**MPYE004: Philosophy of Human Person**

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**1. What are the basic questions considered in general anthropology? How is philosophical anthropology distinct from it? Explain.**

The most basic question of Human Philosophy are

1. What is the Human Person
2. Who am I
3. What is the meaning of life

“Philosophical anthropology” is apt to describe “the study of human nature” that comes down to us through the Thomistic traditions of philosophical reflection. It is a discipline dealing with questions of metaphysics and phenomenology of the human person, and interpersonal relationships. It is a discipline within philosophy that seeks to unify the several empirical investigations of human nature in an effort to understand individuals as both creatures of their environment and creators of their own values. It tends to emphasize questions of social context, inter-subjectivity, and embodiment, and is focused on what Heidegger would describe as “being-in-the-world.”

The principal focus of philosophical interest has been a feature of human nature that has long been central to self-understanding. In simple terms, it is the recognition that human beings have minds—or, in more traditional parlance, souls. Paul Ricoeur said that “every understanding is self-understanding.” He referred to human quest for knowledge and understanding. Every time a human person acquires more knowledge and understands something deeper, one is also improving one’s own self-understanding. Narrative, in particular, held an important place in understanding the human being as essentially historical. Ricoeur was skeptical that any one philosophy, science, or method could be used as an umbrella to cover all the different essential characteristics or conditions of the person.

A large focus of philosophical anthropology is also **interpersonal relationships**, as an attempt to unify disparate ways of understanding the behaviour of humans as both creatures of their social environments and creators of their own values. It analyses also the ontology that is in play in human relationships – of which intersubjectivity is a major theme. Intersubjectivity is the study of how two individuals, subjects, whose experiences and interpretations of the world are radically different understand and relate to each other.

Three types of knowledge—of the external world, of God, and of the soul itself—it is the first that has received most attention from philosophers. As thinking about these issues progressed, a variety of functions were assigned to the soul, which gradually came to be conceived as a kind of container in which the functions resided. The soul was what human thoughts and feelings were “in,” and it was itself each person’s inner reality.

Two of the more influential contemporary developments in philosophical anthropology have occurred within the schools of **phenomenology** and **existentialism**. In phenomenology the philosopher offers a concrete descriptive account of various kinds of human experience in order to attain essential features of that experience and in turn essential characteristics or possibilities of the human being. Existential phenomenology opens the question further by inquiring into human nature from the more concrete angle of “Who am I?” Here deeper dimensions of the human being are opened up by exploring the question from the position of **subjectivity**.

**2. How does Heidegger differentiate between authentic and inauthentic lives? Explain how he situates Dasein as a being-in-the-world?**

There are philosophical questions, Who am I, and what is my relationship with the world? If the human being is really being-in-the-world, then this implies that the world itself is part of the fundamental constitution of human beings. For **Heidegger**, I am my world. The world is here, now and everywhere around us, and we are everywhere around it.

Heidegger refers to the beings as thinking things and the entire fabric of space and time as extended things. The relation between thinking things and extended things is one of knowledge and the philosophical and indeed scientific task consists in ensuring that a later tradition called "subject" might have access to a world of objects.

Heidegger uses the expression **Dasein,** to refer to the experience of being that is peculiar to human beings. **Being-in-the-world** is his replacement for terms such as subject, object, consciousness, and world.

“**Authentic**” means “my own”. So the authentic self is the self that is mine (leading a life that, in a sense to be explained, is owned by me), whereas the “**inauthentic**” self is the fallen self, the self lost to the ‘they’.

Authentic existence can only come into being when individuals arrive at the realization of who they are and grasp the fact that each human being is a distinctive entity. He described the self of everyday Dasein as the ‘they-self’, “which we distinguish from the authentic Self – that is, from the Self which has been taken hold of in its own way [eigens ergriffenen].

Dasein has, in the first instance, fallen away [abgefallen] from itself as an authentic potentiality for Being its self, and has fallen into the ‘world’. Through the Interpretation of falling, is what has been called the ‘inauthenticity’ of Dasein.

