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**METAPHYSICS**

*By: Taruna Jain*

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# QUESTION PAPER

(June – 2019)

(Solved)

## METAPHYSICS

Time: 3 Hours ]

[ Maximum Marks : 100

Note: (i) Answer all five questions.

(ii) All questions carry equal marks.

**Q. 1. Explain the brief history of western metaphysics.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-4, Page No. 35, Q. No. 2.

*Or*

**Discuss Being and Becoming in detail.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-9, Page No. 73, 'The Operative Level'.

**Q. 2. Explain the ontological dimension of human person.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 90, 'Ontological Dimension of Human Person'.

*Or*

**Elucidate Immanuel Kant's views on Beauty.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-18, Page No. 146, Q. No. 3.

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

**(a) Explain the brief history of contemporary Indian Metaphysics.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-5, Page No. 42, 'Contemporary Indian Metaphysics'.

**(b) What is the distinction between matter and form? Discuss.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-8, Page No. 65, 'Distinction between Matter and Form'.

**(c) Discuss the essential conditions for knowledge.**

**Ans.** Now we will take a look at the three essential conditions for knowledge.

**(a) Belief Condition:** Bonjour said that in order to fulfill the process of knowledge, a person need not require explicit, conscious acceptance of the relevant proposition at the time in question. According to the Cartesian view (JTB), to a question how strongly the person must accept or believe the proposition in

question, the answer is that a person has no possible doubt that the proposition is true (person must be certain). This is a strong aspect of the requirement of the belief system but then most of the things that we seem ordinarily regard as instances of knowledge would not satisfy this condition.

The requirement to a significantly weaker version (JTB) of the belief condition would be that a person must be fairly confident and reasonably sure in his or her belief or acceptance of the proposition in question and agrees much better with our commonsense judgment when the knowledge is concerned.

**(b) Truth Condition:** The truth condition believes that 'One cannot know what not the case is'. When the claim in question is not in fact true, then it is intuitively wrong to ascribe knowledge and one must accept that in the process of satisfaction of the other two conditions i.e. belief and justification, the truth condition is fulfilled by the knower.

The truth is the aim of cognitive and one tries to accomplish this by taking beliefs for which they have good reasons or strong justification. One has knowledge if he/she tries to succeed in this task and if one fails, he has is mere 'Attempted Knowledge'. It is not easy to define between these positions. The question is about the nature of the truth itself and what does truth amount to? There is no unanimous opinion about this question and the widely accepted view is of 'The corresponding theory of truth'. According to this theory, "Proposition is true if it corresponds to or agrees with the relevant aspects or part of reality."

**(c) Justification Condition:** One can think of knowledge as merely a true belief and suggest that there is no further condition/ingredient which is necessary. When a question is asked then more is needed for knowledge than a true belief. The answer in that case is: one needs a “Sufficiently strong reason or justification for thinking that the claim in question is true” which is often described as ‘Truth Conducive’ *i.e.*, one that increases or enhances the likelihood that belief is true. The reason is commonly referred to as an ‘Epistemic Reason’ or ‘Epistemic Justification’ which means to have evidence in favour of the truth of the proposition in question. Some questions that are related to justification conditions include: Should this ‘Evidence’ be separate body of information?

Can this concept be comfortably applied to all cases of apparent epistemic reasons or justifications? Are there self-evident propositions?

Some sort of a basis is involved in all the evidences of some sort for thinking that the proposition in question is true or likely to be true. Also this truth conducive basis is something that is within the cognitive possession of the person whose belief thereby comes to be justified, that it is something that he/she aware of in some way that would allow to be cited as a reason or as giving justification for the belief in question. There are many sources from which the truth conducive basis which is *within the cognitive possession of the person* can emerge. These are religious tradition, common sense or arbitrarily (luck). According to the philosophers, if we are able to give good reason we exclude luck, belief can be grounded on religious tradition and common sense but there is no guarantee of truth is assured of. Now again we are confronted with the issue of how strong the reason or justification must be? The demands of JTB is that the reason must be conclusive so as to guarantee the truth. The JTB’ demands that justification be reasonable—strong enough to make quite likely the proposition in question as true.

