they do. Etymologically, the term philosophy means ‘love of wisdom’. The term was probably coined by Pythagoras. Philosophical methods include questioning, critical discussion, rational argument and systematic presentation. The two different activities that go under the name of philosophy are: one is essentially rational and critical with the logical analysis at its heart and the other is openly hostile to rational analysis and professes to arrive at general conclusions by a phenomenological institution or hermeneutical interpretation.

According to Aristotle philosophy is the first and the last science and defined it as: “There is a science which investigates being as being, and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature”. Later on philosophy came to be thought of as running parallel to physics. Some philosophers said that the task of philosophy is to coordinate the most important general notions and fundamental principles of the various sciences.

**Q. 2. How is philosophy different from philosophizing?**

**Ans.** The terms philosophy and philosophizing are different in both meaning and content. The term philosophy is nominal in structure and is static and dead in its meaning and refers to the finished product of thought whereas philosophizing is verbal in its structure and is dynamic and alive in its meaning and refers to the process of thinking.

Philosophy can be defined as the rational investigation of the truths and principles of being, knowledge, or conduct whereas philosophizing is used to speculate or theorize, usually in a superficial or imprecise manner.

Generally speaking, philosophy is concerned with universal truths. It is like science in two ways: (i) It attempts to provide an objective account of the universe and the things in it. (ii) It is social and collaborative in nature, as scientists and philosophers build-off of and refute previous/contemporary ideas. Philosophizing, on the other hand, is an action of the individual. It is self-reflective before being ‘world-reflective’, and is not necessarily concerned with discovering or making any claim of universal truth.

**Q. 3. Differentiate between wisdom and knowledge.**

**Ans.** The term wisdom is different from knowledge as wisdom has an ontological priority over knowledge insofar as the former enables the latter to emerge. Wisdom is the condition of possibility for knowledge. The dictionary defines *wisdom* as “the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting.” *Knowledge*, on the other hand, is “information gained through experience, reasoning, or acquaintance.” Knowledge can exist without wisdom, but not the other way around. One can be knowledgeable without being wise. Knowledge is knowing how to use a gun; wisdom is knowing when to use it and when to keep it holstered.

Wisdom is not only the source of knowledge but is the goal as well. Knowledge is linked and limited to what is known. In knowledge one is almost exclusively concerned about the truth of the knowledge achieved whereas wisdom looks beyond the boundary of knowledge. Wisdom consists in the wonder not only at the beyond of one’s knowledge but also at the ordinary reality evoking thought. It is the wisdom that enables the human to see the wonder of reality. Thus, a wise man is a seer.

Wisdom is the condition of possibility for knowledge. Possibility does not enable the actuality but refers to the situation prior to something becoming actual. Wisdom is not the un-actualized knowledge but the ground that enables the source that engenders knowledge. Wisdom is the goal of knowledge and knowledge is linked and limited to what is known and is a limited enterprise.

**Q. 4. How can wisdom be explained in terms of horizon?**

**Ans.** The term horizon is used in both philosophical and non-philosophical contexts. According to Husserl, a wise person is able to link his actual knowledge about something to the indefinite possible ways in which it can be known and he can know. He calls the phenomenological institution as a call to wisdom or a call to the indefinitely wide horizon of wisdom by transcending the limitation of knowledge. According