Being-in is not a ‘property’ which Dasein sometimes has and sometimes does not have, and without which it could just be just as well as it could be with it. It is not the case that man ‘is’ and then has, by way of an extra, a relationship-of-Being towards the ‘world’—a world with which he provides himself occasionally. Taking up relationships towards the world is possible only because Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, is as it is. This state of Being does not arise just because some entity is present-at-hand outside of Dasein and meets up with it. Such an entity can ‘meet up with’ Dasein only in so far as it can, of its own accord, show itself within a *world*.

Heidegger describes that there is always a phenomenon of mood (stimmung) that assails to our unreflecting phenomenon to the world. The mood arises from our being in the world. I may be depressed, such that the world opens up (is disclosed) to me as a sombre and gloomy place.

Dasein, has an openness to the world, that is constituted by the attunement of mood, or state of mind. I be able to shift myself out of one mood, but only to enter a different one, say euphoria or lethargy, a mood that will open up the world to me in a different way. Dasein confronts every concrete situation in which it finds itself (into which it has been thrown) as a range of possibilities for acting (onto which it may project itself). As projecting, the understanding of Dasein is its possibilities as possibilities. One can take up the possibilities of "The They-self” and merely follow along or make some more authentic understanding.

3. Answer any two of the following questions in about 250 words each:

**a) Discuss how the question of human person is approached in the Existentialist Philosophy.**

Existentialism philosophy is centered upon the **analysis of existence** and of the way humans find themselves existing in the world. It emphasizes individual existence, freedom and choice. Humans define their own meaning in life, and try to make rational decisions despite existing in a chaotic universe. It is concerned with finding self and the meaning of life through free will, choice, and personal responsibility.

Existentialism believes that individuals are entirely free and must take personal responsibility for themselves. A person should be forced to choose and be responsible without the help of laws, ethnic rules, or traditions.

In Existentialist thought, the traditional relation between soul and body is completely eliminated; thus the body is a lived-through experience that is an integral part of man's existence in its relationship with the world. As per Jean Paul Sartre (1905 – 1980, French Philosopher), "In each project of the for itself, in each perception the body is there; it is the immediate Past in so far as it still touches on the Present which flees it." And "existence is prior to essence" (or, put a different way, the existence of humans precedes consciousness), in the sense that the meaning of man's life is not established before his existence, and man is "thrown into" into a concrete, inveterate universe that cannot be "thought away". Consciousness, according to Sartre, is constant openness toward the world, a transcendent relationship with other beings and thereby with the in itself.

Martin Heidegger renounces the term consciousness, as term Dasein, which is more appropriate for designating human reality in its totality. The traditional opposition between subject and object, or between the self and the non-self, loses all sense in his existentialist understanding of human person.

**b) Explain the goals of human life (Purusarthas) as envisioned in the Indian thought.**

Purushartha, or the goal of life literally defines, “what is sought by human.” It is a conscious pursuit, of the means, and the work for them that transforms into purusharthas. The term is derived from the Sanskrit, purusha, meaning "person," and artha, meaning "purpose." They serve as pointers in the human life.

It is believed that god created men with vision and harmony as his aims, and the purusharthas are manifested for this purpose. The human is a microcosmic aspect of god, and the human should pursue the same aims, experience life in its fullness, and do the serve the purpose for which he has been created. It also translates to “purpose of the self.”

Purushartha may also sometimes be referred to as caturvarga, as there are four (4) in number.

The four Purusharthas are the qualities and objectives of the Supreme Self and God.

Dharma: Righteousness, Duty Artha: Wealth

Kama: Desire Moksha: Liberation

**Artha**: This is understood as meaning, money, a thing, possessions, attainment of riches and worldly prosperity, advantage, profit and wealth. It is the pursuit of material wealth, which may bring material comfort to a person. Acquisition of means for the material well-being is a legitimate social and moral purpose. Material wealth is required for basic necessities, education, recreation purposes, and other luxuries. However, if the urge to seek money or possessions is not restricted then it will lead to self-indulgence or greed and will bar the way to highest good, which is moksha.

**Kama**: This is the enjoyment of the appropriate objects by the five senses of hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling, assisted by the mind together with the soul. It is to fulfil ones desire, and desires may come in various forms — to be wealthy, powerful, sexual needs, for recognition, etc.

**Dharma**: A person is born on this earth to fulfil certain duties. Dharma is an ethical concept, defined as that which is right and good, expression of right activities is dharma. In Mimamsa, dharma is a means to the attainment of certain ends. Ends like artha and kama should be acquired through righteousness, honesty and straightforwardness. dharma is stated as that which upholds the society. Under the wise regulation of dharma, desire has to be satisfied and wealth has to be produced and well used.