**(d) Proposed Alternative: JTB + (Modified JTB):** The weak conception (JTB) stands in need of modification as there is no unanimity on the issue as to how strongly the person must believe and justify the proposition in question to qualify as knowledge.

According to the famous scholar Edmund Gettier, JTB is not sufficient for knowledge. He showed that one could believe what is true and be justified in so believing and yet he is fail to know. He also said that the cases of intuition are not cases of knowledge and the luck element is to be totally eliminated. He came up with the JTB + version which adds an additional 4th clause to JTB saying: “It must not be an accident that in relation to S’s reason or justification that P is true.”

We will have to agree with the theory of Russell who said that knowledge is a sub-class of true beliefs and that every case of knowledge is a true belief but not every true belief is knowledge. We have to opt for JTB if we want to include all possible cases of knowledge by common sense. But then ‘Gettier problem’ [accidental knowledge] comes up. Even the fourth clause [JTB+] cannot fully qualify JTB to knowledge as there are chances that a belief that is only weakly justified will turn out to be false. There will be some extent of matter of luck or accident.

To sum up, we can say that the Bonjour’s theory is that the traditional conception of knowledge is seriously problematic with regard to the strength of the reason or justification that should be required for knowledge. “We cannot choose between the strong and weak conceptions of JTBs. All the same problems remain: Whether we have reasons or justification on the light of which our various beliefs are likely to be true? And secondly how strong or compelling such justification is?”

**(d) Explain in detail the problem of falsity.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 133, ‘Problem of Falsity’.

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

**(a) Describe the kinds of relation.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-2, Page No. 13, ‘Kinds of Relation’.

**(b) What is the dialectic method in metaphysics?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-3, Page No. 18, ‘Dialectic Method’.

**(c) What do you understand by the different interpretations of transcendence?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 89, ‘Different Interpretations of Transcendence’.

# **Sample Preview of The Chapter**

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# METAPHYSICS

## Definition and Nature Of Metaphysics



### Etymology, Definition and Scope

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The human beings have labored continuously and seek an encompassing explanation for the universe. There are many explanations given by the various schools of thought. few of us identified the most radical basis of reality with one particular element intrinsic to it such as matter, spirit, thought or motion. This shows that everything in the universe is just an offshoot or derivative of that element. Some thinkers maintained the existence of a transcendent principle which made the universe without being part of it. According to few others the existence of one origin of the universe, while some of them held that the universe came to be from two or more sources. There is a great influence of these views on human psyche. The human beings believe that everything originated from the inner matter and will go back to it and believes that one was created by God who brought one's being out of nothing. The study called as philosophy was initially formed as one undifferentiated body of knowledge and then the studied of different aspects of reality gave rise to special sciences which became distinct from the philosophical knowledge and then appeared the different branches of the subject. These branches have the core of the philosophical knowledge which influences other branches and leads to the study of its first and radical cause. This science is called Metaphysics.

#### **CHAPTER AT A GLANCE**

##### **ETYMOLOGY OF METAPHYSICS**

The great philosopher Aristotle can be called the beginner of the science of being as being or metaphysics. The name 'metaphysics' can be attributed to this science of 'being as being' is something

accidental. Around 60 AD, Andronicus of Rhodes was editing the manuscripts of Aristotle and labelled the books after Aristotle's works on 'physics' as '*meta ta physika*,' which means 'after physics'. The name metaphysics is derived from being placed after physics in the writings of Aristotle. The word metaphysics means the science of what is beyond (*meta*) nature (*physika*) of an object above the mere material. The Greek philosophical writings has the title 'Concerning Nature' which deals with what we would now consider physical science. There were some speculations about the questions which arise after the physical problems or which are concerned with what lies after or beyond the physical world of sensory experience. Thus we can say that the science of what is beyond (*meta*) the nature (*physika*) of an object is metaphysics. The modern philosophy takes metaphysics as study of things transcending nature, *i.e.*, existing separately from nature and having more intrinsic reality and value than the things of nature. Also it refers to the field in philosophy which deals with the questions about the kinds of things there are and their modes of being. The metaphysics of Immanuel Kant talks about apriori speculation on question that cannot be answered by scientific observation and experiment. The term has also been popularly associated with the spiritual or religious.

