

# Introduction to the world of PHILOSOPHY

Ashwin Amalraj J  
Meenakshi Sundaram KP

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- ▶ What is Philosophy?
- ▶ Terminologies involved in philosophy
- ▶ History of Philosophy
- ▶ Philosophy in Theology and Mathematics

# What is Philosophy?

From Greek it literally means love of wisdom. But is it?

Defining Philosophy !!!!!!!

It's not an easy task. Many great people have tried. Many have failed

## Definition from Google

The study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially when considered as an academic discipline.  
But lets not stick with it

## What is Philosophy? Historical approach

According to historical approach philosophy is really the study of historical figures who are considered philosophers. One may encounter the names of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Thales, etc,...

The argument for the historical approach is that no real understanding of philosophy can be had unless one understands the past

## What is Philosophy? Historical approach

This historical definition of philosophy has its problems:

- ▶ It restricts philosophy to an examination of past questions and answers only
- ▶ It is not really different from the study of history of ideas.  
This would make philosophy a sub-unit of history.

# Philosophy in a World-View

- ▶ Early philosophers attempted to describe the world in its simple make-up.
- ▶ Thales asserted that water, and Anaximenes asserted that air, were the important materials of the universe.
- ▶ Many other proposals have come from other philosophers.
- ▶ A world-view, involves more than the questions of the universe.
- ▶ A world-view is the attempt to come to a total view of the universe as it relates to the make-up of matter, man, God, the right, the nature of politics, values, aesthetics, and any other element in the cosmos that is important.

# Philosophy is a Program of Change

## From Marxist philosophy

Karl Marx declared that the role of philosophy is not to think about the world, but to change it.

Philosophy is, in contrast, a movement like Christianity which has a built-in motivation for changing the world by the conversion of people to its cause.

## Philosophy is analysis of language

- ▶ This is one of the more extreme definitions of philosophy.
- ▶ The analysis-of-language-emphasis rejected metaphysics and accepted the simple, but useful modern standard of scientific verification
- ▶ Their central thesis is that only truths of logic and empirically verifiable statements are meaningful.
- ▶ How do verification and language work together? Try this example. How do you know when to take a statement as referring to a fact? We can use three sentences: (1) God is love, (2) Diff42 is in Chennai, and (3) Rape is wrong.
- ▶ These sentences are constructed in a similar manner. But only one is factual, i.e., it can be scientifically verified.

## Philosophy is a Set of Questions and Answers

- ▶ Philosophy has a long list of topics it has been interested in. Some of these are more interesting and up-to-date than others.
- ▶ Is man only a body? Is he, or does he have a soul? Does God exist?
- ▶ Some questions have several proposed solutions. This is true in trying to answer what the nature of man is.
- ▶ Other questions cannot be answered decisively. Does God exist? can only be answered in terms of a probability (or is it possibility) situation.
- ▶ Some questions have been answered to the satisfaction of many philosophers for a long period of time only to be raised again.

# Philosophy is Criticism

- ▶ The idea of philosophy being "criticism" needs explanation.
- ▶ An understanding may be reached by looking at one of the philosophers who embodied this definition. Socrates is one of the earliest to engage in philosophic criticism. For Socrates, criticism referred to critical thinking involving a dialectic in the conversation.
- ▶ A dialectic, one must keep in mind, is a running debate with claims, counter-claims, qualifications, corrections, and compromises in the sincere hope of getting to understand a concept.
- ▶ Criticism must not be confused with skepticism.
- ▶ Skepticism is a willful, self-serving game which is not for the pursuit of knowledge

## Concluding Observations

A definition of philosophy is impossible.

But why can't all of these be used for a definition?

What we have to understand is

- ▶ Philosophy would not be the same without criticism.
- ▶ No philosopher worth his salt would consider an important discussion without resorting to an analysis of the language.
- ▶ Even though a world-view definition has been rejected by some philosophers, still others seek to understand the whole of the universe.
- ▶ Without the historical approach there is nothing to start with.

# Divisions of Philosophy

- ▶ Epistemology
- ▶ Metaphysics
- ▶ Logic
- ▶ Axiology
- ▶ " Philosophies of"

# Divisions of Philosophy

## Epistemology

Epistemology is a Greek word translated as the theory of knowledge. Epistemology is a foundational area for other areas of philosophy.

Epistemology involves three main areas:

- ▶ The source or ways to knowledge.
- ▶ The nature of knowledge.
- ▶ The validity of knowledge.

# Divisions of philosophy

## Logic

Logic is a term used to describe the various types of reasoning structures, the relationship of ideas, deduction and inference, and in modern times. symbolic logic which becomes quite mathematical.

## Axiology

Axios, the Greek word of worth, is related to two different areas of worth. There is, first, moral worth, or ethics.

# Divisions of philosophy

## Metaphysics

Metaphysics is another Greek word which refers to the attempt to describe the nature of reality.

## "Philosophies of"

Another category of philosophy is called "philosophies of" because of the term being related to various other subjects or disciplines.

## Some Terminologies in philosophy

- ▶ Inductive and deductive reasoning
- ▶ Causality and Determinism
- ▶ Scientific realism and Instrumentalism
- ▶ Materialism and Behaviourism
- ▶ Presentism, possibilism, eternalism
- ▶ Empiricism
- ▶ Rationalism