**Moksha**: Moksha means liberation, the realization of the Self, and is the ultimate destination of this human birth. In Bhagavad-Gita, moksha is mentioned as the supreme tranquillity and the highest bliss. Moksa as the last end of human life signifies that its attainment is impossible without first fulfilling the obligations of the other three. Moksa is realization and living of the truth namely Aham Brahma Asmi (I am supreme consciousness) and Tat Tvam Asi(I am that supreme).

4. Answer any four of the following in about 150 words each:

**a) How does Albert Camus approach life and death?**

For Albert Camus, life is **absurd** because it leads to death. Even if life is meaningless, it is worth living. He Said “I have no right to resign myself to the absurdity of life. Valuing life and revolting against its absurdity are related imperatives.” The absurd is born of the confrontation between human need and the unreasonable silence of the world. He considered the Absurd to be a fundamental and even defining characteristic of the modern human condition. The absurdity derives from our attempts to make sense of a senseless world.

He discusses death as it relates to man’s ability to create meaning in a meaningless world, and how if the world is devoid of that possibility, then why should we live? He discusses that we must live, for the sake of it, to soak up everything, and realize the significance of being alive at all.

The preciousness of life depends on the variety of experiences and challenges encountered. Amor Fati, the strange love of fate, is what makes humans want to live a dangerous life in a boat on a rough sea, leading nowhere.

**b) What is Ricoeur‟s understanding of freedom?**

Paul Ricoeur makes his famous distinction between the areas of the voluntary and in voluntary in our life (Ricoeur). There are certain things in our life, with regard to which we seem to be not at all free – the date and place of our birth, our parents, the particular physical body we have, the circumstances of our death. But there is an element of voluntary reserved for us even with regard to these things: It is up to us to freely choose what shall be our attitude to all hindrances and impediments, things to be regretted and rejected.

He seeks to give an account of the fundamental capabilities and vulnerabilities that human beings display in the activities that make up their lives, and to show how these capabilities enable responsible human action and life together. What humans say and do presupposes both a finite freedom that allows us to intervene in natural processes and a dependence on these same processes for the efficacy of such actions.

**c) Can we differentiate between freedom and liberty?**

The word Freedom arrives from German word ‘Freihit’ and Liberty originated from Latin word ‘libertas’. Speaking generally, Freedom usually means to be free from something, whereas Liberty usually means to be free to do something, although both refer to the quality or state of being free.

Everything is striving to realise itself fully, tending to become all that it is meant to be. To have **liberty**, is to have achieved full potential, as in bursting into full flowering by kind of an inner surge. Sub human reality attains liberation by purely deterministic process – the various “laws of nature” which are inbuilt into them and hurry them on to attain this goal.

“Being Human” involves developing “character”, commitment to values, principles and goals to be worthy of it. To attain these, the human require **freedom**.

Vikto frankl Says “freedom is which no one can take away from her/him – the freedom to make meaning.” Paul Ricoeur makes a distinction through certain things, like the date and place of our birth, our parents, the particular physical body we have, the circumstances of our death, where human are not free to choose, but we could freely choose what shall be our attitude to all hindrances and impediments, things to be regretted and rejected.

“Liberty” is the power to act and express oneself according to one’s will while “freedom” is the power to decide one’s actions.

“Freedom” is a more concrete concept than “liberty” which is more associated with an individual’s connection with the state rather than with other individuals and circumstances.

Although an individual has freedom or liberty, he must still conform to what is morally right and ethical.

**d) Describe the root of human dignity.**

Human dignity is the state or quality of being worthy of honour or respect. It is measured solely in terms of what one has been able to accumulate, either by her/his own (questionable?) efforts or by inheritance.

Human knowledge transcends the limitations and boundaries of sense knowledge. The human beings’ identity as a volitional and intellectual agent comes to its fullest meaning when one **loves**. Love includes elements which transcend the sheer physical level. The loving potentialities will be composed - if they operate in an integrated manner - of both sensory and trans-sensory elements.