The name given by Aristotle's for metaphysics was 'First Philosophy' as it deals with the first causes and principles of reality. The name clearly indicates that metaphysics occupy a central place in the whole philosophy. Also metaphysics is distinguished from all other branches of philosophy which are called as 'secondary philosophies' by Aristotle. Christian Wolff called it "Ontology", theory of being which is a name deriving from the Greek on = being and logos = theory

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or doctrine. The name was accepted by many modern philosophers but rejected by some who said that the term ontology has been used sometimes in an idealistic sense to mean the science of the idea of being or an a priori knowledge without relation to experience.

**DEFINITION OF METAPHYSICS**

Traditionally, the word Metaphysics comes to us from Ancient Greece, where it was a combination of two words—Meta, meaning over and beyond—and physics. Thus, the combination means over and beyond physics. In the definition found in most dictionaries, metaphysics is referred to as a branch of philosophy that deals with first cause and the nature of being. It is taught as a branch of philosophy in most academic universities under the label of “Speculative Philosophy.” Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy responsible for the study of existence. It is the foundation of a worldview. It answers the question “What is?” It encompasses everything that exists, as well as the nature of existence itself. It says whether the world is real, or merely an illusion. It is a fundamental view of the world around us. It is the study of the ultimate causes and of the first and most universal principles of Being. The ultimate causes or supreme causes are differentiated from proximate causes. Metaphysics considers the absolutely ultimate cause of the universe and strives to identify that cause and know more about its nature and its activity.

Metaphysics studies the first and most universal principles of all things, Being.

Metaphysics seeks those principles which radically constitute all things. Therefore there are some particular aspects of reality which are considered as the most basic by the philosophers and as such the origin of everything else (for example, change or becoming, quantity, the essence etc).

The metaphysical level includes everything real within its field of study because it seeks the ultimate cause and fundamental principles of things. This is in contrast as particular sciences study only a limited aspect of the world. These sciences advance in their own field thanks to a body of permanent knowledge which serves as their basis, and which is always assumed or taken for granted in every scientific research. According to the definition given by Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984), metaphysics can be called as ‘The core and ground of human knowledge as it underlies and penetrates, transforms and unifies all other departments of knowledge.’

It underlies all other departments: The principles of metaphysics are the detached and disinterested drive

of the pure desire to know which takes place in the empirical, intellectual and rational consciousness of the self-affirming subject. The questions, insights, formulations, reflections and all judgments proceed from the unfolding of that drive. Thus, metaphysics underlies logic, mathematics and all other sciences.

**It penetrates all other departments:** The other departments constitute the same principles as that of metaphysics. They are particular departments related to particular viewpoints. But then all departments emerge from a common source and desire a common compatibility and coherence and are therefore penetrated by metaphysics.

**It transforms all other departments:** The origination of Metaphysics is from the ‘experience of something’. It is free from the realization of particular viewpoints. The positions are distinguished from counter-positions in the whole of knowledge. It is a transforming principle that leads the positions to fuller development.

**It unifies all other departments:** The other departments respond to particular ranges of questions but metaphysics deals with the original, total question and therefore it moves to the total answer transforming and putting together all other answers.

Thus, metaphysics can be defined as the core and ground of all knowledge, which is the science of being as being.

**SCOPE OF METAPHYSICS: MATERIAL AND FORMAL OBJECT**

In philosophy, matter indicates the indeterminate but determinable element and ‘form’ is the determining element. The material science and the theoretical science also have the relative meaning of ‘material’ and ‘formal’. A science deals with the Material Object which is the definite realm or definite subject-matter. The Formal Object is that special aspect of the material object which is under consideration or study. There are many knowledgeable aspects which is to be grasped in a definite material object which is taken as the general matter. The approach is through formal and analytic abstraction, the various aspects of the object. Thus, the material object so considered in a definite aspect is called the formal object. The things which fall under the notion of being are included in the material object of metaphysics. The study of ‘being as being,’ *ens in quantum ens* is the formal object of the metaphysics. Thus, metaphysics is not restricted to any particular being or part of that being but rather treats of what is common to all beings namely, Being which is the

ground of beings since all beings are in Being. There is no particular thing in which the Being can be found but it embraces everything in it. That which is not particular is still something or in some way. Thus, Being is that which is in some way or something.

The knowledge of Being is an act of intuition. This is because of the indubitable, inseparable, and immediate self-presence of being as being to my knowing in a pre-predicative certainty which precedes the formation of all explicit concepts and judgements. But this intuition is so imperfect that it does not yet say anything explicit about identity or participation, unity or plurality, etc. This imperfection of our intuition forces us to express the knowledge of Being by means of a judgement. The problem now is of one and many which means that we will have to investigate more accurately the nature of the predicate which is common to all. Also we need to ask ourselves how a predicate that does not express any plurality, finiteness, imperfection or indetermination can be predicated of distinct, manifold, finite, imperfect, and determinable subjects. With the help of this investigation, we will have to show how the most universal concept expresses everything at the same time and simultaneously falls short because of its inadequacy. Thus, *Being pertains to everything*: The needed, the real and even the possible, one the object known and the knowing subject, the concept and what is conceived, what is perceived and what is purely proposed in imagination or thought is apparent. We can thus conclude that Being or 'something' is the absolutely all-embracing and general notion.

Thus, Being is the absolutely general notion. This is because it is predicated not merely of a group of beings but absolutely of all. The Being cannot be defined if it is the absolute general notion. This is because the notion of Being does not fall under a higher, more general concept and therefore it is not a species. It is the first known in which everything else that is known, thought or proposed is already present and presupposed. The notion of Being can be described only if we recognize a certain structure in it. The notion is not perfectly simple but shows a certain dichotomy of bearer and form. Being is that which is, that which has 'Being', that which has a reference to 'Being', and through which 'Being' is. If Being is considered as a predicate, it is a participle and it is related with the participation in 'Being'. If it is used as a subject, it is a noun and stresses that which shows in 'Being', the bearer or the subject of 'Being'.

The operation by which the mind leaves aside is Abstraction and abstracts from certain aspects of a being. When the intellect abstracts it out of the whole complex of a being, it does so as it discovers that other beings also exhibit this same feature. When the content of a thought is more abstract and leaves aside more particular contents the extension become more general and universal and predicable of a large number.

Contraction is the opposite of abstraction and is the process by which the mind adds again to the central characteristic of a being the aspects which were left behind through abstraction. Let us assume that the concept of a being is the most abstract in the sense of total abstraction then it would retain only that in which the many beings agree but leave aside that in which they differ. The differences would be expressed in differentiating concepts that stand independently alongside the notion of Being. The notion of being and the differentiating concepts would have to show a certain similarity with one another which could be isolated through a process of abstraction in a higher and more general concept and so on to infinity without ever allowing us to reach the absolutely supreme and first notion. The need is of a supreme and all-embracing concept because of the unity of thinking as well as that of the thinkable. Therefore, the most general concept cannot be obtained through abstraction which leaves aside the differences. The concept is of another nature than abstract concepts and should include the differentiating concepts, not merely potentially as in concepts that are obtained through total abstraction, but actually. The notion of being is called as transcendental as it extends to all beings not only in so far as they are similar but also in so far as they are dissimilar and contains them in all aspects. Being transcends every genus and all differences and contains in an eminent way not only the highest abstract concepts or general but also the differentiating concepts and therefore also the concepts of species. Categorical is opposite of the term 'transcendental'. A concept is 'categorical' insofar as it falls under one of the categories or predicaments which are the fundamental concepts.