The physical expression of love is an expression of the totality of human love. Pure “intellectual” love becomes barren and desiccated if it is not exhibited by the symbol of the total person: be it a gift, a word, a letter, a smile or sexual intercourse. Hence the “spiritual” and the sexual are both aspects of human love.

One fulfils oneself by dying to himself and going out of oneself into the world of value and persons. Self-fulfilment is achieved only in self-divestment. When one loves, one affirms the very values for which one is striving with his whole humanity: the fullness of knowledge, of love and of communion. This is the **root of human dignity**, uniqueness and irreplaceability.

5. Write short notes on any five of the following in about 100 words each:

**a) Animal symbolicum**

Animal symbolicum is a felicitous expression which brings out the basically integrative xunderstanding of how the traditionally called “spiritual” and “material” elements fuse together in the human person. It refers to “symbol-making”, or “symbol-using-animal”. Human is a being that needs symbols. He is the "representational animal," homo symbolicum, the creature whose distinctive character is the creation and manipulation of signs - things that stand for or take the place of something else.

We aren’t pure spirits but spirit in the world. In order to ensure the full meaningfulness of inter-personal relationships, we have to somehow “embody the disembodied”. So our bodily dimension can enter into the relationship and find its fulfilment.

**b) Logotherapy**

“Logos” is a Greek word that translates as “meaning,” and therapy, is defined as treatment of a condition, illness, or maladjustment. The theory of **Logotherapy** is founded on the belief that human nature is motivated by the search for a life purpose.

Viktor Frankl and was influenced by Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler. He was deported to a Nazi concentration camp. He believed that humans are motivated by something called a "will to meaning," which equates to a desire to find meaning in life. He argued that life can have meaning even in the most miserable of circumstances, and that the motivation for living comes from finding that meaning.

There are three main components that are at the heart of his philosophy. First, Each person has a healthy core. Secondly, the primary focus is to enlighten a person to their own internal resources and provide them with the tools to use their inner core. Third, life offers you purpose and meaning; it does not owe you a sense of fulfilment or happiness. Logotherapy follows that suffering is a part of life, and that man’s ultimate freedom is his ability to choose how to respond to any set of given circumstances, even the most painful ones. Additionally, people can find meaning in their lives by identifying the unique roles that only they can fulfil.

**c) Facticity** :

Facticity is An understanding of specific structures in advance comes from Dasein understanding of its own most Being. Philosophy, understood as the hermeneutics of facticity, does not attempt to get at theoretical truths about the existence in general of some sort of universal humanity but rather about what “is always as its own [dasein].” city. Facticity in the “loose” sense refers to the subject’s situatedness, but facticity in the “strict” sense refers to that aspect of the subject that is unavailable to reflection. Facticity, therefore, consists in socially constructed self-interpretations. If all knowledge is sustained and grounded in such socially constructed self-interpretations, and if such interpretations can change over time, it means that we can never really have a philosophical account of knowledge.

**d) Butterfly Effect** :

The butterfly effect is the idea that small things can have non-linear impacts on a complex system. The concept is imagined with a butterfly flapping its wings and causing a typhoon. The butterfly effect is a phrase that encapsulates the more technical notion of sensitive dependence on initial conditions in chaos theory. It refers to the idea that a butterfly‘s wings might create tiny changes in the atmosphere that ultimately cause a tornado to appear (or prevent a tornado from appearing). The flapping of wings represents a small change in the initial condition of the system, which causes a chain of events leading to the large-scale phenomena.

In reality, there are many natural phenomenon which are so extremely sensitive to the initial conditions, that the outcome –intended or unintended – cannot be theoretically predicted. In such areas we do not have accurate measurements but rough approximations. A major aspect of reality is thus approximation, which belong to the world of roughness and inter-relationships.

**e) Appetite**

“Appetite” is more or less a synonym for “tendency”, “drive”, “striving” or even “dynamism”. It is derived from apetitus, any strong desire or drive. It extend the term in a general sense to every human (hence, more or less conscious) process whereby we strive towards some good or pleasure or, conversely, seek to avoid some evil or pain.

An appetite draws to a certain object, without regard to its being good or ill. A certain motion follows every material being. The existence of appetite may be recognized through internal experience (introspection) and external experience. Through internal experience, we recognize the existence of motions which are consequent to our knowledge. Through external experience, we see human beings and animals as inclined towards objects they know, or as inclined to avoid them.