'Transcendental' belongs first of all to 'Being'. This is why the name 'transcendental properties of being' is given to the properties which flow from being as being. The characteristics that flow from the identity of Being with itself include unity, truth, goodness and beauty.

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The transcendental properties can be considered in broader sense as those which pertain not to all beings but to beings having a higher mode of Being, inasmuch as they do not include any imperfection in themselves. In the Kantian sense, 'Transcendental' is opposed to 'empirical' and applies to knowledge insofar as this knowledge is not concerned with objects but with the subjective a priori possibility of knowing objects. There is a difference between 'Transcendental' and 'transcendent,' *i.e.*, what transcends a given order of being and is independent of it. The 'transcendent' with reference to the cognitive object means that which is above the cognitive immanence of the object and with respect to the world of experience, it indicates what lies beyond the world of experience and with reference to the finite, it applies to what transcends everything finite. Thus, the difference between the transcendental notion of Being and abstract general concepts is: 'Being' belongs to a being not only because of its similarity but also because of its dissimilarity with the other beings; whereas the unity of the abstract-general concept results from its abstraction.

Thus, it is believe that the notion of Being actually contains anything whatsoever that in any way has a reference to 'Being' and includes even the differences through which the various beings are in their own manner. At the same time as a concept or intermediary representation of our thinking, it does not give us adequate knowledge of the universal interconnection uniting 'everything that is.' The idea contains the different modes of Being actually and contains them only implicitly and confusedly. The notion of Being is sometimes referred as 'improper' abstraction as it does not leave anything behind but it does not yet say everything explicitly. The development of thought consists in an immanent explicitation of the notion of Being, so that in an increasingly more adequate way everything which through Being is possible and all its realizations are brought to explicit knowledge in more determined concepts. This way will help in revealing the full richness of the notion of 'Being'. The transition from the confused notion to the explicit grasp of 'that which is' depends on experience and the insight contained in it. This experience helps in the placement in the presence of the various modes of Being, which cannot be deduced immediately from the general notion of Being itself. The Being belongs to everything if it is the absolutely general notion and if it is transcendental and contains not merely potentially but actually the differentiating concepts then how can it be predicated

of the various beings and aspects of Being in the same undifferentiated sense?

To sum up, the notion of Being is predicated of many in a sense that is neither absolutely the same nor entirely different and has a unity of meaning because its sense reveals not an absolute but a relative similarity in the judgments we make about different beings commonly called 'analogy'.

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q. 1. What is the etymological meaning of metaphysics?**

**Ans.** Around 60 AD, Andronicus and Rhodes while editing the manuscripts of Aristotle, labeled the books as '*meta ta physika*' which means '*after physics*'. Etymologically speaking, metaphysics refers to the science of what is beyond (*meta*) nature (*physika*) of an object above the mere material. The word "metaphysics" derives from the Greek words *μετά* (*metá*, "beyond", "upon" or "after") and *φυσικα* (*physiká*, "physics"). It was first used as the title for several of Aristotle's works, because they were usually anthologized after the works on physics in complete editions. The prefix meta- ("after") indicates that these works come "after" the chapters on physics. However, Aristotle himself did not call the subject of these books "Metaphysics": He referred to it as "first philosophy." The editor of Aristotle's works, Andronicus of Rhodes, is thought to have placed the books on first philosophy right after another work, Physics, and called *them τὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ βιβλία* (*ta meta ta physika biblia*) or "The books that come after the [books on] physics". This was misread by Latin scholiasts, who thought it meant "the science of what is beyond the physical".

Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy exploring the fundamental nature of reality. There are two broad conceptions about what "world" is studied by metaphysics. The strong, classical view assumes that the objects studied by metaphysics exist independently of any observer, so that the subject is the most fundamental of all sciences. The weaker, more modern view assumes that the objects studied by metaphysics exist inside the mind of an observer, so the subject becomes a form of introspection and conceptual analysis. Some philosophers, notably Kant, discuss both of these "worlds" and what can be inferred about each